

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ARCHITECTURE IN KUMASE, 1874-1960.

BY

TONY YEBOAH

Thesis submitted to the Department of History, of the College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy degree in History.

MARCH 2017

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this study is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or elsewhere.

Signature..... Date.....

Candidate's Name: Tony Yeboah

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast

Signature:.....Date:.....

Principal Supervisor's Name: Prof. De-Valera N.Y.M. Botchway

Co-Supervisor's Name: Dr. Collins AdjeiMensah

Signature:.....Date:.....

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the development of architecture in Kumase from 1874 to 1960. In other words, the study focuses on the rebuilding of the built environment of Kumase from 1874 to 1960. Using qualitative evaluation of archival documents, interviews with Asante chiefs, owners of houses, heads of families, trustees of households etc., and some secondary sources of historical information, this work discusses the traditional architecture of Kumase and, how the British colonial government and its agents joined forces with the Asante political authorities and the entire citizenry to architecturally reconstruct the city. The collaboration between the local people and the Europeans produced striking alterations within the built space of Kumase. This study shows that the alteration of the traditional Kumase architecture did not only affect the city's built environment, but it also had impact on the cultural values of Asante. This is because British and European building technology did not completely and entirely support the observation and performance of some aspects of Asante cultural values and practices which found customary expression within the domain of a built environment. This thesis is a contribution to architectural history and the history of built environment which as fields of study are burgeoning within the historiography of Ghana.

KEY WORDS

Akan Courtyard

Architecture

Asante

Building

Built environment

Kumase

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe special thanks to my supervisors, Prof. De-Valera N.Y.M. Botchway, for the immediate interest and enthusiasm in supervising the thesis, and Dr. Collins Adjei Mensah, who encouraged me in a friendly manner. I am particularly grateful to Dr. S.Y. Boadi-Siaw and Mr. Bruno Osafo for their advice, support, and assistance. I am similarly grateful to Prof. Edmund Abaka for the amazing display of love towards me. My sincere thanks also goes to the faculty of the Department of History, particularly Prof. Kwame OseiKwarteng, and Mr. Adjei Adjepong, who reposed great deal of confidence in me.

I also wish to express my appreciation to my parents, Mr. Akwasi Yeboah Nkansah and Theresah Yeboah, who have supported me both spiritually and materially. I cannot forget my sweet and adorable sister, Ivy Boakye, and brother, A.B. Kyerematen for their unflinching support throughout the study period. Inside my heart is a box of memories for the wonderful deeds for the Osafos which made my postgraduate study enjoyable. I appreciate the support and generosity of my friend and pastor, Clifford Ashun.

The study has significantly benefited from conversations and suggestions from Mr. Peter Boakye, and Mr. Joseph Kachim for which I am grateful. I am similarly grateful to my friends, Daniel Adu Boakye and Victoria A. Marcourt and my mates.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere thanks to my informants including Baffour Asabre Kogyawoasu Ababio III, Opoku Frefre III, Mr. Kojo Darko-Asante and Mr. Justice Brobbey. The last goes to the staff of the Public Records and Archives Administration Department, (PRAAD), Kumase.

DEDICATION

To my grandmother,

Akosua Nkrumah

DEFINITION OF TERM

Asante/Asanteman- Asante can also be called Asanteman, which literally means Asante nation. In this regard, the thesis would use Asante, Asante nation and Asanteman interchangeably for the nation/society/state.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
KEY WORDS	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
DEDICATION	vi
DEFINITION OF TERM	vii
LIST OF PLATE	xi
INTRODUCTION	1
Background to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	5
Literature Review	8
Purpose of the Study	26
Methodology and Sources	27
Significance of the Study	34
Organisation of the Study	35
Research Questions	36
CHAPTER ONE: TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE OF KUMASE	37
Introduction	37
Pre-colonial Architecture of Kumase	37
Foundation	42
Floor	42
Wall	43
Roof	50

Notable Compartments within Traditional Kumase Structure	52
The Entrance Porch	52
The Courtyard (<i>Aduho</i>)	52
Construction Expression for Palaces and Shrines	55
Palace	55
<i>Abosom Dan</i> (Shrines)	68
Conclusion	77

CHAPTER TWO: ARCHITECTURAL ACCULTURATION OF
KUMASE 78

Introduction	78
The Destruction of Kumase	79
Transitions in the Architectural Landscape of Kumase,	84
Kumase Housing Building Experiment	90
New Techniques of Building	93
Arguments for European Residential Areas	101
Conclusion	113

CHAPTER THREE: SELECTION, INCORPORATION AND
APPROPRIATION OF EUROPEAN
ARCHITECTURE IN KUMASE 115

Introduction	115
Factors that Encouraged the Appropriation of European Architecture	116
Population Growth, (1944-1960)	117
Trade and Commerce	118
Cocoa	121
Nuclear Family	123
First Gold Coast Building Society	125
The Hybrid Akan Courtyard House and its Characteristics	127

Benefits Associated with the Hybrid Architecture	131
Settlement Pattern and the Relative Architectural Styles in Kumase	134
The Incentive for Building in Kumase	138
How the Hybrid Architecture Facilitated the Intentions of People	140
House Construction in Kumase; Individual or Corporate Responsibility	142
The Exclusion of African Residential Areas from the 1910 Building Regulations	144
Conclusion	146
CHAPTER FOUR: ARCHITECTURE AND THE CULTURAL VALUES OF ASANTE	
	147
Introduction	147
Architecture and Politics	148
The Interplay between Architecture and Social Institutions in Kumase	165
Architecture and Household Bond	169
Conclusion	177
CONCLUSION	178
BIBLIOGRAPHY	184
APPENDICES	195

LIST OF PLATES

Plate	Page
1. An undesignated <i>pato</i> at the Tano Yaw shrine house. However, in most cases, it received traditional leaders and other important personalities who called at the deity for diverse reasons.	47
2. An image showing a market centre in Kumase in 1908. This market was close to the Kumase Fort, in present-day Adum. The structures within which buying and selling took place were roofed with grass and palm fronds.	50
3. The palaver hall of the king's palace at the time of the take-over of Kumase by the British in 1874. The open space is what has been described as <i>aduho</i> whereas the opening behind the man was a <i>pato</i> .	61
4. Drummers' section at the Tano Yaw Shrine House, Besease	69
5. An illustration of the repeated decorative design of "garden and service compounds"	97
6. Building plan of a single family residential structure at Suntreso	100
7. European bungalow built on stilt at the Nhyiaeso residency	107
8. Plan of a one-room bungalow	109
9. Original plan of the bungalow, (built on stilt), which is now occupied by the Subin Sub-Metropolitan Council in Nhyiaeso, Kumase	110
10. Three bedroom extension of the bungalow, (built on ground level), which is now occupied by the Subin Sub-Metropolitan Council in Nhyiaeso	111
11. Plan of an Omanhene's Palace	151
12. Front view of the Manhyia Palace Musuem	158

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Architecture of human residence has a long history because of the fact that the thought of living in places has been with man since time immemorial. Rocks and trees served as shelter for early people. This was when people wandered and roamed about looking for edible wild foods in the forest during the day. Thus, people in this period were basically gatherers who were forced to retire to bed when dusk approached because of darkness and other unfavourable weather conditions. As time went on, humans made technological advancements which enabled them to put up enclosed structures, thereby, protecting them from any possible danger.

The physical and social conditions existing in any environment determine the prevailing building technology. Thus, the level of technological advancement is conditioned on the available technological toolkit in view of the strong argument that it is the available toolkit which enables the people to effectively make the most of the available natural resources. Technology, therefore, aids and supports the development of architecture. As a consequence, the creation of architectural forms is the product of a combination of building technologies and building materials. In Africa, and for that matter Kumase, the building technology encompasses the specialisation of skills, the division of labour and the distinctions between individual and communal building processes. In Kumase for instance, the *atakpame*, which is the rammed earth type of construction abounded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries because its labour population was made up

of people with expert skill or knowledge. However, Kumase witnessed a far reaching transformation in the construction of houses after its 1874 defeat by the British. This thesis therefore focuses on the rebuilding of Kumase from 1874, when the city was incinerated by the British expeditionary force, to 1960 when Ghana became a Republic under the Kwame Nkrumah-led government.

Earlier, the British acted as intermediaries in the wars between the Asante and Fante. However, from about the third decade of the nineteenth century, they took the centre stage as fierce opponents to Asante's ascendancy in the Gold Coast. The idea that underpinned the sudden change of role by the British included the attempt to establish peace and order with the aim of finding an alternate economic activity to the slave trade as well as promoting missionary activities, and the desire to frustrate Asante's attempt to establish supreme authority in the Gold Coast.

The dates from where the thesis commences and ends have been carefully chosen with consideration to the general history of Asante. Indeed, 1874, which marks the starting point of the study witnessed the marching of the British forces led by Garnett Wolseley into Kumase. The British expeditionary force was motivated by the desire to establish peace and order in a bid to promote the spread of the Christian gospel and Western education as well as finding an alternate economic activity for the vacuum created by the abolition of the slave trade. Thus, war ensued and Asante was decisively defeated. In the end, Kumase was ransacked. This event necessitated a total reconstruction of Kumase and saw the introduction of new architectural styles. The British renewed their attack on Kumase in 1896 which marked the final stage in their attempt to establish absolute authority over Asante. The 1896

event effectively altered the city's spatial organisation as well as the social order. In the end, the architecture of Kumase was affected by virtue of the fact that the transformation structures within the architectural order shifted into the hands of the British.

The British colonial government established a conducive environment for acculturation to take off. This development actually encouraged the British to reconstruct and expand the fort built by the Asantehene, Osei Tutu Kwame in 1820 and later structures for administrative and accommodation purposes. It is necessary to examine the 1874 event especially in relation to the transformation it brought to Kumase with respect to the city's architecture and authority.

Kumase, unlike some coastal towns and even inland towns in the AkimAbuakwa area, does not appear to have had a separate "European community" for the Africans. However, in some Gold Coast urban environments, the Europeans created distinct communities with European art and science of building and thereby influenced the Gold Coasters especially the merchants and the educated elite who, in identifying themselves with the Europeans, constructed houses of European design. Indeed, the Christian/European community in AkimAbuakwa was named "Oburoni-kurom", translated in English as the "white man's town." In such places, the European communities influenced the indigenous settlements with their European art and science of building. In Kumase, however, there was a strong and continued opposition to granting the European missionaries and the colonial government stations to propagate their message and establish the basis for their political control. This probably explains the absence of a

“European community” for Africans in Kumase. Notwithstanding this absence, the nature of architecture in Kumase began to assume some features typical of European designs in the reconstruction process from 1874-1960.

It is essential to note that house construction after the 1874 destruction of Kumasetook a different direction following the establishment of the apparatus of colonialism. Building of houses in pre-colonial Kumase was essentially non-commercial. Thus, the construction of a new domicile or compound involved the owner as well as the members of his extended family in particular and the entire community at large. The owner was the master builder of his own structure. However, the building skills were in the hands of all the participants, so that the owner of each new house played the role of an architect. In most cases, the materials for construction were localised within the community. Building construction during this period had its roots in rudimentary crafts which did not facilitate mass production. However, the establishment of control by the British greatly influenced the production of built structures in Kumase following the introduction of a more advanced approach to the provision of houses. The provision of building materials such as sand crate (cement and sand) and block houses with more professional architectural drawings and other building accoutrements became popular. The introduction of reinforced designs paved the way for the proliferation of multi-storeyed and more sophisticated structures to be erected.

The study ends at 1960. This is because 1960 witnessed Ghana's attainment of republican status which effectively situated her in a position where she could take decisions without needing approval from any external power. Thus, this thesis has basically examined the development of

architecture at the time the Europeans had a stake in the administration of Kumase.

Statement of the Problem

The history of architecture in Ghana generally and Kumase in particular has not been explored much by historians and researchers. While there is a good deal of research on state formation in Asante, there is very little in-depth studies on its rich architecture. It is simply astonishing that Kumase, affectionately known as the “San Francisco of West Africa” has no extensive historical document about its architectural development.

Major works on Asante, Ghana, West Africa and Africa that give a history of Kumase have failed to pay adequate attention to its architectural development. For example, S.J. Salm and T. Falola, in *African Urban Spaces in Historical Perspectives*¹ could not give the details but just fragments of the nature of architecture in Kumase without talking about the ethno-cosmological and Western cultural philosophies behind such architectural constructions. Furthermore, those studies that have given information about architectural history of Africa do not spell out, in detail, the architectural development of specific places like Kumase. This can also be attributed to the broad nature of these studies which does not permit them to examine the architectural records of specific places but to only do a general description and examination. Also, early works which factored the city of Kumase in their discussion like T.E. Bowdich’s *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee*,²

¹S.J. Salm and T.Falola (eds.), *African Urban Spaces in Historical Perspective*, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2005.

² T.E.Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee*, (3rded). London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1966.

and K.A. Busia's *The Position of Chiefs in the Akan Political System*³ give accounts of the observations about architecture in Kumase without throwing light on the art and science of built structures. There are other works that examined, specifically, the history of Asante and for that matter Kumase. One of such works is T.C. McCaskie's *Asante Identities*.⁴ This work mainly discusses the architectural and infrastructural transformations in Adiebeba, a suburb of Kumase. Thus, one cannot rely solely on this work to understand the architectural setting of Kumase from 1874 to 1960. Above all, these works could not delineate specifically the nature of buildings in their discussion, thereby, making it seem that there was just one type of building in Kumase.

It is informative, however, to note that different types of structures existed in Kumase right from the time the Asante occupied the area. The inability of earlier works to delineate the types of structures in the city's architecture raises some interesting questions. One of these questions is whether Kumase was noted for one particular type of building for all purposes or otherwise. If one particular type of building existed, what accounted for that singularity? If this is not the case why did people in Kumase construct different types of buildings? If Kumase had more than one type of building, how was the processes involved in constructing one type of building different from the other? Were there special places for the construction of specific types of buildings? Above all, what philosophies and ideologies underpinned the construction of the various types of buildings in Kumase? Thus, this thesis,

³ K.A. Busia, *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti*, London: Oxford University Press, 1958.

⁴ T.C. McCaskie, *Asante Identities: History and Modernity in an African Village, 1850-1950*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000.

“The Development of Architecture in Kumase, 1874-1960” has examined the past and provided answers to the issues raised.

The difference between the literature consulted and the proposed research is that the literature does not discuss the architectural history of Kumase in relation to the philosophies that inspired the Asante people in the designing of their houses in a particular form in a particular period. Furthermore, they do not explain why many indigenous people adopted European architectural designs during the colonial period and beyond. Most of the works that touched on the architectural evolution of the city did it in the form of a case study where some sections/suburbs of the city and particular types of building were made to represent the city’s architecture. This therefore cannot be accepted as a complete picture of the development of architecture in the city because architecture must also factor in the artistic and scientific ideas that birth buildings. The problem created is that extant documents that treat the history of Asante, and for that matter Kumase, do not factor in an explanation of the ideas in their study of the development of architecture in a comprehensive way.

From the foregoing, it is obvious that there is little written about the architectural history of Kumase. This study therefore seeks to make known the development of architecture in Kumase from 1874 up to 1960. It will also bring to light the skills and techniques involved as well as the values, beliefs and ideas behind specific types of built structures, namely, key palaces, notable shrines and distinguished private and family houses. Thus, the study hopes to produce a significant literature which will contribute greatly to the growing works on the development of architecture in Kumase, and, in effect,

bridge the knowledge gap in relation to the history of built environments and architecture in that historic city.

Literature Review

A number of books related to the subject of this thesis have been consulted and fortunately the authors spelt out their objectives clearly which have given the thrust of their work, hence, one can do an appreciation of these books. The main arguments and the perspective from which the authors treated their topics are summarised. Furthermore, the impact and limits of those arguments and perspectives in relation to this research are highlighted. It also delineates the differences, that is, in terms of scope or content, between the individual secondary sources and this research.

*Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee*⁵ is an account written by T.E.Bowdich, who led a British embassy to Kumase in an attempt to stop the repeated invasion by the Asante army of the coastal areas, destroying property and lives of the Fante as well as affecting the British by breaking the flow of trade between the indigenous people and the Europeans. The main purpose of the mission centred on politics and economics. However, architecture which is linked to the social organisation and construction of the people found expression in the perusal of the Governor's instructions which is extracted thus: 'In short, leave nothing undone that may add to our present imperfect geographical knowledge of the Interior' In recognition of the instruction given them, Bowdich in his account of the Mission to Ashantee examines the '...construction of the ornamental architecture of Coomassie (sic)...'

⁵Bowdich, *Mission to Ashantee*.

In his description, Bowdich concludes that the architectural make-up of the people of Asante, and for that matter Kumase, was something borrowed or learnt from the people further inland of Kumase which he referred to as the “interior countries” The researcher investigated further to ascertain the veracity of that assertion and also delineated the indigenous architecture of Kumase. Bowdich highlights the materials, the processes and the styles that were used in the construction of houses in Asante. He also goes on to talk about the compartments of the houses he witnessed. However, he does not state the ideologies and philosophies behind the construction of houses in Kumase especially with respect to the compartments and divisions in the houses he saw. Thus, this study has revealed the ideologies and philosophies which underpinned the construction of houses in Kumase.

Bowdich also talks about the impact the mission had on the then Asantehene following the desire by the latter to construct houses of British design. He talks about the fact that the Asantehene wanted to use public treasury to adorn and enlarge houses of the traditional leaders in order to ensure great improvements and embellishments in the architecture of Kumase. This researcher continued from this point and investigated the success of this intention and also explored the changes that it brought to the architectural make up of Kumase. The book mainly describes the architecture of Kumase in the form of an eyewitness account for a limited period of time. In view of this, this researcher is tempted to believe that Bowdich could not do a comprehensive study about the nature of architecture in Kumase in such a limited period. This thesis, “The Development of Architecture in Kumase, 1874-1960”, attempts to fill this gap.

*Asante Identities: History and Modernity in an African Village, 1850-1950*⁶ has been found to be very useful to this thesis. In this book, T.C. McCaskie recounts “the inexorable growth of Kumase and the changes that have resulted since” he first visited Kumase in the 1960s. He describes the changes the city witnessed from his first visit in the 1960s as against his August 1997 visit. He gives an eye witness account of the impressive changes: large buildings, squat, foursquare, concrete slabbed etc. Indeed, the author ably examines the general history of Kumase in precolonial times. For instance, he discusses the situation where residents of Kumase depended on the services and labour of the outlying villages for their food supplies. He also looks at the population of Kumase which in most cases increased during the national festival, Odwira. He also makes a remarkable effort to link places and lands to their rightful owners. Little mention was made of house building or the architectural development of the entire Kumase because he spelt out his focus as an examination of Adiebeba, a suburb of Kumase. Indeed, McCaskie in 1997 recognised the fact that the architectural history of Kumase remains to be written despite the availability of abundant evidence. He was, however, quick to add that there existed obstacles that one might face in the attempt to document such an important aspect of Asante history. This goes to support the claim of this study that there is a knowledge gap with respect to the development of architecture in Kumase which the researcher hopes to fill.

The starting point of McCaskie’s book is 1850 and so he gives readers a satisfactory knowledge of Kumase in the nineteenth century. Accordingly, he discusses the events that led to the decline of Kumase in terms of power

⁶McCaskie, *Asante Identities*.

and population which resulted from the cumulative effects of the civil wars and the British intervention which led to the deportation of the Asantehene, Nana AgyemangPrempeh I and some other relatives and key members of his government. This period, that is, the nineteenth century, witnessed a change in the administration of Kumase from its royals into the hands of the British administrators of the Gold Coast. The change affected architecture as the British officials envisaged building a new Kumase to the west of the old town. To this end, a comprehensive planning document and an overall development programme for the rationalisation and expansion of the city was drawn up in 1910. McCaskie does not give details of the planning document and whether it was indeed implemented and if it was so, the transformations it brought to the architectural composition of Kumase. This knowledge gap has been successfully filled by the researcher. The study has identified the 1910 development plan as an important landmark in the architectural history of Kumase and has accordingly highlighted the effects the document had on the built environment of the city.

McCaskie's is essentially about Adiebeba and its people. Thus, despite it having important material for the thesis, it is not enough to give an account of the architectural development in Kumase. However, it has provided an important insight into the transformations witnessed in Kumase from 1850 to 1950.

The book titled, *Asante and Its Neighbours 1700-1807*,⁷ is authored by J.K. Fynn. It basically explores the rise of Asante in the eighteenth century. In other words, the book discusses the beginnings of the Asante Kingdom in

⁷ J.K. Fynn, *Asante and Neighbours 1700-1807*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1971.

respect of its migrations from the region of the Pra and Ofin basin. The events leading to the formation of the Asante Union through the instrumentality of Osei Tutu and OkomfoAnokye are clearly delineated. It was after the formation of the Asante Nation that Osei Tutu transferred his court from Kwaman, the former capital of the Asante nation, to Kumase, which has remained the capital. After realising the formation of the Union, a number of state-building instruments were put in place to foster unity among the various groups. The national army together with the Golden Stool, the Asante Constitution and the Odwira festival stood as the most potent of all the instruments. To a large extent, the military formation provided a catalyst for Asante's realisation of her political and economic objectives. Thus, the Asante Union was fundamentally a military union. The mention of Kumase in this work had nothing to do with architecture but rather it recognised it as the centre of the Asante administration where its supremacy was founded in initially superior military knowledge, and active and intelligent rulers. The author actually devotes a whole chapter to discuss the administration of Opoku Ware who turned the kingdom into an empire.

The author makes reference to Kumase but his aim was not to examine the development of architecture in the town. He was more interested in the economic role it played toward the rise of Asante in the eighteenth century and the impact that the rise and expansion had on both the Europeans and the Gold Coast at the time. Thus, the book provides insight into Asante's involvement in the Transatlantic Trade which increased the wealth of the people. However, this study's scope does not exceed the eighteenth century. In view of this, this work, "The Development of Architecture in Kumase, 1874-1960" moved

beyond the eighteenth century and discussed the nineteenth and twentieth centuries' economic activities which increased the wealth of the people and consequently, contributed to the architectural development of Kumase.

D. Kimble in his book entitled, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism, 1850-1928*,⁸ has extensively given an analytical account of the political history with much concentration on nationalist activities in Ghana. The book has thirteen chapters. However, only two of these chapters have relevance for this thesis. These are the first and third chapters titled: The Economic Background and Social Change respectively. In the first chapter, the economic background of Ghana was highlighted and topics like a sluggish economy, 1850-1890; the expanding network of communications, 1890-1907; cocoa and the market economy; planned economic development, 1919-28, among others are discussed. This chapter gives an idea about the sources of money which in a way made room for the adoption of European architecture by indigenous Kumase settlers. The third chapter also gives an idea of the extent of change recorded in the Gold Coast in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thus, the author does not discuss the architecture of Kumase as such because of the broad nature of his work and probably as a result of the fact that Kumase had no European community at the time. This study has succeeded in filling this gap.

*An Outline of Asante History*⁹ by K. Osei chronicles the contributions of the various Asante Kings, from the reign of Nana Osei Tutu up to the reign of Nana Opoku Ware II, to the development of the Asante nation. The book is

⁸ D. Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism 1850-1928*, London: Clarendon Press, 1963.

⁹K. Osei, *An Outline of Asante History* (3rd ed.) Kumase: Cita Press Ltd., 2004.

relevant to the thesis because it gives the genesis of Kumase and the transformation it has witnessed from the time it assumed the role as the capital of the Asante nation. The book discusses the two types of houses- houses for the nobles and the rich and houses for the poor, which in effect gives an idea about the city's architecture. The purpose of the book was not to discuss architectural development in Kumase, yet it gives the researcher an idea which serves as a background to the study of the intended research. This is because the author makes the effort to inform readers about the initial location of Kumase which was sited at the area occupied by the present ministries block, the area covering the regional office of Vodafone and the post office, the prison area, Adum in general and extending to the OkomfoAnokye Teaching Hospital. The author makes no effort to give the characteristics of the two types of houses in Kumase. Also, he does not reveal in detail the architectural designs of the town in those periods. This study has critically examined in detail the composition and nature of these types of houses and unearthed the philosophy behind their construction. The author does well to discuss the transformation in Kumase, (architecture as one of them), following the deportation of Nana AgyemangPrempeh I. He also does a superficial examination of the various administrators of Kumase and their respective contribution to the development of the city. This served as a guideline to the researcher and helped him to scrutinise the available documents with the aim of giving a comprehensive account of the administrators whose tenure of office had an effect on the architecture of Kumase. The author himself recognised the shortfall of his work as he remarks, "Half a loaf is better than none, is a wise saying which is true with this book because, it does not give

detailed history of Asante nation ‘and for that matter the architectural development of Kumase’ but introduces readers to the History.”¹⁰ This study has examined in detail the architectural development of the city.

K. Arhin and K. Afari-Gyan, in a book titled, *The City of Kumasi, Handbook: Past, Present and Future*,¹¹ give an account of how different kinds of houses were built by different classes of people, with much emphasis on their available resources. The book also provides information about the materials that were used in building these houses. According to Arhin and Afari-Gyan, Kumasi had two kinds of houses. These were those of the low income earners and slaves and those of the royal family and the merchants. Houses of the first category were normally situated in dirty and dim environments. The second category of houses were built along the streets with wattle work, and plastered with clay and swish, but thatched with well-prepared palm branches. Thus, this book gives the researcher an insight into the fact that the houses depicted the status and wealth of a particular family or individual. It, however, does not give much description and representation of the two types of houses highlighted. This is a knowledge gap and the thesis has accordingly filled it by highlighting the reasons why people belonging to the same nation built houses of different architectural designs.

*Rediscovering Ghana's Past*¹² is authored by J. Anquandah and provides information on how habitation and village settlement began in the country, a development which is said to have been found in the

¹⁰Ibid., viii.

¹¹ K. Arhin and K. Afari-Gyan, *The City of Kumasi, Handbook: Past, Present and Future*. Accra: The Institute of African Studies, 1992.

¹² J. Anquandah, *Rediscovery Ghana's Past*, Accra: Sedco Publishing Ltd., 1982.

Kintampo Culture. The style and nature of building in Ghana, like elsewhere in the world, is largely determined by the availability of resources, climate, population size and sometimes historical factors such as security conditions. Thus, the materials used by the Kintampo people of the Bono and Asante regions for the construction of their homes are highlighted in the book. Traditional Kumase buildings, taking a clue from the legacy bequeathed to Ghana by the indigenous Adanse architecture, were raised on supporting blocks. *Rediscovering Ghana's Past* has been a resource material for this thesis since it highlights how settlement began in the country. Materials and style preference that characterised the construction of buildings and architectural developments are also highlighted. The book examines the entire country and therefore gives just a fragment of the architectural development of Kumase. This study has however examined the architectural evolution of Kumase, by bringing into light the detailed account of what the book could not discuss.

A.A.Boahen in *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*,¹³ and D.E.K. Amenumey in, *Ghana: A Concise History from Pre-Colonial Times to the 20th Century*¹⁴ provide the researcher with information about the post-independence developmental projects of Ghana including the architectural development of Kumase. As the art of government became sophisticated after independence, government agencies were established across the country. This largely contributed to the style of buildings in Kumase to accommodate government staff and serve as offices.

¹³ A.A.Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, London: Longman Group Ltd., 1975.

¹⁴ D.E.K. Amenumey, *Ghana: A Concise History in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Accra: Woeli Publishing, 2008.

This thesis went further by illuminating the reasons for which houses built by the Europeans in Kumase were redesigned to suit African workers of the various government agencies after independence in 1957.

The book titled, *African Urban Spaces in Historical Perspective*¹⁵ is an edited work by S. J. Salm and T. Falola. The book recognises the fact that cities existed in Africa long before European arrival by tracing the origin of these cities to the ancient archaeological times and the age of medieval Islam. It, however, acknowledges the role played by the Indian Ocean, Mediterranean Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean trading systems as well as that of the autochthonous processes in urban development in Africa. It traces the development of urbanisation in Africa citing the agricultural neolithic revolution. It again highlights the role played by the nineteenth century development, that is, the Industrial Revolution. As pointed out earlier, the book basically looks at urbanisation. However, this study is interested in this work because urbanisation in most cases influences the organisation of urban space or the nature of architectural design of a particular region. For instance, as the population of Kumase increased, the colonial government encouraged the wealthy local people to build more houses to accommodate their less endowed family members. Also, as the population increased, many were encouraged to build two-storey structures for rental purposes. Thus, urbanisation influenced the kind of houses built in Kumase.

The book could not give a comprehensive study of the various cities in the area of concentration. The editors recognise the control that those in power often have in the planning and development of urban space. Thus, the authors

¹⁵Salm and Falola, *African Urban Space*.

make the effort to discuss the policies of the various European colonial powers with respect to their areas of influence. By extension, and with this as a guide, the study has brought to light the ideologies that influenced the British in their planning and organisation of Kumase which eventually shaped the character and development of the city after they assumed total control.

Of particular interest to the thesis is the book's exposition on the contribution of architectural patterns to the development and organisation of urban spaces in the said region. Indeed the book explores African urban spaces and all the issues related to urban settlement in Africa. The researcher has therefore unearthed the ideologies that influenced the British in their planning and organisation of Kumase.

The book titled, *The African City, A History*¹⁶ is written by B. Freund. The underlying theme of the book is that urban formations are indigenous and a feature of the African continent which have long been sites of dynamic innovation and interaction with foreign populations. The book is divided into six chapters. Of particular interest to the purpose of this study is the second chapter titled, "African Cities, the Emergence of a World Trading Economy" in Freund's book. This chapter basically delves into Africa's contact with the Europeans from the sixteenth century and the developments that accompanied this with respect to urbanisation. The contact resulted in the transfer of the worldview of the Europeans thereby producing different forms of urban life. Although the author makes references to Kumase in relation to its layout and architectural design, he does so only in fragments from the fifteenth up to the seventeenth centuries. Thus, the book does not cover the period this research

¹⁶B. Freund, *The African City*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

has in mind, that is, 1874 to 1960. On this score, this thesis has specifically examined the role played by merchants and cocoa farmers in Kumase in the architectural development of the city from 1874 up to 1960. Thus, an attempt has been made in discussing the specific situation at Kumase in contrast to the general approach taken by Freund.

On West Africa, Freund gives a general composition of houses. This point is made in his remark that “West African house construction has historically focused on walled compounds that surrounded courtyards and contained a variety of structures aimed at different uses.”¹⁷ Throughout the nineteenth century, simplified versions of such compounds began to give way, or merge with European house models, to create a new distinctive house architecture. Connecting this to the burning of Kumase in 1874 which necessitated a reconstruction of the city, the researcher has examined the creativity with which the indigenous Kumase settlers merged European building technology with their traditional notions of architecture to produce the hybrid Akan courtyard house. The new distinctive house architecture, as noted in the book, came with an increase in room size and ceilings which were raised while ground floors became surrounded with verandas. Often, because the ground was itself considered rather suspect in nature, the floor was lifted well above it. Upper floors were constructed when possible and balconies made available. Decorative material reflected varied adaptations of African and European styles. This was promoted particularly by the Afro-Brazilians who returned to Africa having learnt various forms of artistic work. They brought their sense of style and craftsmanship to the growing urban

¹⁷Ibid., 55.

communities. West Africa in particular adapted the ordinary building style of India, which became known as bungalow. The European introduced this building technology in the Danyame/Nhyiaeso building development in Kumase. Architectural adaptations, indeed, influenced the increasingly important way of life of an emerging African elite and, on the other hand, became an effective weapon that intensified racial segregation and separation in Africa as a consequence of the European presence. The thesis has established that Kumase had a special zone restricted for European settlement. The book has been an important reference material and provided guidelines for the study due to its ability in spelling out the art and science of built structures.

The article titled, “Kumase: Ambience of Urbanity, Tradition and Modernity,”¹⁸ written by W.J. Donkoh, examines the new outlook that Kumase assumed following the establishment of British hegemony after 1896. According to this work, Kumase was a well-planned town before European presence. Its fame went beyond the shores of the Gold Coast because of its role in the trans-Saharan trade. However, it became a modernised cosmopolitan centre during the British administration in the period after 1896. The article particularly gives a description of the physical appearance of Kumase, making an extensive use of European travelers’ accounts. It is in the light of this that the author made a quick reference to architecture and the building materials that were used in the construction of buildings in Kumase in the nineteenth century into the twentieth century. Added to that, she specifically mentions the role played by the coastal and international

¹⁸W.J. Donkoh, “Kumase: Ambience of Urbanity, Tradition and Modernity”. *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No. 8, (2004), 167-183.

immigrants, such as the Lebanese, Syrians, Indians, etc. to the development of architecture in Kumase. She also discusses the transformation of Kumase's economy as a major contributory factor to the architectural development of the town. Traversing along this path, the researcher has disclosed the contributory factors that went into the development of architecture after the burning of Kumase in 1874.

Indeed the author does not limit herself to a discussion of architecture. Other issues relating to the provision of modern amenities were also highlighted. This period witnessed the introduction of a new type of architecture, modern amenities such as electricity and pipe borne water supply systems, modern hospital facilities, a post office, banks, railway and road transport as well as new economic opportunities that promoted the growth of individualism. Nevertheless, the author did not give a detailed account of the development of architecture in Kumase.

Even though the article does not have architectural development in Kumase as its central theme, it has provided significant guidelines to the topic of the study. The article has largely demonstrated to the researcher that a number of factors, among which were economic transformation and the presence of foreigners, have indeed, stimulated architectural development in Kumase especially after the establishment of British hegemony in Asante. Thus, the article provided guidelines for the researcher to investigate the issues further by specifically highlighting and giving a comprehensive account of the architectural development in Kumase. The researcher also went a step further by examining the art and science of the designing and construction of built structures in Kumase, a perspective lacking in Donkoh's article.

“Imagining Architecture II: ‘Treasure Storehouses’ and Construction of Asante Regional Hegemony”¹⁹ is an article authored by J.B. Hess. The author recognises the profound alteration of Asante’s spatial organisation as well as the social and political order following its defeat by the British in 1874. Largely as a result of this development, the city’s architectural development passed to the British as they controlled the administration of the city.

The author defines her intention for the article as placing the Kumase Fort Museum, the Ghana National Cultural Centre, and the Manhyia PalaceMuseum, within the architectural history of Kumase. Thus, the article uses the above landmarks (as a case) study in studying the architecture of Kumase. The article looks at the precolonial architectural history of Kumase where the establishment of that city is made known. Pre-colonial Kumase had a unique architectural design which was to replicate the enforced cultural order that characterised every Asante settlement and constituted the basis of the Asante society. There was the influence of Islamic and European architectural design in Kumase. The author discusses the materials as well as the art and science used in the construction of an Asantehene palace.

Just like the political and social structure, the architectural organisation changed drastically after the destruction of Kumasi in 1874. The Asantehene’s palace was also destroyed in the massacre. Unfortunately for the Asante, the rubble of the King’s palace was used in building the Military Fort which was of European architectural design, despite it being built from local materials.

¹⁹ J.B. Hess, “Imagining Architecture II: ‘Treasure Storehouses’ and Constructions of Asante Regional Hegemony.” *Africa Today*, Vol. 50, No. 1, (2003), 27-48.

Although the article discusses significant architectural landscape which will be useful to this study, it does so by looking at just three important historic sites in Kumase without giving a comprehensive account of what private houses, commercial and administrative structures offer to the architecture of Kumase. Also, unlike this work, Hess' article does not consider the ideological underpinnings of these buildings. This knowledge gap has been dealt with in this study.

The Ph.D. thesis titled, "African Coastal Elite Architecture: Cultural Authentication during the Colonial Period in Anomabo, Ghana",²⁰ examines residential architecture in Anomabo during the colonial period, specifically from the 1860s to the 1930s. It looks at the efforts made by the Anomabo people as they combined the coastal elite style with elements of the Akan courtyard house, European Palladian architecture and the Afro-Portuguese sobrado. A combination of these styles produced a great artistic work which demonstrated how the Fante and other coastal communities, especially the privileged minority, used their built structures as a means of demonstrating and exhibiting visually the wealth, status, and identity of a group or individual.

The work goes on to discuss the sources of funding, which he identified as members of the family who made it financially and were expected to extend the family house or to build it anew making use of hybrid architecture. The work is relevant to this study because the coastal Anomabo people, who are a sub-group of the Akan people, inspired the Kumase traders with their borrowed architectural designs. They also shared similar

²⁰ C.Micots, "African Coastal Elite Architecture: Cultural Authentication during the Colonial Period in Anomabo, Ghana." Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Florida, 2010.

philosophies with residents of Kumase, who were predominantly Asante, with respect to the kind of buildings. Like Kumase, the kind of houses built by families and individuals in Anomabo reflected their status. Thus, family residences communicated their level of connections, wealth, dignity, education and mobility in the society. Thus, the thesis furnishes the researcher insights into the inspiration derived by Kumase merchants who traded at Anomabo as well as the ideologies and philosophies behind some of the building styles.

Particularly important is the construction techniques and materials used and the discussion on the Akan courtyard house which was prevalent in Kumase. He revealed the two most dominant architectural forms for wealthy people in urban environments, which were the courtyard house and the two-storey house, both made with rammed earth construction. These housing types may be combined to produce a third. All three – the courtyard, the two-storey, and the combination of the two - are found in African coastal elite housing during the colonial period and exist presently in Anomabo and other port cities in southern Ghana; Kumase could be added owing to its adoption by the Kumase residents. He does well to trace the origins of the Akan courtyard house.

Micots significantly demonstrates the nature of architecture in Anomabo during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. It is a brilliant and well-researched thesis that has critically analysed the various architectural designs in relation to the material composition of Anomabo in the period under review as well as the philosophies and ideologies behind the construction of buildings. The thesis of Micot has therefore given a contextual and practical justification to my thesis, “The Development of Architecture in

Kumase, 1874-1960.” However, the contrast of the two works lies in the geographical spaces in relation to Anomabo, which is a coastal town and Kumase, an inland town.

“The Architectural History of Cape Coast”²¹ is authored by A.D.C. Hyland. It gives a general expose about the architecture of Cape Coast and describes a few of the major historical buildings. Hyland claims that the architectural history of Cape Coast mostly evolved around the Castle and hence his desire to venture into other architectural landmarks which together contributed in making Cape Coast one of the leading destinations of tourism in Ghana. He cites the cocoa boom of the 1900s, Christian missionary activities, and traders as contributory factors to the architectural makeup of Cape Coast. The building plans, (the internal and external layouts), and facilities as well as the ideologies of built structures of both the indigenous people and the European-style houses were highlighted. Obviously, the contrast of the two works, that is, “The Architectural History of Cape Coast”²² and “The Development of Architecture in Kumase, 1874-1960” lies in the area of concentration for each work. Hyland’s article, like P. Labelle’s article, “An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture,”²³ has given a contextual and practical justification to this study by spelling out the ideologies for the construction of both indigenous and European-style houses. This thesis has traversed along the path of Hyland with respect to the contributory factors, especially the cocoa boom of the 1900s that aided the architectural makeup of

²¹A.D.C. Hyland, “The Architectural History of Cape Coast”, *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. New Series, No. 1, Vol. 16, (1995), 163-184.

²² Ibid.

²³P. Labelle, “An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture” *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 33, No. 3. October, (1974), 184-205.

Cape Coast. “The Architectural History of Cape Coast”²⁴ and “An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture”²⁵ have provoked this thesis to look beyond the physical structure and explore the ideologies and philosophies that influenced built structures.

“Imagining Architecture: The Structure of Nationalism in Accra, Ghana”²⁶ is authored by J.B. Hess. It looks at the architectural history of Accra in the colonial and post-colonial Accra. Hess claims that the expansion of Accra under British administration followed the existing pattern of coastal settlement. With similar conditions in Kumase after the 1874 event, the thesis attempts to determine whether or not Kumase experienced a similar transmission in its expansion under the colonial administration. Architectural development in post-colonial Accra was influenced by the desire of the Nkrumah government to promote a sense of national identity. At independence the spatial organisation, like Accra, came under the control of the Nkrumah government. So the article has helped this thesis to investigate the situation at Kumase from 1957 to 1960.

Purpose of the Study

The study aimed at achieving certain objectives and has in fact attained these goals. It has:

1. Examined traditional architecture, that is, the type of buildings and the philosophies which informed the art and science of the various built structures in Kumase;

²⁴Hyland, “The Architectural History,” 163-184.

²⁵Labelle, “An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture,” 184-205

²⁶ J.B. Hess, “Imagining Architecture: The Structure of Nationalism in Accra, Ghana”, *Africa Today*, Vol. 47, No. 2, (2000), 35-58.

2. Provided a historical insight into the 1874 destruction and delineated the extent of change it brought to the architectural landscape of Kumase;
3. Examined the architectural transformation that accompanied British control and administration of Kumase;
4. Assessed the impact of British administration with respect to the development of architecture in Kumase during the colonial period;
5. Ascertained whether the people of Kumase abandoned their traditional courtyard house and others for European architectural design through the process of acculturation or there was a blend of traditional Kumase architecture with the European architecture; and
6. Assessed the interplay between architecture and the cultural values of Asante.

Methodology and Sources

The study adopted the historical method of research and presentation of data. This method falls within the broader framework of qualitative approach which involves the analytical and critical examination and description of historical data.

Two main sources of history were used: primary and secondary sources. The primary source involves an account of a historical past by an eyewitness whereas the secondary source involves an account of anyone who did not witness the event he describes. From the primary sources, data were assembled through oral traditions and oral histories using both formal and informal interviews and focus group discussions. Oral traditions are verbal testimonies of the past passed down from one generation to the other. Thus,

one does not have to be a participant or a contemporary of the event being recounted. Oral history on the other hand is solely restricted to contemporaries and eyewitnesses of a particular historical past. A majority of the information obtained from oral traditions and histories were acquired through direct interviews with key Asante chiefs including BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabio III, and OpokuFrefre III; the regional architect, in the person of KojoDarko-Asante and those who matter in the built environment of Kumase like Justice Brobbey, curator of the Manhyia Palace Musuem and trustees of various households in the city of Kumase. Focus group interviews and discussions also aided the acquisition of data for the thesis. At the Asafo Palace in Kumase, it was the Gyaasehene of the Akwamu Stool, Nana FiakoAbabio III, who made such a suggestion arguing that he might not be able to respond to all my questions. It was in this regard that other chiefs, numbering about five, came together in a lively reflection of the past. The researcher in some cases requested for focus group discussions in order to meet set targets all in good time.

This was mostly used when the researcher had more than three interviews in a day. For instance, the researcher applied the focus group interview at the Tano Yaw shrine involving KomfooYaa and NsumankwafoKwakuMensah. This was applied to make time for an arranged interview with the AsanteheneGyaasehene, and the curator of Manhyia Palace Musuem. Data collection through interviews involved three main processes: the first was the voice recording and writing/making notes alongside; the second was recording onto a videotape. The motivation for recording onto videotape was borne out of the researcher's own non-architecture/technical

background in giving a pictorial description of houses from an architectural point of view. Thus, the researcher later spent time on the playback and provided clear description of the particular documents devoid of any architectural technicalities. In this study, the researcher placed much emphasis on the people who occupied key offices in the Asante political system as well as key positions within an Asante household.

Due to the period of the study, 1874-1960, which is relatively remote there was the need to consult people who are far advanced in age in order to have first-hand information— of some of the issues— from people who may have witnessed the events they recounted. It was for this reason that a majority of the people interviewed were at least sixty years old. Informants were carefully selected based on their knowledge of the past in question, especially, agents in the development of architecture in Kumase. Such people include chiefs, family heads, and owners/trustees of houses/estates, architects, curators, among others whose perspectives were relevant to the writing of the thesis, especially those whose properties were put up during the colonial period.

The researcher made use of archival documents, which are a rich repository of colonial history. Archival documents were assembled from the Public Records and Archives Administration Department, (PRAAD), Kumase and Accra branches; the archives of the Public Works Department, (PWD), Kumase; and the archives of the Manhyia Palace Museum, Kumase. The PRAAD branch in Kumase served as the main centre for the collection of documents including official colonial government correspondences on housing programmes and schemes; application letters for plots of land for the

construction of houses by various European firms; government gazettes that announced the requirement and procedure for the construction of houses and other issues relating to the built environment and architecture; letters and petitions relating to housing from the local people to the District Commissioner and other British authorities in Asante. The annual reports of both the District Commissioner for Asante and the Governor which recounted the various developmental projects and state of affairs within the colony for a particular year were also accessed. The researcher carefully examined the reports and appropriated the aspects that were related to the objective of the thesis. Site and building plans of the various housing programmes as well as maps of the city were also obtained from the PRAAD branch in Kumase. The visual representation of the houses and estates from the maps and site/building plans helped the researcher to better appreciate and interpret the architectural reconstruction, especially of those houses built and occupied by the Europeans in the Danyame and Nhyiaeso residencies. In Kumase, the researcher made use of colonial files designated as ARG whereas in the national archives, Accra, the researcher made use of colonial files designated as ADM.

The researcher also made use of the archives of the PWD, Kumase, where the building plans of the Danyame/Nhyiaeso residencies were accessed. Documents accessed from these archives were not catalogued according to periods, types of building or under any designation for easy identification. Nonetheless, the researcher after thorough search of all the site/building plans in their possession, was able to identify a few of those related to the topic of the thesis. During the search and examination of files at the PRAAD branch in Kumase, the researcher became aware of the pivotal role played by the

Kumase Town Planning Department in the architectural development of the city in the twentieth century. However, the information at the Department was scanty and so the researcher went to the now Kumase Town Planning Council with the aim of beefing up the information gathered at PRAAD, Kumase. The effort ended in failure because no particular attention has been paid to keeping those documents for ease of access at the Council. The Regional Director told the researcher that the documents were packed in a haphazard manner in a room and therefore cannot be accessed. The researcher insisted but the director said the room can only be accessed after the place has been cleared and put in order. This was actually a long term project of the Council and considering the time frame of the thesis, the researcher gave up and rather looked elsewhere for equally important data.

For secondary sources, the study made use of both published materials including books and peer-reviewed articles and unpublished materials including articles and theses. The researcher examined available secondary materials relevant to the problem of the study. In ensuring the authenticity of the various secondary materials consulted, the study employed the two methods used in the critical examination of historical documents. These are the external criticism and the internal criticism. The external criticism basically aims to establish the authenticity of a document by tracing the origin of the document in order to avoid forgeries. The researcher did this by confirming from scholars and students from the history academic world—this was mostly with books the researcher has not encountered before. Also, the researcher verified by entering titles and authors of those books and articles in the search engines of renowned journals including JSTOR Archival Database,

African Journal Online, EBSCO HOST, CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY and Taylor and Francis. On the other hand, the internal criticism deals with the content of the document, that is, ascertaining the meaning and trustworthiness of statements made in juxtaposition to archival documents and oral interviews. Thus, the thesis began with the examination of facts based on internal and external methods of historical writing after which analyses were made to ascertain the reality of the past in their natural situations.

These secondary materials, especially the published books, were obtained from libraries in the public universities of Ghana including the Sir Sam Jonah Library at the University of Cape Coast, UCC, Balme Library at the University of Ghana, UG, Prempeh II Library at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science Technology, KNUST. It must be noted that a majority of the published secondary materials were obtained from the Sir Sam Jonah library at UCC. The researcher also made use of some departmental/institute libraries including the Department of History library, UCC, library of the Faculty of Built Environment, KNUST, and the Institute of African Studies library, UG. Equally significant data were acquired from articles in journals and internet sources. The researcher made contacts with friends and authors when the search for a particular important book was not found in any of the major libraries and bookshops in the country. For instance, the researcher sent an email to the American professor, L.J. Vale, author of *Architecture, Power and National Identity*,²⁷ after unsuccessful attempts in getting the book locally and the lack of funds to buy on the internet. The author responded and kindly sent a copy of the book to the researcher. The researcher also contacted the

²⁷ L.J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, Massachusetts: Routledge, 2008.

architectural historians, Hannah le Roux of University of Witwatersrand in South Africa and Iain Jackson, of Tropical Architecture Research Unit of the Liverpool University for the book titled, *Tropical Architecture in the Humid Zones*.²⁸ Unfortunately, they both did not have a copy of the book but their suggestion and direction aided the researcher in securing equally important books for the writing of the thesis. Similarly, lecturers and friends who have been informed about the topic of my thesis made helpful recommendation of books and articles on their reading list and library. Special mention is made of the book, *The Brazil House*,²⁹ which the researcher received from Dr. S.Y. Boadi-Siaw; “Imagining Architecture: The Structure of Nationalism in Accra, Ghana”³⁰ was obtained from Prof. De Valera N.Y.M. Botchway; *Asante Identities: History and Modernity in an African Village, 1850-1950*,³¹ was obtained from Mr. Adjei Adjepong; *Future of the Tree: Towards growth and development of Kumasi*³² from Dr. Adjei-Mensah; *Prempeh II and the Making of Modern Asante*³³ from Mr. Bruno Osafo; and *The African City*³⁴ from Hermann Von Hesse.

These sources of information, both primary and secondary sources, were juxtaposed and crosschecked, thereby ensuring authenticity and true representation of the architectural past of Kumase in the period under review.

²⁸M. Fry and J. Drew, *Tropical Architecture in the Humid Zones*, California: Reinhold Pub. Corp., 1964.

²⁹J.K. Mae-ling, *The Brazil House*. Accra: Surf Publications Limited, 2010.

³⁰Hess, “Imagining Architecture: The Structure of Nationalism in Accra”

³¹McCaskie, *Asante Identities*.

³²K.K. Adarkwa (ed). *Future of the Tree: Towards growth and development of Kumasi*. Kumase: University Printing Press, 2011.

³³M.A. Seiwaa Owusu, *Agyemang Prempeh II and the Making of Modern Asante*, Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2009.

³⁴Freund, *The African City*.

In most cases, the primary and secondary sources of information corroborated each other. It must, however, be noted that in some instances there were conflicting views. In such cases, the researcher applied the standards and methods of historical writing by relying on his own interpretation from primary records and on the researcher's limited knowledge of the subject area. In situations where primary materials relating to a particular subject could not be obtained due to their loss, or any unfortunate state, the researcher relied on analysis and conclusions of authors who are noted for their intellectual integrity and dedication to the standards and methods of historical writing. The study generally relied on primary sources of information using archival and oral tradition and oral histories for the writing of the thesis. In view of this, more than half of the data were gathered from archival sources and oral traditions and histories, with information from secondary sources largely serving auxiliary functions.

Significance of the Study

As noted in the statement of the problem, the researcher, motivated by the lack of literature on the architectural history of Kumase, embarked on this research. Accordingly, the thesis has contributed to the architectural history of Kumase particularly and Ghana at large. Further, it is expected that this thesis will serve as an important document to architects, researchers and the general public, especially those with the intention of doing further studies on the topic or related topics as well as those seeking information on the architectural history of Kumase from the period which the study covers. Also, this study will be an important reference document to the city administrators and policy implementers who can make references to the policies and interventions

introduced in the period under review in order to have a fair understanding of how the city has evolved architecturally. This will help influence future architectural policies and decisions by way of bringing meaning to the city's nickname as the "San Francisco" of West Africa.

Organisation of the Study

The study has four main chapters. It has an introductory section which is subdivided as follows: background to the study, statement of the problem, literature review, purpose of the study, methodology and sources of data, significance of the study, organisation of the study, research questions and limitations of the study.

Chapter One examines the traditional architecture in relation to the art and science that informed the nature of built structures in Kumase. Chapter Two delineates the influences of British and European architectural ideas on the architectural landscape of Kumase. It specifically highlights the nascent evolution of foreign building technology and how it absorbed the local architectural designs following the reconstruction of the burnt city of Kumase. Chapter Three discusses the response of the local people to British and European architectural ideas. The response manifested in a creative and purposeful selection, incorporation and appropriation of foreign building style that suited local needs and aims. Chapter Four considers the role of architecture in the cultural values of Asante. The building designs of the local architecture facilitated and provided a podium for the observation of the cultural values of the people. Again, an assessment of the impact of the British and European building technology on the culture of the people is highlighted.

The study ends with a concluding section which highlights the findings of the study as well as remarkable observations already emphasised.

Research Questions

In order to focus on the objective of the thesis and to present a coherent piece of writing, four focused questions were developed to guide the course of the critical and analytical interpretation and presentation of facts. It must be noted that the topic of the thesis, “The Development of Architecture in Kumase, 1874-1960” has provided direction for the writing, however, the following four research questions have helped to bring out the essential information required.

1. How did the Asante worldview and experiences of the Kumase people influence the nature of built structures before adoption of European architectural designs?
2. How did built structures reflect the power, wealth and status of families and individuals within the Kumase community?
3. What were the philosophies and ideologies that guided the British in their administration of Kumase and how far did they succeed in the transportation and implementation of their architectural worldview?
4. To what extent did the economic conditions created by the British contribute to the adoption of European architecture by the indigenous people in the period after the 1874 destruction of Kumase?

CHAPTER ONE

TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE OF KUMASE

Introduction

This chapter appraises from a historical perspective the building designs and types that characterised the built environment in Kumase before the start of the indigenous state's reconstruction agenda which followed the burning of the city in 1874. It also examines the building styles and forms that eventually became the conventional ways of building in the city. It argues that the traditional architecture of Kumase became a blend of indigenous and suitable and borrowable foreign building processes and practices. Thus, Kumase through exchanges with the external world, appropriated aspects of foreign architecture which found support and execution in the prevailing local geographic conditions. The unique elements that distinguish the indigenous architecture of Kumase have also been highlighted.

Pre-colonial Architecture of Kumase

H.M.Stanley, a *Special Correspondent* of the New York Herald, sums up his view of Kumase in the nineteenth century thus:

Coomassie is built upon the side of a large rocky hill of iron-stone. It is insulated by a marsh close to the town northwards, and by a narrow stream, half a mile distant from it north-west, and sixty yards broad; close to it north-east, east, south-east, and south, and about a hundred, twenty, seventy, and fifty yards broad at these points... Coomassie is an oblong, four miles in circumference¹.

Prior to the British administration, the architecture of Kumase was made up of an identical building plan, from that of a chief, down to the lowest

¹ H.M. Stanley, *Coomassie: The Story of the Campaign in Africa, 1873-4*, London: Sampson Low, Marston and Company, 1896,105.

rank, commoner, in the social stratification of the society.² The front views of the houses were virtually uniform, especially among those located along the beautiful streets, sandwiched by the unique and beautiful Banyan trees,³ which produced a magnificent scenery in the city. Generally, Kumase architecture traditionally consisted of a single storey which appeared in different expressions and designs depending on the wealth and power of the individuals who were to occupy the house.⁴ This was actually the concept of the indigenous family dwelling, commonly described as the courtyard. These houses were built of wood and a composition of what Bowdich, member of first British commercial negotiating team to Kumase, describes as the “special red soil”, (red soil, mud, or clay), known as *ntwuma*, and sticks called swish. Ntwumawas the common building material in Kumase for the most part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.⁵ The walls of houses were decorated with clay mouldings.⁶ The weather conditions and daily temperatures which were characterised by low to moderate with high levels of air humidity made more spacious and ventilated structures desirable in Kumase.⁷ The weather condition explained why the courtyard type of building was prevalent in its most open form in the city. The observation here reflects the earlier position by Dupuis, who expressed, in 1817, that: “...under the torrid zone a barn,

²Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, Kumase, “Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana”, *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. XXX No. 3,(1978). 449-476.

³ J. Beecham, *Ashantee and the Gold Coast*, London:Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1968, 145.

⁴Interview with BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabio III, OtumfourNsumankwahene, 64 years, at his palace, Ash-Town, Kumase, on 29th November 2015.

⁵T.E.Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd. 1966, 304-306.

⁶*Ibid.*, 304-306.

⁷Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, “Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana.” 449-476.

‘courtyard’, is better suited to the climate, and certainly more adapted to the habits of the people than a more confined habitation would be.’⁸

The architecture of Kumase originally developed from the prevailing geographical, geological, topographical, climatological and sociological and historical considerations of the city.⁹ These factors were very important in determining the available building materials and therefore the nature of the built environment. As a result, the traditional Kumase architecture from 1874 to 1960 revealed particular distinctive characteristics, including a formal rectilinear settlement layout especially for those houses built along the streets. A cursory observation of Kumase revealed an architectural layout which generally consisted of four blocks, “each of which is about ten feet long by six wide”,¹⁰ closely joined together to form a rectangular shape with an opening into one or more courtyards.

This kind of building popularly known as compound house had floors that were generally raised well above the ground level on a high plinth, approximately three feet above the ground.¹¹ Recognisable indigenous ideograms and symbols in painting and ornamentation which were often displayed on the walls gave an impression about the elaborate ideas of ornamentation possessed by the Kumase people. This was mostly observed in the decoration of the most prestigious houses of shrines and palaces. This visual projection, which characterised the built environment in Kumase,

⁸ J. Dupuis, *Journal of a Residence in Ashantee*, (2nd ed.), London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1966, 83.

⁹ J. Prussin, “An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture” *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 33 No. 3. (1974.) 182-205.

¹⁰ Stanley, *Coomassie*, 132.

¹¹ R.A. Freeman, *Travels and Life in Ashanti and Jaman*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1967, 107.

reinforced the unifying traditional Asante political system with its imposed order and hierarchy then.¹² Thus, decoration of homes, palaces and even shrines was relative depending on the status and power of the home owner, stool and the deities of the shrines.¹³

The indigenous building physical methodology of Kumase involved a timber frame construction over which mud was plastered, and a steeply pitched roof, covered with thatch, was imposed. The roof took more than one shape: there were the flat roof and the rectilinear roofing. The houses were built through a communal process where the construction of a new structure involved not only the owner, but the whole community where everyone gave their assistance.¹⁴ The owner of the proposed building was the master builder for his own compound, however, the building skills were in the hands of all the participants, such that the owner of each new compound became his own architect. The clay was carried and conveyed to the building site by the males, indeed the strong ones, from nearby borrow-pits. The females were the main carriers of water from rivers/streams/wells for mixing the earth into proper workable constituents.

The separation of work, as noted above, in the building process gives an idea about the division of labour that existed between men and women in the building processes which reflected the basic division of labour that characterised the city of Kumase. Thus, dominion over the earth related to the traditional leadership roles assumed by male members of the community,

¹²Interview with KomfooYaa, 80years, at the Tano Yaw Shrine, Besease on 11th December 2015.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Interview with KomfooNyarko, 100years, at the TanoSubunu Shrine, Abirem on 13th December 2015.

whereas water carrying was a reserve for the women because of its association with their domestic responsibilities. It seems that there were no specially trained architects and guilds that controlled and produced Kumase's traditional architecture.¹⁵ The architecture could be described as Asante folk architecture, and information on building designs and methods was passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth and through the follow-observe-practice form of education among the Asante. Thus, the younger generation learnt the art of building anytime a building project presented itself within the community. While they assisted in the gathering of the materials, they critically observed, and practiced accordingly when they came of age.

What is now described as the traditional architecture of Kumase has been carefully examined and appropriated bearing in mind the *weltanschauung* of the people who were to occupy them. Thus, we find different interior designs, even though the composition of the house may be of the same architectural design of that rectangular shape. The construction of structures in Kumase involved three or four processes: foundation, floor, wall and roof.¹⁶ It must be noted that the foundation became necessary or otherwise depending on the site for the construction of a house. Three of the processes: floor, wall and roof dominated because most of the houses built in this era had building sites that supported and served as the foundation for the houses. Description of these processes and the materials involved is discussed below:

¹⁵Interview with OpokuFrefre III, (aka Nana Buabasa), OtumfourGyaasehene, 68years, at his palace, Ash-Town on 10th December 2015.

¹⁶Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, "Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana." 449-476.

Foundation

The climate and vegetation of Kumase determined the building materials available and influenced the nature of architecture there. Wattle and daub were the primary materials that were initially used in the construction of walls, and palm thatch for the roofs.¹⁷ New materials were subsequently discovered and used in the construction of different forms of structures. Laying of foundation was not a common feature in the indigenous architecture and thus, no specified materials were reserved for this process.¹⁸ In most cases, areas of solid ground were selected as the foundation for most houses and hence no need for artificial foundation.¹⁹ However, whenever a foundation was artificially laid, holes were created and filled with large pieces of stone to form the base of the building.²⁰ Shallow holes were dug into the firm ground to hold wooden posts in position. The posts were stabilised by adding small pieces of stone at the footing. The stones were trampled using any heavy metal or wooden object to tightly pack the stones to hold the wooden posts in a robust position. These small pieces of stone acted, but for a brief period, as termite proof elements for the posts put into the ground.²¹

Floor

The few sections of the solid earth floor were made and finished smooth with a variety of available materials including clay and stone.²² On this, Bowdich correctly observed that the sections to be finished smooth were

¹⁷ K.B. Dickson, *A Historical Geography of Ghana*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1969, 51.

¹⁸ Faculty of Architecture, "Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana", 449-476.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 449-476.

²⁰ Interview with Mr. Akwasi Asante, ex-drummer at Anyano Shrine House, 40+ years, at his residence at Kentinkrono on 13th December, 2015.

²¹ Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, "Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana" 449-476.

²² KomfooNyarko, interviewed on 13th December, 2015.

mostly filled with a “thick layer of a special red soil”²³ to a desired platform after which they were finished using compacted earth made of laterite. The clay was mixed with water and then applied to the floor by the hands. Water was first sprinkled on the rough earth to soften up the surface of the floor in order to ensure engrossment of the mixed clay when it was applied. At times, the absence of a proper ratio in the mixing of the sand and clay to get durable pastes led to the development of cracks and tears when drying.²⁴Therefore, builders took care to have a proper mixing ratio and texture, and also ensured regular maintenance of the building.²⁵ The palms of women and at times round edged stones, carried by the hand, were skilfully used in this flooring process.²⁶

Wall

The first option for the construction of walls was by the use of timber frame which was covered with a variety of wood materials. There was also the wattle and daub technique, whereby sticks which were skilfully woven together were covered and strengthened with clay or mud mortar, which often contained binding agents like lime, dung, or straw.²⁷A fortified mortar could also be achieved through the solid rammed earth approach where the ntwuma was thoroughly mixed to achieve a perfect compatibility for a perfect work. The structure for the construction of the walls, (using the wattle and daub approach), either had a straight termite-resistant wood, bamboo or palm branches as a protective mechanism from harm which ensured long

²³Bowdich,*Mission from Cape Castle*, 304-306.

²⁴OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, “Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana” 449-476.

²⁷ L.Prussin, “Traditional Asante Architecture”,*The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* Vol. 13, No. 2,(1980), 57-87.

preservation.²⁸ Holes were dug at regular intervals according to the desired shape of the builder to receive the posts. The posts were then inserted into the holes, and pieces of stone were rammed into the ground at the base to stabilise the posts.²⁹ The beams were then placed on the forked ends of the posts, and tied into position with twine made from creepers, bark, or raffia palm.³⁰ Importantly, the wood was arranged in two positions: vertical and horizontal in order to lock each of the two positions to give much strength to the wall.³¹ Those arranged vertically had forked ends at the top for receiving beams arranged horizontally and were fairly massive at the base. The beams were fairly regular and uniform in their girth and were comparatively less massive.³² To ensure proper and effective control and use of the wood, they mostly came in pieces of moderate dimensions (from 2 to 6 inches, (5- 15cm) in diameter).³³ In this way, the main structure of the building was erected and made ready to receive either mats made from fronds of the palm tree or daubs of mud or laterite, as material to fill the wooden frame. For the daub method, moistened laterite earth was pressed systematically into position over the intermediary frame to an overall thickness of about 6 to 9 inches, (15 to 23 cm.).³⁴ The materials for the filling were made ready for use by digging out the clay, pouring water over it, and then trampling over it to ensure consistency and compatibility.³⁵ Balls of wet laterite were made from the mix, which were then pressed into position with the hand. In most cases, the completed walls

²⁸ Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, "Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana" 449-476.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ KomfooNyarko, interviewed on 13th December, 2015.

were generally left unembellished except in the more prestigious buildings which received a plastering of expensive and stylish architectural designs.³⁶ Thus, indications of hand plastering were sometimes seen on walls besides the unevenness of the surface.

However, the more important shrine houses and the houses of traditional leaders and clan heads were customarily rendered and decorated with moulded and elaborate ornamentation.³⁷ This view is supported by the observation made by Dupuis, a member of the British delegation and “exploratory mission to Coomassy”³⁸ in the nineteenth century, that: “The annexed engravings is copied from a correct external view of the palace, representing that sort of hieroglyphical sculpture, in relief, which is characteristic of the style of decorating the houses of chieftains...”³⁹

The forms of the ornamentation were moulded in clay built up over a profile formed out of thin slips of sticks. Plinths and lower parts of walls would be finished with a rendering of ntwuma, also used as a floor finish and covered with an incised spiral ornament: upper parts of walls would be finished with a lime white-wash.⁴⁰

Austen Freeman, a member of the British delegation to Kumase in 1888-9, based on his observation in Kumase categorised the ornamental decorations, “sculptures”, into three varieties namely: (1) Simple incised pattern on flat surfaces; (2) Designs in low relief; and (3) Perforated designs or

³⁶Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Castle*, 5.

³⁷*Ibid.*, 5.

³⁸Dupuis, *Journal of a Residence*, ii.

³⁹*Ibid.*, 83.

⁴⁰KomfooNyarko, interviewed on 13th December, 2015.

fretwork.⁴¹ The first variety, according to Freeman, was not prevalent in the city even though it was simple in character and made of that “special red soil”. The perforated designs or fretwork was virtually restricted to a particular form of house construction. This was the better-class houses of traditional leaders such as palaces, shrines and residential houses of influential and well-to-do people in the city.⁴² Further, he identified the most common forms that the ornamental designs took. These included (1) the spiral or volute: (2) a kidney-like form derived from the volute form: (3) the circle (rather rare): (4) the zigzag: (5) a form somewhat like the stone arrow-head.⁴³ Freeman’s categorisation is fully endorsed due to the fact that the nature of houses built by families and individuals depended on their wealth, status, among other indicators within the society.⁴⁴ For instance, the perforated designs or fretwork was virtually restricted to a particular class of buildings. In shrine construction, it was mostly observed in those that were built for the most senior gods, *Tano*, in Kumase like the *Tano*Subunu shrine house.⁴⁵ Thus, each of the categorisation found expression in a particular form of building.

⁴¹Freeman, *Travels and Life in Ashanti*, 104-107.

⁴²KomfooYaa, interviewed on 11th December, 2015.

⁴³Freeman, *Travels and Life in Ashanti*, 104-107.

⁴⁴ C.Micots, “African Coastal Elite Architecture: Cultural Authentification during the Colonial Period in Anomabo, Ghana,” PhD. Dissertation, University of Florida, 2010.

⁴⁵KomfooYaa, interviewed on 11th December, 2015.



Photograph by Tony Yeboah

Plate 1: An undesignated pato at the Tano

Yaw shrine house. However, in most cases, it received traditional leaders and other important personalities who called at the deity for diverse reasons.

Besides wattle and daub and the timber frame constructions, there was also the *atakpame*, which is the rammed earth type of construction.⁴⁶ This building technology has been traced to the Neolithic age where there was the development of settled agriculture and the use of polished stone tools and weapons.⁴⁷ Still on the origin, *atakpame*—construction has also been credited and linked to the itinerant builders from Atakpame, a society in central Togo.⁴⁸ Tarikh Farrar indicates that the rammed earth method of construction dominated the architectural landscape of the southern Akan states, and for that matter Kumase in the late-nineteenth century.⁴⁹ This conclusion is reasonable

⁴⁶V.K.T. Farrar “Some Comments on Indigenous African Building Technology”, *Archaeology in Ghana*, (1993.), 46.

⁴⁶Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle*, 300-307.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 300-307.

⁴⁸Micots, “African Coastal Elite Architecture”

⁴⁹Farrar, “Some Comments” 45-47.

because of the fact that construction of this type of building was prevalent in the city.⁵⁰

The process involved in rammed earth construction was by packing layers of successive bricks of wet earth or clay into portable wooden moulds to the desired height of the wall.⁵¹ Moulds which could be easily moved around and handled and managed by one or two people were made from lightweight wood.⁵² The mould allowed builders to construct small sections of the wall at a time, moving the form along the length of the wall and lifting it as the wall grew taller. The use of this building technology involved a relatively longer period before a house was completed.⁵³ This was so because each layer of brick was made to dry, which took about a week, before the next layer was laid. The bricks were not of the same weight despite the fact that they had the same size. The layers of bricks reduced in weight as the wall grew taller. This was an attempt made to prevent too much weight on those beneath. It is important to state that the manner of making the layers differed from one person to the other and from one family to the other depending on the social standing or the status of the individuals or families to which the building belonged.⁵⁴

An added advantage of this type of construction was that its wall supported the roof. Walls with fairly wide footings (about 18 inches, (45

⁵⁰Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle*.

⁵¹ Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, "Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana" 449-476.

⁵²Ibid., 449-476.

⁵³Ibid., 449-476.

⁵⁴KomfooNyarko, interviewed on 13th December, 2015.

cm).⁵⁵ were then constructed by piling blocks of mud on top of each other in layers. A remarkable feature associated with this type of construction had to do with the creation of openings: windows and doors. In this case, short pieces of wood were placed in position which, to some extent, acted as supporting beam during construction but cut out to create a window or door when the wall dried out. In cases where the building operation was temporarily suspended, the partially completed mud wall was covered with grass or palm fronds to prevent the wall being eroded by rain.⁵⁶ Like the wattle and daub type of construction, the upper sections of the walls were painted with white clay whilst the plinths and the lower sections of the walls were painted with red soil and polished to a dim shine. Elevated floors, sometimes up to 2m above the ground, were polished in the same way as the lower walls.⁵⁷

Overall, the structures which were elaborately decorated were mostly situated along main streets of Kumase.⁵⁸ Perhaps this was done to make visitors, who may not have the time to explore the entire city, have a better impression and perspective about the architectural landscape of the city. European image of West African architecture during the pre-colonial period was virtually restricted to observation of only a “narrow strip of tropical coastline”⁵⁹ and by extension to only the houses found along the streets of Kumase in the hinterland. Thus, the position of elaborately designed houses along the main streets could be interpreted as perhaps a deliberate policy and attempt by the leadership of Kumase to get foreigners to have a good

⁵⁵ Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, “Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana” 449-476.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 449-476.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 449-476.

⁵⁸ Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle*, 304-309.

⁵⁹ Prussin, “An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture” 182-205.

impression of the city's architectural landscape. In fact, visitors, at least from what many European explorers including Bowdich, Stanley, and Austen Freeman wrote about Kumase, were impressed by the city's layout during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This impressive architectural design was to a large extent restricted to important buildings such as the Chief's palace, public buildings, temples and the houses of the dignitaries.⁶⁰

Roof

There were two main kinds of roofing in Kumase. These were the flat and the rectilinear types of roofing.⁶¹ Materials used in the construction varied from one type to the other. The rectilinear type was made of grass and palm fronds whereas the flat roofing type made use of mud.



Source: BMA, D-30.18.011

Plate 2: An image showing a market centre in Kumase in 1908. This market was close to the Kumase Fort, in present-day Adum. The structures within which buying and selling took place were roofed with grass and palm fronds.

The mud of the flat roofs usually had a thickness of about 2.5" (6 cm.). It sat on a mesh of lightweight timber, bamboo or palm branch, supported in turn on timber beams or poles fixed horizontally at 1' 6" to 3' 0" (45 to 90

⁶⁰KomfooYaa, interviewed on 11th December, 2015.

⁶¹Interview with BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabio III, OtumfourNsumankwahene, 64years, at his palace, Ash-Town on 29th November 2015.

cm. centres).⁶² Sometimes the mesh was laid in a pattern of interlocking ‘V’ shapes.⁶³ A slightly different form was for the mud to be laid in layers interposed with grass. Generally, the roofs would be laid in a slightly falling manner, with a more noticeable fall at the water points or outlets which discharged rain water from the roof, and finished with a waterproof top coat, made of bamboo and grass.

In the rectilinear roofing, smaller pieces of stick or bamboo were tied to a main supporting timber with plant based twine. When the structure was completed, bundles of fresh palm thatch or grass in about 3 to 4 layers were fastened on top of the structure to become the roof cover. In some cases, strips of bamboo or palm raffia were placed on top of this cover to hold it in position. The use of the thick palm-leaf had climatic significance as it did not expose the room to the burning rays of the sun but rather provided a delightful shade and made the room fairly cool and very comfortable.⁶⁴

At this stage the study examines some of the notable compartments of the Kumase customary structure. It must be noted that the customary compound house architectural structure had different partitioned spaces with each having its philosophical underpinnings. This study will deal with the two main segments: the *abranaa* (entrance porch), and the *aduho* (courtyard).

⁶² Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, “Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana”, 449-476.

⁶³Ibid., 449-476.

⁶⁴OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

Notable Compartments within Traditional Kumase Structure

1. The Entrance Porch

The entrance porch was one of the important features. Almost like the *pato*, as we shall see, it was enclosed on two sides leaving the entrance and courtyard ends open. The entrance porch did not project outside the wall to which it was connected or linked. Thus, the enclosure of an entrance porch ended on the edge of the wall to create the opening, the gate, for ushering people in and out of a house. The gate was usually bigger than ordinary doors and was kept open throughout the day so long as there was at least one person in the house. This had climatic implications for the building because the opened gate served as a funnel through which cool, fresh air blew into the courtyard continuously.⁶⁵ Leaving the gate open throughout the day also reinforced the great deal of value placed on communal values in the city and thus signified the association of a particular household to the entire community in which the said household was an integral member.⁶⁶ In some instances, small wicket doors— a small door which formed part of a larger one— were the ones normally shut during the day to keep off intruding animals- goats, sheep, fowls, dogs etc.

2. The Courtyard (Aduho)

This was the living area of the house that received people.⁶⁷ The area served several purposes. It functioned as event grounds for people to gather for important occasions like the naming of a child or for performing final

⁶⁵Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, "Traditional Forms of Architecture in Ghana", 449-476

⁶⁶OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

funeral rites of family members. It also served as a playing ground for children. The courtyard played an important role in the transmission of the people's culture. Thus, the adult members of households told stories to the young ones after evening meals. From these stories, children were expected to pick up good manners, care for one another and give due respect to adults and even among themselves.⁶⁸ Also, even though the average household was designed with a kitchen, most foods were not prepared in the kitchen but in the courtyard. This was because the heat and the smoke from the firewood during cooking made cooking in an enclosed place uncomfortable. The pounding of fufu⁶⁹ was also usually done in the courtyard rather than the kitchen. The kitchen was therefore usually used for the storing of utensils, water, foodstuff, and for minimum cooking only. This situation, which is, cooking at the courtyard, made it quite easy for girls to learn how to cook. The courtyard also served as the dining place for the people.⁷⁰ The nature of the architectural design of the house was such that individuals and family members could not enjoy a real private life within the house. This public nature of the architecture appeared to have hindered private endeavours but the benefits were enormous. Thus, the opened nature of the architectural design afforded children from

⁶⁸ Interview with Nana Dwamena, Okyeame of Asantehene Gyaasehene, 60 years at Nana Opoku Frefre's Palace, Ash-Town on 16th December 2015.

⁶⁹ Fufu is a staple food of the Akan in Ghana. It is a thick paste made by pounding cassava and plantain or any starchy root crops with pestle in a mortar. It is served with soup and has a delightful taste.

⁷⁰ Meals were normally cooked and served in earthenware bowls and eaten in group. Normally breakfast and lunch on the days they went to farm were casual; the main meal was cooked in the evening, on open hearths with firewood almost invariably as the fuel. In spite of this chimneys were never a feature of traditional building. In view of this smoke and heat made cooking uncomfortable especially when done in a kitchen. Thus, mostly outside cooking as much as the weather permitted was done in the courtyard. Besides, the nature of preparation of certain meals like "fufu" which required pounding with pestles which were usually long in required ceiling heights that were not usually obtainable in the average kitchen, and therefore had to be done outside. Further, like "fufu" pounding, the preparation of certain meals like "banku", and "kokonte" required so much energy that women ended up being soaked in sweat. These among others thus made it very convenient for the preparation of such foods to be performed outside the kitchen.

different parents the opportunity to play together and enabled them to hear and watch and learn from adults which in turn made them become fluent in speech and conversant with customs at an early age. Thus, the courtyard served as an arena of socialisation especially for children. In sum, the courtyard played an important role in the transmission of the community's shared values to the younger generation. The courtyard at the Asantehene's palace assumed the name *Pramaso*⁷¹ or *Pramakeseso*. Wilks, following an earlier account by Bonnat, presents an erroneous account of the function of the Pramaso when he stated that:

‘The meetings of the supreme court of justice and legislation, wrote Bonnat with reference to the early 1870s, takes place every day in the great court of the royal palace called Apramosso. This court measured 30 to 35 metres long by 14 to 15 metres wide; all around ran a gallery which was supported by square columns resting on bases ornamented with bas-relief in red earth, polished and shining, truly magnificent’⁷²

Contrary to the above view, it was the *pato* that in fact served as the court of the Asantehene and any other traditional leader. The Pramaso served as the sitting place for those who were connected with the cases brought before a traditional leader as well as observers during the adjudication of cases.⁷³ Thus, the above views agreed on by Bonnat and Wilks cannot be accepted as the case. This study argues that the “meetings of the supreme court of justice and legislation” took place at the *pato* with the “great court” serving as the sitting place for observers. Indeed this was the arrangement during the highest tribunal sitting of Asante in connection with the golden stool case in

⁷¹Pramaso served as the meeting place for chiefs especially during important household gatherings during the observation of certain rituals.

⁷²I. Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975, 377.

⁷³Opoku Frefre III, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

September, 1920.⁷⁴ In attendance were the various *amanhene* of the Eastern provinces of Asante as well as the Kumase chiefs.⁷⁵

Depending on the social and economic status of the owner in the community, the house may consist of more than one courtyard. Where there were two courtyards, one was usually reserved for basic domestic functions and was normally occupied by the women and children. The other was reserved for the more important social functions like receiving guests, holding important discussions or arbitrations, and for funerals. It was usually free from smoke and noise and kept dry and clean.⁷⁶

Apart from the residential houses, palaces and shrines were also key architectural manifestations and structures in Kumase. Now let us look at the construction expressions for the palaces and shrines.

Construction Expression for Palaces and Shrines

1. Palace

In Asante, the palace is supposed to be an immense building primarily built to provide accommodation to an *ohene*, (traditional political chief or leader), and an *ohemaa*, (the female chief). It was also to house the preserved stools of past leaders, and contain other valuable treasures of the royal family and the community at large.⁷⁷ Palaces were normally built in the middle of the town. Thus, Stanley was on point when he concluded that:

⁷⁴BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabioIII, interviewed on 29th November, 2015.

⁷⁵ Public Records and Archives Administration Department, (hereafter PRAAD), Accra, ADM 11/1903: Desecration of the Golden Stool.

⁷⁶BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabioIII, interviewed on 29th November, 2015.

⁷⁷Ibid.

The palace was situated in a long and wide street running through the middle of the town, from which it was shut out by a high wall, terminating at each end at the marsh, when it was disconnected, that being a sufficient boundary.⁷⁸

The view that the world is centralised has preoccupied the minds of many for centuries. Legends and myths of origin in African societies and even beyond on other continents confirm to the widespread belief in the “centre” as a point of beginning or origin of life.⁷⁹ The centre therefore assumes a sacred quality and becomes an ideal in the minds of people, especially those who ascribe to such a belief. This “centre ideal” was observed by the Asante in general and the inhabitants of Kumase, their capital, in particular. Thus, anytime a palace was to be built it was built in the centre of the said nascent community. The construction of palaces served as the beginning of the built environment from where other houses were to follow. Thus, other houses spring up around the palace, often the early abode of the founding ancestor of the state, in accordance with the “centre ideal” and to the communal lifestyle of the Asante.⁸⁰ The houses ended up assuming an irregular pattern as observed in the many European travellers’ accounts.⁸¹

However, the settlement pattern described by the Europeans conformed to the “centre ideal” and the worldview of the indigenous people, thereby illuminating the erroneous notion associated with the description of the settlement pattern in Kumase based on the incorrect assumption on the part of the Europeans. This is because, to the indigenous people, their settlement

⁷⁸ Stanley, *Coomassie*, 105.

⁷⁹ Prussin, “An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture” 182-205.

⁸⁰ See K. Gyekye, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*, Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company, 2003, 35-46.

⁸¹ Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, 376.

pattern followed a certain plan and the centre ideal philosophy and hence could not be described as assuming an irregular pattern.

Libation and certain rituals of spiritual significance were performed by the chief before a palace was constructed.⁸² For instance, when Kofi Karikari, the chief of the Asante, charged Ramseyer, Kuhne and others to build him a European house during their four years' stay in Kumase between 1869 and 1872, he had to "perform a ceremony"⁸³ before the foundation was laid. This was done to charge the Asante deities for a successful completion of the house and to also ward off any evil attack that could result in the collapse of the building after completion.⁸⁴ As the official residence of the traditional leaders, a palace was used for receiving both Asante people and foreigners. The Kumase palace during the reign of Kofi Karikari, that is, before the 1874 burning and ransacking of Kumase, consisted of, "...square Court yards and surrounded with room extensions and verandas with two doors, one at each end, so that each yard is a passage covered with an arched roof."⁸⁵

This palace was a two storey building with a suite of rooms on both floors.⁸⁶ The front view was characterised by a touch of beautiful indigenous paintings.⁸⁷ The rooms in the second floor were artistically decorated and furnished with the finest available local materials for the adornment of classy houses.⁸⁸

⁸²F. Ramseyer and J. Kuhne, *Four Years in Ashantee*, London: James Nisbet & Co., 1874, 226.

⁸³*Ibid.*, 226.

⁸⁴Baffour Asabre Kogyawoasu Ababio III, interviewed on 29th November, 2015.

⁸⁵A.A. Anti, *The Ancient Asante Kings*, Accra: The Volta Bridge Publishing Co., 1974, 15.

⁸⁶Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle*.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*

⁸⁸*Ibid.*

Rooms in palaces were comparatively bigger than rooms in the traditional homes. The rooms in the ordinary homes in Kumase were mostly small in sizes because of the fact that the people spent most of their time outside.⁸⁹ Bigger rooms in the palaces were spacious in order for the chief, who seldomly went out of the palace, to feel comfortable.

Generally, palaces in Kumase were made up of two sections depending on the status and wealth of a particular stool⁹⁰ within the Asante nation.⁹¹ The observation is contrary to Beecham's general observation which he made about the palace style in a chief's palace. According to him, "On entering this door, the visitor finds himself in a square yard, or court, surrounded by a number of sheds, or small buildings, in which dwell the chief, his wives, and the domestic slaves."⁹²

It must be noted that it was mostly the paramount chiefs who were able to build palaces with two sections, apart from the Asantehene (trans. The paramount chief of the Asante) One section was for the chief and the other was for the female chief, who was commonly known as the queenmother. The division created separate spaces for the two sexes which ensured privacy for the issues/matters relating to either men only or females only. Most importantly, the division was influenced by the monthly process of menstruation which was regarded in Asante lore as taboo against the gods and

⁸⁹OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

⁹⁰ Stool is the Akan symbol of a chief's authority. It represents the office and leadership of a chief and also connect people with land and the world—both physical and the ancestral world. Thus, by reference to a stool an individual is able to claim inheritance to a particular ancestor. It is believed that the stool houses the spirit of the people and serves as unifier.

⁹¹OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

⁹² Beecham, *Ashantee and the Gold Coast*, 145

ancestors.⁹³ Menstruating women were regarded as inactive, a state which is commonly but inadequately interpreted as unclean, and hence unfit to be in the same section where the chiefs as well as the gods and ancestors resided.⁹⁴ Thus, women who found themselves in a state between puberty and menopause were mostly not permitted to stay at the chief's section, where the *nkonwadan* (stool room), which was the abode of the gods and ancestors, was situated.⁹⁵

The building plans of both sections were however similar but differed in functions. Both sections had *aduo*, (courtyard), and *pato*, (playing the role of modern day living rooms). The *pato* was an interesting feature in the traditional architecture of palaces in Kumase. It was a covered space walled on three sides and opening onto the courtyard. It was the day living space used for dining, receiving guests, holding arbitrations and “for the hearing of palavers”⁹⁶ and for laying bodies in state at funerals.⁹⁷ When a case was being tried, the traditional leaders sat at the *pato*. The Asantehene was distinguished by the fact that his seat was put on a flat raised structure⁹⁸ in the biggest of all the *pato* such that he was easily seen from all directions. Some other chiefs joined him in the bigger *pato* while the other chiefs, occupied the remaining ones. The people, on the other hand, occupied the courtyard as observers and witnesses in the arbitration of cases or in the event of an important calendar ceremony. The courtyard receiving people during the arbitration of cases provided further evidence to support the view that Asante had been a nation

⁹³Interview with Ms. Comfort Asante, 60+ years, Lecturer at the Ghanaian Language Department, University of Cape Coast on 3rd November, 2015.

⁹⁴BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuIII, interviewed on 29th November, 2015.

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Bowdich,*Mission from Cape Castle*, 307.

⁹⁷BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabioIII, interviewed on 29th November, 2015.

⁹⁸Ibid.

which upheld fairness from since it was founded in the eighteenth century. Thus, before a case was decided, the individuals involved were given the opportunity to be heard by the king, *ahenkwaafoo*, (attendants of a chief), and the entire nation. At the end, the chief solicited the views of his council which included the *krontihene*, (this office is next in command to the chief and thus, when a chief dies, the *krontihene* assumed the roles of the chief), *adontenhene*, (in the days of Asante expansionist programme, the office of the *adontenhene* was held in high esteem because of the fact that he commanded the main fighting body), *akwamuhene*, (the office of the *akwamuhene* takes over responsibilities of the *krontihene* whenever the latter is absent or incapacitated to effectively perform roles), *benkumhene*, (this office was mandated to protect the chief's left flank during war time and also assisted the *nifahene* in performing his roles), *nifahene*, (the core duty of this office was to protect the chief's right flank during wars), *oyokohene*, *ankobeahene*, (this officer was the commander of the chief's personal bodyguard and was basically in charge of the welfare of the female chief, females and children, especially when the state was at war), *gyaasehene*, (traditionally, the *gyaasehene* was the landlord of the Asantehene and he supervises the Gyase group, i.e., the numerous attendants of a chief that work under him), *mamwrehene* (this officer was in charge of the chief's health, welfare services and palace protocols), and *nkosoohene* (this office was to ensure the socio-economic wellbeing of the community).⁹⁹ Each of them gave his verdict of the case and communicated to the chief through the *okyeame*, (chief's spokesperson). The chief then announced through the *okyeame* the decision of the council. Thus, we observe the role played by

⁹⁹ Nana Dwamena, interviewed on 16th December 2015

courtyards, (an important element in the architectural composition of Kumase), in the arbitration process of Kumase. The procedure that went on in the *pato* and the *aduh* at least communicated to the people that the chief was not a dictator who also ensured proper conduct by adhering to traditional rules. Thus, the entire proceedings performed within the architectural space ensured the satisfaction of both parties even if one was on the losing side.



Source: The BMA, D-30.18.047

Plate 3: The palaver hall of the king's palace at the time of the take-over of Kumase by the British in 1874. The open space is what has been described as *aduh* whereas the opening behind the man was a *pato*.

It is important to note that the *pato* in the chief's section was not used for laying in state dead people, even if a member of the royal family, except for the king.¹⁰⁰ This was done to prevent unclean activities at that section of the palace which might cause an offence against the deities and the ancestors and eventually bring serious repercussions on the society.¹⁰¹ Rather, it was the *pato* in the female ruler's section that was used in laying the dead in state by way of giving people the opportunity to pay their last respect to a dead person

¹⁰⁰Interview with Nana Durowaa, Priestess at the Bomso Shrine, 50+ years, on 20th November, 2015.

¹⁰¹BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabioIII, interviewed on 29th November, 2015.

and to also officially bid the dead farewell from the land of the living into the ancestral world. Naming ceremonies, which announced the birth of a child, were also performed at the female's section of the pato. These two important events were held at the pato because of the philosophical reason that they both marked human transition from one existence to the other.¹⁰² In the same way, the pato also served as the entrance and exit points in a palace. Thus, when naming ceremonies were held there, it signified the traditional way of welcoming a new member into a family. Likewise, when a person died and was laid in state, it signified the traditional way of ushering in and bidding farewell to the dead in their journey to the land of the ancestors. To the people, it was only through the observation of these rites that the dead could be welcomed and received in the ancestral world and hence to be regarded as an ancestor in the land of the living and also the only traditional way of welcoming a child into the household.

The pato found in the section of the chief was also prohibited from being used for drying laundry and other household activities. It must be noted that, customarily, a house without a pato, even though it may be immense and impressive, could not be regarded as having great worth in the traditional architecture of the city in particular and Asante in general.¹⁰³ As noted earlier, the size and how magnificent a palace may look depended on the status and wealth of a particular stool. The Kumase stool was the biggest in Kumase and indeed the entire Asante nation. In view of this, its palace was huge in terms of the number of rooms, obviously because of the number of people that served the Asantehene, who were each accommodated in the palace which was

¹⁰²OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

adorned with beaten gold. For instance, Ramseyer and Kuhne, during their captivity in Kumase, were impressed with the palace of the Asantehene because of the “ostentation and gaudy show” of gold and jewels.¹⁰⁴ Bowdich made a similar observation with respect to the adornment of the palace in the following description:

...the piazza is 20 yards long, and inhabited by captains and other attendants on the King; above is a small gallery. Piles of skulls, and drums ornamented with them, are frequent in this piazza... The upper end of the piazza ... is more ornamented, and appropriated to the superior captains, who have each a suite of rooms, marked by the small doors under the piazza.¹⁰⁵

The Kumase palace was glorious and magnificent then. The way that led to it was along an impressive passageway which was flanked with the offices and living rooms of the palace attendants. The palace had special compartments with each serving a specific role; there were places for “assembly and holding of courts, bedrooms, sitting rooms, kitchens, bathrooms and what not.”¹⁰⁶ As at 1960, the chief’s section of Manhyia Palace, which is the Asantehene’s palace, consisted of numerous rooms all of which opened into the courtyard and also had four pato.¹⁰⁷

An area called *sodo*, kitchen, was where the king’s food and *nkonnnyaaduane*, (stool’s food) were prepared. Another area, *nsafieso* was where all kinds of drinks, both alcoholic beverages and non-alcoholic beverages were kept. There was also the *sankorase* where the *gyaasefo*, sub-chiefs in charge of daily management of a palace, received their leader,

¹⁰⁴Ramseyer and Kuhne, *Four Years in Ashantee*, 85.

¹⁰⁵Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle*

¹⁰⁶Anti, *Ancient Asante Kings*

¹⁰⁷OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

gyaasehene and ushered him into his traditional sitting place during any important event at the palace.¹⁰⁸ The large yard found within the palace was called *Pramaso*, the “Great Court”. This was another important compartment within the palace. This was the area where the rooms within the palace abutted.

As underscored, it was in the chief’s section of the palace that the stool room, an important religious room, where stools of previous Asante chiefs were kept, was situated.¹⁰⁹ When a chief was enstooled, a special *asesedwa*, (-white carved wooden stool), was given him and kept somewhere in the palace to signify his ascension to the highest office. When a chief died, the *asesedwa* was blackened with blood, fresh eggs, and carbon mono-oxide. The *asesedwa* was then given a name and marked in a special way to identify with the name of the chief who owned it and kept at the stool room a year after the observation of the one year funeral rites, called *ayikese*.¹¹⁰ Later, as the Asante became literate in the Akan and English languages, they started writing the names of the bearers of the stools on the stools. The need for this ritual was the belief that the spirits of departed chiefs hovered around the palace until the one year funeral observation was performed. Thus, after the one year funeral observation, the spirit of a dead chief was ritualistically invoked into the blackened *asesedwa*, and the stool was kept in the stool room.¹¹¹ This is why incumbent chiefs and other traditional leaders did not, and do not, pour libation in veneration of the deities and ancestors at Breman, where the bodies

¹⁰⁸Interview with Justice Brobbey, Curator, Manhyia Palace Museum, 40+ years, at his office at Manhyia Palace on 8th December, 2015.

¹⁰⁹Interview with Nana KwakuNyina, (AbiremGyaasehene), 51 years, at his residence at Abirem on 6th December 2015.

¹¹⁰Brobbey, interviewed on 8th December, 2015.

¹¹¹BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabioIII, interviewed on 29th November, 2015.

of the kings were buried, or any other royal mausoleum within Kumase but at the stool room, where the spirits and essences of the physically dead chiefs lived. Therefore, the stool room served a function of keeping the souls of dead chiefs. Also, the chief, as the political and religious leader of the nation, led the *gyaase* to the stool room to pour libation every forty-two days in thanking the deities for a successful month and also used the opportunity to ask for their protection and blessing in the coming month. The chief also went to the stool room to seek the direction of the deities and ancestors when a durbar was to be organised. There were important days on the Asante calendar which required a chief to pour libation for the deities and ancestors during certain religious ceremonies. These include; the two *adae*¹¹²—*wukudae*, and *kwasidae*—*fofie*, *dapaa*, and *akwasidae*. The stool room was also an important indicator in recounting the history of families, especially royal families. This was because a stool room was supposed to be a place of social memory and to keep record of names and the periods of reign for all past chiefs and so if one sought to know the number and names of chiefs who had ruled a particular community, reference was easily made to the stool room for such an important aspect of history. Quiet related was when two families claimed ownership to a stooland at same time claimed affinity to an ancestor, who ruled as chief. Such a situation could only be justified by a family's ability to identify the said king's stool in the stool room of their palace. This was mostly used by the Asantehene in settling cases of contested areas where two families claimed rightful possession and ownership of a particular stool. Royal families heading the various areas governed by paramount stools, even proved their ownership

¹¹²Adae refers to those ceremonies performed to appease the spirits of departed rulers whilst imploring them for their favours and mercy.

and occupancy of the stool by making references to the black stool in their respective areas of jurisdiction during the swearing of the oath of allegiance to the Asantehene.

Another important spiritual room at the king's palace, Manhyia Palace was that of the *Sikadwa Kofi*, (Golden Stool). In Asante, there is a special stool called *Sikadwa Kofi* but known in English as the Golden Stool. It gives ultimate validation to the authority of an Asantehene. It is in Kumase, the capital and it has a room. Being such a unique and powerful stool it is housed in Manhyia. Thus, Manhyia is the only palace whose design came to accommodate another room for a special stool, the Golden Stool. No other palace in Kumase had a Golden Stool room. The *Sikadwa Kofi* is the head and symbolic essence of the Asante nation. It is the blood, the soul, the spirit, the unity and the continuity of the Asante nation.¹¹³ Tradition of the Asante states that it is only when they lose the Stool that the nation will be disintegrated.¹¹⁴ In view of this, it is not surprising how much reverence the Asante people accord the *Sikadwa Kofi* and thus kept it in one of the rooms at the palace. In reverence to the stool and ancestors, libation was also poured at the *Sikadwa Kofi* room. There was also the *Baemu*, a room where dead chiefs were embalmed amidst the performance of other rituals before being carried to Breman for burial. These rooms were highly restricted to particular positions and officers within the Asante state. The positions included the

¹¹³Brobbeey, interviewed on 8th December, 2015.

¹¹⁴*Ibid.*

nkonwasuafoohene, damponanohene, and other chiefs in Kumase like Nana OpokuFrefre III, and Deebosohene.¹¹⁵

There was a room in the palace reserved for the keeping of regalia worn by an Asantehene. It must be emphasized here that the personal wardrobes of the chiefs were kept in their private residences. Also, regalia used by other chiefs in serving the Asantehene and the Asante nation each had its own place/room for keeping them. For instance, the eleven sacred guns used for protecting the chief and the Sikadwa Kofi had a special room for their safe keeping.¹¹⁶

It is worthy to note that houses played a major role in determining the wealth, connections and dignity of families and so palaces were expected to be outstanding among the other dwellings in a particular community. Most importantly, palaces were seen as the property of the entire community and as such were built with the community's resources. This was why palaces were expected to stand tall among all built structures in Kumase.¹¹⁷ Also, the architectural makeup of a palace as to the building plan, and how it was embellished, among others, revealed the state of a particular family to which the stool belonged. Thus, a royal family whose palace found itself in a deplorable state was deemed as one that lacked astute, progressive and effective leaders. The absence of such strong leaders meant the absence of unity which invariably affected the ability of such a royal family to come

¹¹⁵OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

¹¹⁶Interview with OtumfourTumtuni Kofi Amponsah, 38years at his residence at Bomso on 24th November 2015.

¹¹⁷Comfort Asante, interviewed on 3rd November, 2015.

together with its leaders to plan for the family and the community respectively.

2. *Abosom Dan* (Shrines)

The abosom¹¹⁸ (deities) manifest in diverse ways to people. They could manifest in trees, rivers and in some cases places that seemed unimaginable. However, in the culture and tradition of the Asante, they mostly appeared in rivers. After manifesting itself, a deity was attended to by a priest or priestess. The priest or priestess also communicated the mind of the deity to individuals and the community at large, and occasionally the *nsumankwaafɔ*, (spokesperson of a priest or priestess who has insight into traditional medicine), of the priest. A *Bosom Dan* (lit. house of a deity), that is a shrine, was the one built as the abode of the deity where the priest or priestess and others would serve the deity.¹¹⁹ A shrine thus provided shelter for the deities and the priests and priestesses.

Bosom Dan was usually characterised by four separate but linked rectangular blocks which enclosed a main courtyard, and with service courtyards at the rear. One of the blocks was reserved for the *akyeremadefɔ*, (drummers), who played drums for ritual music for the service of the deities.¹²⁰ Its three plain walls gave effective reverberation when the drums are played.

¹¹⁸ The singular is bosom.

¹¹⁹ Interview with Kwaku Mensah, *Nsumankwaafɔ* at Tano Yaw Shrine, 87yrs, at the shrine on 30th November, 2015.

¹²⁰ Nana Durowaa, interviewed on 24th November, 2015.



Photograph by Tony Yeboah

Plate 4: Drummers' section at the Tano Yaw Shrine House, Besease.

Another, usually the one opposite, was used by the *nennwomtofoo*, (singers) who sang along the drumming during important religious gatherings and ceremonies.¹²¹ It is important to note that these two groups were strategically positioned to ensure effective communication between them. In this case, singing and drumming were always on point and when they wanted to end, it happened simultaneously because of their positions which allowed for effective communication between them. The third open room was used as a cooking area where ritual ceremonial meals were regularly prepared for the deities and their devotees during religious ceremonies. The fourth block housing a deity was approached by people with awe.¹²² It was usually characterised by intricate open-work screen walls which allowed for ventilation and lighting. In some cases, it had a *pato* just in front of it to receive traditional leaders and other important dignitaries who patronised and

¹²¹AkwasiAsante, interviewed on 16th December, 2015.

¹²²KomfooYaa, interviewed on 11th December, 2015.

venerated the deity.¹²³ The entry to this room was strictly restricted to the priest and his attendants. However, on days of veneration of the deity, *abisa*, (consultation), individuals were allowed to enter the room in order to facilitate effective communication with the deity domiciled in the room. The *suman*, (physical object that represents a deity) was kept in the room except on every fortieth day when it was brought out for ritual bath.¹²⁴ The bathing was done by the traditional priest and the *nsumankwaafo* during the night at the courtyard of the shrine. In cases where the shrine had just one or two rooms, one of the *pato* also served as a place of storage for certain instruments of worship, like *apakan*, (palanquin), and *seko*. The absence of homogeneity in shrine construction in Kumase brought differences in its architectural make-up. To this end, some shrines were built and placed on a raised and often ornamented platform or dais whereas others were built on a flat surface.

An important feature in the courtyard of a shrine was the *nyamedua* or altar for the sky god. This was in the form of a tree or a forked post between whose branches a *yaawa*, (calabash, pot or brass basin) was wedged, and into which sacrificial offerings were deposited. It was placed to the right of the shrine room entrance. Such altars were formerly also found in every Asante compound where the oldest member of the home would not eat before putting some of the food into it for *Onyame*. There may be one or two depending on the custom of a shrine. For instance, as at 1960, there was only one tree representing the *nyamedua* at the *Tano Yaw* shrine whereas there were two forked posts, named *gyinaee* and *boame* at the *AbiremSubunu* shrine house.¹²⁵

¹²³KwakuMensah, interviewed on 30th November, 2015

¹²⁴KomfooNyarko, interviewed on 13th December, 2015.

¹²⁵Ibid.

Rain water was collected into the *yaawa* for the bathing of people and getting them cleansed from diseases and any uncleanness.

According to BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabio III, when a shrine was constructed, a room was allocated and reserved for the *Tano*, (the chief deity of a particular shrine and the highest category of deities in Asante) and another for the smaller deities, *Bosom Mma* or *Abrafoo*.¹²⁶ This was done to prevent taboos against the *Tano* whose preferences may be different from the *Abrafoo*. However, KomfooYaa gave a contradictory account saying that one room was allocated for all the deities, no matter the category to which a deity belonged; that is, the *Tano* used one room with the *Abrafoo*. In this case, she remarked, “those food items and drinks which the *Tano* disliked were kept in special section of the shrine but very close to the shrine room and it was believed that the *Abrafoo* came out to use when needed.”¹²⁷ The latter’s version seems more appealing than the former owing to the fact that the remaining shrines, made of traditional Asante architecture, in Kumase all have one room that housed the deities. Moreover, in these shrines, certain food items and drinks were kept at the forecourt of the *Bosom Dan* while others were kept inside. This observation therefore gives much weight and evidence to the position of KomfooYaa. The shrine houses that have been identified among the “first class” category because of the gods it housed all have one room for all the deities. The argument here is that, so long as these “first class” category of shrines had just one room for all the deities then it provides justification to support KomfooYaa’s claim that the deities shared one room. A special room, *KoFreNyame* was reserved for the traditional priest or

¹²⁶BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabioIII, interviewed on 29th November, 2015.

¹²⁷KomfooYaa, interviewed on 11th December, 2015.

priestess where he/she cleanses himself/herself before entering the room that housed the deities.¹²⁸ The idea was to purify them of any uncleanness.

The Abrafoo were those deities the Tano sent on errands to bring reports especially when *abisa* was ongoing.¹²⁹ Pato also featured prominently in the architectural construction of shrines in Kumase. However, its functions differed from those observed in palaces and houses of families and individuals. Pato in the architectural design of shrines in Kumase was used to receive important dignitaries like the king, sub-chiefs, odikuro of various villages, among others. Like elsewhere, they were used as a court room for the arbitration of cases by the priest or priestess and their council. Unlike in palaces and family houses, pato in a shrine could not be used for the laying of dead people except the traditional priest and in some cases the nsumankwaafu of the priest.¹³⁰ Even with this, the deities' approval had to be sought because laying the dead in state in a pato of a shrine house attracted a number of people who, in an attempt to pay their last respect to the dead, ended up flouting rules and causing taboo against the gods.

As stated earlier, the room that housed the *bosom* was always distinguished from the remaining rooms in the house. The marked difference of that room from the rest was as a result of customary practices of traditional worship where certain rituals were restricted to the *Bosom Dan* and for that matter the worshippers were expected to perform those rituals in none other place but at the *Bosom Dan*. On top of the room was food items such as maize or yam, some sort of farm crop suspended above the entrance. The

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Nana Durowaa, interviewed on 24th November, 2015.

significance was that anytime a new harvest was made the deities were to first eat it through the observation of certain rituals. It was after the observation of the rituals that the people could eat the food item and this was done by raising that particular food item in front of the deities' room to announce to all worshippers that the deities have eaten and hence opened the way for everyone to eat that particular food item.¹³¹ Apart from housing the deities, the *Bosom Dan* played other important roles in Asante culture. It was the room where *nsamraanee* (appellations) were recited to invite the deities. It was also the room that the priest used during *abisa*. The *Bosom Dan* was the only room in the shrine that could not be entered on any day. There were specific days and periods like *fofie*, *andawukudae* when the priest could enter the room. However, in cases of emergency which demanded urgent and prompt reaction, the priest entered the room to ascertain the voice of the deities in the matter at hand.¹³²

Also, it was the room where the anger of the ancestors and deities was evoked to bring curses on persons who flouted the accepted way of life in the community. The process involved in the evoking of curses was characterised by the priest performing certain rituals at the *Bosom Dan* after which he came out to the courtyard, located in front of the room, to continue with the rituals. In front of the room was placed a pot of water placed on a platform, *NyameDua* and the devil's stone on which animals were slaughtered for rituals. The sacrificed item was bathed with water from the pot or may be taken to a washroom depending on the tradition of the shrine to rid it of any curse and any evil entanglement. But one could only be bathed after the deities

¹³¹KwakuMensah, interviewed on 30th November, 2015.

¹³²AkwasiAsante, interviewed on 16th December, 2015.

had accepted the sacrifice. To know whether the deities have accepted the sacrifice or otherwise, the slaughtered animal, fowl mostly, must hop from one position to the other at the courtyard and finally die on its side.¹³³

The *Bosom Dan* also served as the store room for important sacred materials and others used by the priest. These include the *nsuman* which was represented with an artificial object in the form of a brass pan containing water. There was also a sacred mirror.¹³⁴ The traditional priest stirred the water and looked into the mirror to tell people events or happenings in the realm of the spirit. There was also the *doso*, which was a ceremonial dress worn by traditional priests during important occasions.¹³⁵ They could only wear it when possessed by the deity whom they served. It must be noted that the *doso* served as a symbol of authority and hence was not kept in any other place aside the *Bosom Dan* itself. An *Ntrowa*, (bell), was also kept at the *Bosom Dan*. This was an object with a ringing sound used in announcing the presence of a god. It also served the function of training new recruits. Those who were privileged to be called into the ranks of priesthood at the traditional shrines received special training with respect to the customs and method of performing rituals. Before being ushered into the training sessions, a prospective priest had a ritual bath at the courtyard of the shrine. The idea of the ritual bath was to ensure that a prospective priest completely ended the normal lifestyle of association and on the whole operated from the spiritual perspective.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Nana Durowaa, interviewed on 24th November, 2015.

¹³⁵ KomfooYaa, interviewed on 11th December, 2015.

Also, prospective priests were sometimes received at the *Bosom Dan* at night as part of the three or more year period of training in order to facilitate the art of divination.¹³⁶ It was in this room that prospective priests received divine gifts and skills, including the power of diagnosing diseases and prescribing cures which came through impartation from the gods. The divination pot was also kept in this room and, here, the eyes and ears of prospective priests were rubbed with medicines in order that they could see visions, hear from the deities, and also distinguish between impressions from the deities and those that did not come from them.¹³⁷ Using the *ntrowa*, they were also made to learn the songs which, when sung, invoked the presence of the gods whom they served.

Because of the importance of the *abosom* in the Asante religious practice, shrine houses were elaborately decorated just like palaces and other public buildings. In some cases, like the case of *TanoSubunu*, decorations were applied during construction. However, there were some instances, as observed and recounted at the Fofie shrine house at Bomso, where improvements and decorations were later added with the aim of elevating the power and status of the god and as an acknowledgement to the priest and to the *abosom*.¹³⁸

It is important to note that the architectural composition of a shrine in Kumase during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries reflected the power and might of a particular deity. There is no doubt that an individual, specifically a

¹³⁶ H.O.A. Mewilliam and M.A. Kwamena-Poh, *The Development of Education in Ghana*, London: Longman Group 1975, 28-34.

¹³⁷ Nana Durowaa, interviewed on 24th November, 2015

¹³⁸ Ibid.

foreigner would be able to have an idea about the power, might, status and worth of a god in the city by the mere observation of the god's official residence. More acceptable is the view that, the abilities and capabilities of gods were reflected in the nature of structures built for them by their devotees. For instance, a god received a reward of a standard shrine after ensuring good fortune to his/her worshipers.¹³⁹ Juxtaposing *TanoSubunu's* shrine at Abirem to *TanoFofie's* shrine at Bomso, all located in Kumase, it can be concluded that the former was far ahead of the latter in terms of status by mere observation of the building plan as well as the ornamentations of the two shrines. This is because, unlike *TanoFofie's*, *TanoSubunu's* shrine was built by an Asantehene in honour of the god's effective role in bringing good fortune to Asanteman.¹⁴⁰ The deity was also classified among the senior deities within the Asante nation, hence, its house was decorated with ornamental relief and as at 1960, together with Tano Yaw, were the only shrines in Kumase in particular and Asante in general with a traditional two-storey attachment in one of its blocks. The upper section was basically used for storing herbs and medicine.

It is worth remarking that even though shrines in this period performed the same role of serving as the official residence of the gods and traditional priests and in some cases the *nsumankwafo* of the priests, they had different sizes, and different orientations and decorations according to the status and power of a deity.

¹³⁹KomfooNyarko, interviewed on 13th November, 2015.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

Conclusion

So far this chapter has discussed certain fundamentals of the built environment in the traditional Kumase architecture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The nature of the architectural make up was inspired by the climatic conditions as well as the indigenous ethno-cosmological worldview of the Asante people. The four processes leading to the erection of structures, that is foundation, flooring, walling and roofing have been highlighted. It has been made known that what became known as the traditional architecture of Kumase in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries involved a blend of indigenous knowledge of architecture and the adaptation and incorporation of foreign architecture. Thus, through exchanges with the external world, the Asante people appropriated aspects of foreign architecture that suited their ethno-cosmological worldview and the environment. Be that as it may, the argument is that architecture provided a platform for the observation of virtually every aspect of the way of life of the Kumase people including religion, governance and social life of the people.

CHAPTER TWO

ARCHITECTURAL ACCULTURATION OF KUMASE

Colonialism was distinguished by its power of representation, whose paradigm was the architecture of the colonial city but whose effects extended themselves at every level.¹

Introduction

This chapter examines the transformation that the architectural landscape of Kumase went through after 1874, when Asante, which according to the interpretation of the Europeans, was “decisively defeated” in the War of *Toto*.² The outcome of the war was the transfer of power from the Asante ruling monarch, the Oyoko dynasty, to the British colonial government. The British then came to control the architectural planning of Kumase, the capital city of Asante. The colonial regime used the built environment to express and maintain control over the indigenes. It transferred European architectural knowledge and designs from Europe and other colonies of the Empire to Kumase. Initially, such foreign designs were expressed in the few government buildings that hosted colonial officials. But later, these styles were used extensively and in the city and the local people began to appropriate it. Thus, British architectural acculturation became a popular reference model for most of the indigenous people.

¹S.J. Salm and T.Falola (ed.), *African Urban Spaces in Historical Perspective*, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2005, 23.

² The Asante sometimes referred to the war with the British in 1873-74 as the *Toto* War. The name was derived from the sound of the English cannon, a weapon that fired heavy iron balls at the forts. See R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, London: Clarendon Press, 1969, 134 and 175. See also, D.Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism, 1850-1928*, London: Clarendon Press. 1963. and J.K. Adjaye, “Asantehene Agyeman Prempe I and British Colonization of Asante: A Reassessment” *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 2(1989), 223-249.

The Destruction of Kumase

Monroe has argued that ancient cities created by Africans are scarce in Africa today because European imperial and colonial forces destroyed them.³ In 1874 the city of Kumase was destroyed by British expeditionary forces in the British effort to bring Asante under British rule and promote the spread of Euro-centric Christianity and school education.⁴ It was also part of the British attempt to find an alternate economic activity, also known as the legitimate trade, for the vacuum created by the abolition of the slave trade and protect their interests on the coast. That was why Governor Pine suggested in 1863 that an attack on Asante in their capital would save the British the trouble of the repeated Asante invasion and attacks on the coastal states.⁵ Thus, Kumase, a political rallying point for Asante nationalism, and a centre of Asante civilization was destroyed after they captured it on 4th February, 1874.⁶ Fire was set to the palace and the entire city two days after the capture.⁷ Of this, H.M. Stanley, a correspondent for the New York Herald and a contemporary of the event reported:

We were preparing to retire to our well-earned couches for the night, which were made under the porticoes or in the alcoves of the rich men's houses which lined the street on either side, when we were alarmed by seeing a great blaze of fire in the neighbourhood of the king's palace. Soon after this another fire started to the right of it, and still another to the left, and before we had barely time to reflect upon its origin, two more fires started on the southern side of the town. Looking towards headquarters to see whether they were concerned in the matter, we found all the members of the Staff unconcernedly looking on, except Captain Buller of the Intelligence Department,

³C. J. Monroe, "In the Belly of Dan: Space, History and Power in Pre-Colonial Dahomey" *Current Anthropology* Vol. 52 No. 6(2011.), 769-798.

⁴A.A. Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, London: Longman Group Ltd., 1975.

⁵D.E.K. Amenumey, *Ghana: A Concise History in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Accra: Woeli Publishing, 2008, 133.

⁶H.M. Stanley, *Coomassie: The Story of the Campaign in Africa, 1873-4*, London: Sampson Low, Marston and Company, 1896. 180-181

⁷H.Brackenbury, *The Ashante War: A Narrative*, Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1874.

who had volunteered to go and find out what it meant. Captain Buller was presently seen returning from the scene of one of the conflagrations, and heard to remark quietly that he thought he would turn in⁸

Major-General Garnett J. Wolseley, the leader of the British expeditionary force that the British colonial government appointed “to free the Gold Coast from the Ashanti menace”⁹ also reported that: “...I gave orders for the destruction of the palace and the burning of the city...The demolition of the palace was complete... the main object of my expedition... perfectly secured...”¹⁰ It took a long span of time to rebuild the ruined city. Consequently, Freeman, a medical officer and a member of 1888-9 British mission to the interior of the Gold Coast, summed up the effect of the attack thus:

It was not merely that so little existed, but that so much had been destroyed. As it stands, or then stood, the town was nothing more than a large clearing in the forest, over which were scattered, somewhat irregularly, groups of ‘ruined’ houses. The paths were dirty and ill kept, and between the groups of ‘ruined’ houses large patches of waste ground intervened, and on these, amidst the tall, coarse grass that covered them, were to be seen the remains of houses that had once occupied them. These houses once stood in wide and regular streets, but since the destruction of the city in 1874 the natives do not seem to have had heart to rebuild them...¹¹

It is important at this stage to examine why the British set the city, including the palace of the Asante monarch, on fire and destroyed it completely when the people of Asante through their chief had demonstrated the willingness to surrender and pay war indemnity for damage and

⁸Stanley, *Coomassie*, 181.

⁹Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana*, 271.

¹⁰Stanley, *Coomassie*, 190-191.

¹¹ R.A. Freeman, *Travels and Life in Ashanti and Jaman*, London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1967, 109.

inconvenience that Asante wrought on the Protectorate.¹² Monroe, in “In the Belly of Dan: Space, History, and Power in Pre-Colonial Dahomey”, argued two interrelated ways that royal palaces, and by extension, capital cities of states were implicated in the use of space for authority in the eighteenth century. Monroe’s study on Dahomey provided valuable insights into the relationship between the use of space or built environment and the exercise of power. His analysis revealed that the production of space emerged as “a potential tool of domination... thereby silencing alternative narratives of political order...”¹³ Firstly, Monroe argued the construction of and performing of certain rituals by a particular group within an architectural space represented certain claims to dynastic origins and smooth political succession, thereby “underwriting historically grounded claims to power and materially silencing those of political rivals.”¹⁴ Secondly, palace sites and “cities” were important and crucial for regaining control through resettlement campaigns initiated by monarchs.¹⁵ Within the context of Munroe’s study and logic, it can be argued that, the destruction of the palace and city was to prevent the people of Asante from entertaining any thought of regaining control, and ensure Britain’s absolute control in Kumase. It aimed to obliterate everything traditional about Asante, the conquered, and impose the colonial institutions and lifestyles including architecture of the conqueror. The British destroyed the city to create space for the realisation of an architectural character they wished for Kumase and to get a favourable condition to express political

¹² Amenumey, *Concise History*, 132-133. The Protectorate were the southern states, that is, Asante and her vassals who came under the authority of the British following the defeat of Asante in 1873-4.

¹³ Monroe, “In the Belly of Dan” 769-798.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

power and control. The architectural designs that they introduced manipulated the built environment to promote a version of identity that supported and aided the legitimisation of their rule. Thus, the burning of the city, facilitated the architectural acculturation because of the need for total reconstruction.

Between 1895 and 1896, the British attacked Kumase again to establish absolute authority over the Asante because the Asante did not honour the Treaty of Fomena,¹⁶ which was signed after the 1874 British attack. The British had requested for the stationing of an officer in Kumase as a “friend and adviser.”¹⁷ They demanded action to this request. However, Prempeh I, the Asante paramount chief, became the master of inaction, leading to the attack which effectively altered the city’s spatial organisation as well as its social order. In the end, the architecture of Kumase was affected by virtue of the fact that the organisational and transformational structures within the architectural order shifted into the hands of the British.

Surprisingly, the Secretary of State for the Colonies in justifying the military expedition between 1895 and 1896 stated that it was necessary to station a British official in Kumasi who would see to it that the King carried out his engagements¹⁸ as if the Asante kings did not know how to perform their duties and responsibilities as leaders of the people. This view of the Secretary of State was a pretext for an underlying motive which was the appointment of a British resident in Kumase to facilitate a process of architectural acculturation as part of the core aim of the British to exploit the

¹⁶ This was the peace treaty signed between Asante and the British in March 1874 after the Sargrenti War. Asante gave up claims to Denkyera, Akyem, Adanse, Edina and Asen. They further agreed to pay war indemnity as well as bringing to an end what the British described as “human sacrifice”

¹⁷ Kimble, *Political History*, 283.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 267-300

area's resources. Nonetheless, the 1896 attack radically altered the urban structure of Kumase¹⁹ as the British proceeded to rebuild the city according to their own needs and intentions:

The administration of Coomassie is theoretically in the hands of the Police Magistrate... Practically all work in connection with the layout and buildings is carried out by the Medical Officer of Health and the Town Surveyor, the latter being the only person in Coomassie who has any idea what is the layout and where are the pillars to mark streets and building plots...for there is an excellent opportunity now, before the rush comes, of laying out an attractive township...²⁰

This explains why the built environment of Kumase was to be declared government land acquired partly by right of conquest and partly, at a later date, by "free gift of the chiefs."²¹ Further, as we shall see, it accounted for the reason why a number of rules including those for the built environment were introduced to guide the planning and administration of the city. The colonial government felt that being the owner of all unoccupied land provided them the simplified opportunity to greatly influence the work of town planning and administration in regulating and segregating architectural space. According to Berry Hess, author of "Imagining Architecture: The Structure of Nationalism in Accra, Ghana", such a feeling of the colonial government was marked by the determination to regulate the structure and organisation of the city, thereby bringing meaning to the British goal of wielding absolute authority. Thus, in 1878, the Gold Coast Towns Police and Health Ordinance was passed.²² The Ordinance gave authority to the Governor to approve the erection of buildings

¹⁹ I. Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century*, London: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

²⁰ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG.1/1/113: Town and Administration of Coomassie.

²¹ Ibid.

²² J.B. Hess, "Imagining Architecture: The Structure of Nationalism in Accra, Ghana" *Africa Today*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (2000), 35-58.

and to compel the demolition or repairing of houses that fell in the category of “dilapidated or unsanitary buildings”²³ Certainly, the control of the built environment paved the way for the changes that the pre-existing architectural character of Kumase witnessed after the British took over the city. This affected the culture of the people because buildings reflected cultural values and so the change in the traditional architecture of Kumase gradually contributed to the change in the cultural worldview of the indigenous people.

Transitions in the Architectural Landscape of Kumase

Salm and Falola, have argued that urban planning under colonial rule was largely an ideological activity intended to achieve primarily economic goals, that is, the exploitation of local natural resources and markets,²⁴ and political ends, that is, subjugation of the local power structure to the British Crown. Indeed, the intentions of the colonial government for the future of Kumase, as they were expressed immediately after the conquest by the colonial administration in Cape Coast, made the position of Salm and Falola apt.

His excellency (Governor Maxwell) formed a committee...to administer the town and villages of Kumasi, under control of the Resident; and left instructions for the Acting resident ... who was then on his way up from the Coast, to continue the work of laying out the town of Kumasi and encouraging trade.²⁵

It is important to attempt an analysis of the aims of British policy in Asante. Firstly, there was the destruction of Asante political power. This led to the denial of Kumase as an independent source of power and domination, and

²³Ibid., 35-58.

²⁴Salm and Falola, *African Urban Spaces*, 3-22.

²⁵S. Schmidt, “Cultural Influences and the Built Environment: An Examination of Kumasi, Ghana” *Journal of Urban Design*, Vol. 10, Issue 3, (2005), 353-370.

hence its political subordination to the colonial headquarters first in Cape Coast and later Accra in 1877. Secondly, there was the exploitation of the natural resources of Asante. The special changes that occurred in Kumase were the direct consequence of these aims. Physical changes occurred rapidly in response to the political and economic demands placed on the city. The British established a strong military presence in Kumase and constructed a fort from the debris of its disintegrated palace.²⁶ The construction of the fort gives truth to Vale's argument that architecture and urban design can be manipulated in the service of politics²⁷ because the British manipulated it into their administrative centre in Kumase, and it became a symbol of political power and economic exploitation of Asante. However, it was also a profound mark of British architectural imprint on Asante.

After the conquest, the British were determined to effectively control the planning of the city and thus be able to decide the kind of architectural designs of the city. Consequently, the Chief Commissioner of Asante, F.C. Fuller, introduced some rules to guide and regulate the erection of buildings in 1910.²⁸ The underlying principle was that prospective builders were to secure permits from the Chief Commissioner of Asante before they could "erect any house, building, wall, or fence upon or adjoining any street; nor to extend, make any addition to or bring forward any house building, wall or fence adjoining any street, or any part or out-building of any such house or building, so as to encroach upon any street; nor divert, enclose, or obstruct, or cultivate

²⁶ K. Osei, *An Outline of Asante History (3rd ed.)*, Kumase:Cita Press Ltd., 2004, 119-121.

²⁷ L.J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, Massachusetts:Routledge, 2008, 16.

²⁸ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 1/26/3/1: Rules for the Regulation of Building in Kumase.

or otherwise turn to any private use, any street or any part thereof.”²⁹ The permit was given on the condition that the guidelines and regulations would be adhered to. The following, published in the 1910 Government Gazette, were the rules for building in Kumase in particular and Asante in general:³⁰

1. From and after the publication of these Rules there shall be not less than an 18 foot road in the front of any new building and the building line shall be set back not less than six feet from the gutter line. There shall be not less than twelve feet separation between any two plots. The building line means that line beyond which no part of a building may extend or project. No out-building shall be erected at less distance than twenty feet from any main building. All persons before commencing to build shall notify the Sanitary Board of the officer in charge of the public streets and open places requesting that the frontage line may be given.

2. The bottom of foundations to all walls must not be less than eighteenth inches below the surface of the ground and may be required to be carried to a greater depth to secure a solid foundation as the officer in charge may direct; the foundations shall consist either of cement concrete not less than nine inches thick or of large flat bedded stones forming a foundation of not less than twelve inches thick, in either case the foundation must have a scarcement on each side of the wall not less than half the thickness of the wall at base, and in the case of nine inch walls not less than six inches.

3. Where walls built of swish bricks are allowed in one storey buildings, the foundations shall be either of concrete or stone as above described, and the walls carried up in stone built with cement or lime mortar to a height of not less than two feet above the surface of the ground before the swish brick-work is commenced.

4. No walls shall exceed thirty feet in length without having cross walls or buttresses.

5. The height of walls of any one storey building from the surface of the ground shall not be less than ten feet nor more than thirteen feet. The height of the walls of any two storey buildings from the surface of the ground shall not be more than 25 feet. No building shall be erected whose walls are not within the above set out limits except by special permission of the Chief Commissioner.

6. The following are the approved materials for covering roofs:- corrugated sheet iron, zinc, beams and concrete, tiles, slates, or other non-inflammable materials. Boarding or felt roofs will be allowed where the building which is to be covered is at a reasonable distance from adjoining buildings such distance to be determined by the Sanitary Board.

7. In the case of a building where application is made to cover the roof with thatch, full particulars as to its relative position and height should be sent to the Sanitary Board who will have power to grant or disallow the application.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

8. The building permits must be produced to the officer in charge of the public streets and open spaces whenever required.
9. The foregoing regulations may be altered in special cases where the proposed new building occupies a position, or is of dimensions, character, purpose and design which in the discretion of the Sanitary Board renders a departure from these regulations necessary.³¹

Failure to observe these rules attracted a fine such as payment of forty shillings.³² However, this followed the approval from the Sanitary Board that the regulations have been disrespected. As we shall see, the regulations were sometimes compromised to encourage investors and to attract European expatriates into the city. Also, these regulations were largely restricted to the European residential areas as there was no proper application and supervision in the government residential areas for Africans as well as those places where Africans constructed their own houses.³³ The rules contributed greatly in altering the architectural character of Kumase. Be that as it may, Britain's initial conspicuous influence on the architectural landscape of the city was the introduction of what became known as the Kumase Housing Building Experiment for their officials in 1944.

From the records, the British seemed to have sought the concern of the indigenous architectural preference in their architectural planning of the estate houses. In 1944 the District Commissioner put forward a questionnaire to ascertain the advantages and disadvantages of the traditional architecture of Kumase.³⁴ Specifically, he wanted to know more about the Akan courtyard and compound houses from the indigenous people which included Mr J.S. Kankam of the Government school in Kumase, Mr. J.W.K. Appiah of the

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid

³⁴ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG. 6/15/87: Housing Plan for Ashanti and the Colony (Including Asawasi Experimental Housing Estate Kumasi).

Lands Department and Miss Harriett Ben-Smith of the Post and Telegraph.³⁵ In spite of this study, the British failed to factor in key concerns including the social orientation of the indigenous people for which they built houses of that nature. Consequently, the houses the British built for the local workers deviated sharply from what they were used to. The people saw the conditions of the British style architecture to be uncomfortable and tenants complained about this new architecture. For instance, in 1951, Moses K. Sarpong of the Suntreso Tenants' Association wrote to the Chief Commissioner complaining about the unwholesome conditions in the houses.³⁶ According to him, the houses were unhealthy for human habitation and therefore the windows fixed on those houses were absolute waste of public funds.³⁷ He lamented that the houses, such as those estate houses, which were without sufficient ventilation would give the occupants a host of diseases including pneumonia and influenza.³⁸ He complained that,

...No air especially during the night hours when all the windows are closed for fear of thieves and it rather turns the room into a house of torment or subterranean inferno...(sic) I do not think that people who have stayed in the modern types of houses in the municipality, despite the public demand for those housing Estate Block, will prefer to stay there and cause their lives to be damaged within a shorter space of time... It is the duty of government therefore, to remove the archaic windows (plain windows) which prevent sufficient, fresh air into ones room and substitute "JALOUSIES" windows which are the right types of modern windows and also apporved...sic by the Medical Officer of Health for anyone who will built up a house in any of the municipal Towns and even in some of the large towns, and villages in Ghana.

We need more standardised rooms with modern types of buildings that would make lives more enjoyable that would make one feels at home. No doubt you were not the one who did the job or designed the plan. It might have been done I hope by a man who has no interest for Ghanaians at heart. The public criticisms about the Estate Houses are becoming rampant. You render the lives of the poor

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/15/2/5: Suntreso Housing Estate.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid.

tenants into danger if the present windows are not removed and better types as mentioned above are not put instead.³⁹

Thus, the British were only concerned and preoccupied with the option that brought their officials a conducive environment to carry out the exploitative agenda. This perfectly reflects the position of Salm and Falola who argued that those in power often controlled the planning and development of urban space with particular predetermined plans and objectives in mind.⁴⁰ Thus, we have a situation where the British disregarded the region's pre-existing architectural character and rather introduced and transferred their worldview in order to satisfy an obvious need, which was to create a suitable environment for the habitation of the European expatriates, who acted as agents and facilitated the process of architectural acculturation particularly in the city and the entire Asante nation at large.

The need for permanent administrative personnel to manage the affairs of the British colonial government in Asante meant that European residential areas had to be built for such workers in Kumase. Consequently, planning practices were not solely focused on extractive infrastructure like the provision of communication networks, but also creating a habitable environment for European administrators and staff. Likewise, there was the need for the few African civil servants and those Africans who assisted the British in their ravenous exploitation to be accommodated. In this regard, there was an importation of aspects of European cultural values whereby their physical expression, that is, European architecture, became the principal determinants in altering the form and spatial configuration of Kumase.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Salm and Falola, *African Urban Space*, 2.

Kumase Housing Building Experiment

As part of measures to transform the architecture of Kumase, the British introduced what became known as the Kumase Housing Estate Building Experiment in September, 1944, which started at Asawase. This place was also known as New Zongo.⁴¹ The building project, even though patterned on foreign architecture, made use of local materials. Thus, the building experiment was primarily carried out to test the buildability, that is, how to build houses with the available materials. This was aimed at testing the durability of those materials. It was also to determine how local materials would make the construction programme and development of buildings structurally possible. The building experiment, according to this study, was carried out to test the available materials before being used in the construction of houses for European accommodation but not necessarily providing accommodation for the Kumase settlers as the Africans were made to believe, especially the Zongo community who were affected by evacuation as a result of the redevelopment of the Kumase Zongo. This conclusion is made in the light of the consideration for the materials to be used in the construction of houses at the Danyame and Nhyiaeso residencies for the Europeans. The British had wanted to import building materials but the cost involved discouraged the move and rather an experiment was made with local building materials to test their buildability.⁴² Moreover, high haulage cost also discouraged the colonial government.⁴³ Initially, the government plan for this

⁴¹PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 6/15/87.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

experiment was the construction of 96 rooms. However, with time government plan changed and this explains why more rooms were constructed.⁴⁴

The building experiment preferred two types of cottage houses. The first was the construction of a block of cottage type of houses which were made up of twelve rooms; six at the front and six at the back. Each of the rooms opened unto a veranda. The kitchen was detached from the main building and also built in a block such that the first occupant of the main house took the first kitchen and the second occupant also took the second kitchen in that order. The second category was the construction of a single block of cottage houses consisting of two bedrooms, a hall, with a detached toilet/bath and a kitchen.⁴⁵ These types of houses were built on a relatively big compound. The houses were numbered using the first ten alphabets with the exception of the letter “I”, that is, A to K, without I. The letter “I” was omitted for the reason that it resembled the number 1. Thus, if a house is numbered II it might be mistaken by someone as 11. It therefore meant that non-residents and visitors would have difficulty identifying houses on the “I” line, especially for those houses whose figures begin with 1. The architectural design of houses along the F, H, and K lines were the same whereas the remaining, that is, A,B,C,D,E,G, and J, also assumed one architectural plan, namely one block of cottage houses with twelve rooms.⁴⁶ Ideally, families from the KumaseZongo community should have been given the detached residential houses since each family had their own house in their previous community. However, the relatively better houses, F, H, and K were given to government

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Interview with Mohammed Adams, 45yrs at his workshop at Asawase on 27th February, 2016.

⁴⁶ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 6/15/87.

workers whereas the single rooms were mostly given to the zongo community and any other group of people who might have been affected by the evacuation of the government building programme as a compensation for their lost properties.⁴⁷ The allocation was done in such a way that if a family had a house of three bedrooms in its old residence, it was given three rooms from a block of the cottage houses. This created inconvenience to the people because their old houses, even though despised by the Europeans, were more conducive than the block of houses offered them by the colonial government. The disappointment of the people in these types of houses was expressed in a survey by the Town Engineer of the Kumase City Council:

I have spoken to a few of the people occupying the two-roomed quarters in the long blocks of 12 rooms and I gather that they would like to have separate baths and latrines from the living rooms; their only concern is that there is no privacy about them.⁴⁸

The report from the survey also added that "...more of the other type of two-roomed quarters should be built in order to serve the interest of the public."⁴⁹ This survey challenges the veracity of the claim of the Chief Commissioner of Asante that it was the unanimous opinion of the many tenants of these houses that the design of the cottage was good.⁵⁰ Indeed, the houses were not popular among artisans, traders, and clerks but for its low cost charges and perfectly suiting their means it was popular among the low income earners as well as the displaced people.⁵¹ It was therefore not surprising when an Asantehene, who was also the indigenous custodian of

⁴⁷ Interview with Mohammed Sanusi Abdullai Gardi, 57 years, Asawase Zongohene, at his residence on 27th February, 2016.

⁴⁸ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/15/2/5.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/15/2/6: Bungalow Building Programme, Kumase.

⁵¹ Ibid.

Kumase, bought houses in Ash-Town for some members of the royal family who had challenges with accommodation instead of securing free rooms for them.⁵² The paramount chief's motivation, apart from the poor nature of this architectural design, was to have siblings and their mothers accommodated in "old style" one compound houses.⁵³ Thus, the nature of the "new style" house deprived families of the opportunity offered by the courtyard in the transmission of societal norms to its younger generation among other important advantages connected to African cultural values. Clearly, the decision of the Asantehene spoke volumes of the poor nature of the houses and illuminated the disregard shown by the British in relation to the traditional architecture of Kumase in the construction of houses for the Africans. Also, the inhabitants of Nhyiaeso and especially the Odikuro, (chief), of the community, J.C. Frimpong, refused accommodation at the Suntreso housing estate after their evacuation. It is obvious that their evacuation was done to create space at Nhyiaeso for the construction of houses with European architectural designs that provided accommodation for the European expatriates.

New Techniques of Building

In this building experiment, blocks were made of 20 natural laterite soil to one bag of cement and rammed in wooden moulds with pear shaped known as punner.⁵⁴ The moulds were 18" × 9" × 5".⁵⁵ The blocks were trowelled in the moulds on the top face to a smooth finish. The water content

⁵²Interview with Nana AfiaKonadu, 70yrs, Royal of the Oyoko Clan at Manhyia, at her residence at Ash-Town on 10th March, 2016.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴PRAAD, Kumase, ARG. 6/15/87.

⁵⁵Ibid.

of the mix was kept as low as possible to ensure compatibility with proper mixing of the cement and laterite soil.⁵⁶ The British were guided by their architectural knowledge and so the recommendations by the Building Research Station of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, in England, were applied in the Kumase building project where possible.⁵⁷ In view of this, the building scheme was virtually guided by the department's technical advice. For instance, the department made a recommendation that: "A preliminary estimate of the necessary mixture for a mix can be had by squeezing in the hand; the particles should just squeeze together; if they merge into each other and form a plastic mass the mixture is too wet, if the particles fall apart the mix is too dry."⁵⁸ Recommendation for mortar preparation was that sandy soil was required to have a water content of about 10% whereas clay soils needed a water content that ranged between 22% and 24%.⁵⁹ Indeed this building programme was the pig experiment for the later and better houses to be built for European occupation. For this reason, the British made efforts to obtain an impeccable measurement and building practices in every respect. A sample of laterite soil was thus sent to the Building Research Station in England for scientific determination of the optimum moisture content.⁶⁰ Through such practices, it was revealed that the earlier experience where the blocks were easily damaged was because the blocks were moved and stacked before use. The solution to this was that the blocks were to be allowed to harden in the place where they were cast. This led to the introduction of a new norm where majority of the blocks, if not all, were cast at the site where they

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 6/15/87.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 6/15/87.

were to be used.⁶¹ To improve upon its quality and ensure consistency, the blocks were made in the proportions of 18 parts sand to 1 part cement.⁶² Initially, the blocks were cast on boards but as time went on there was a change where they were cast on the concrete floors following the revelation that the blocks were slow to harden and it was better not to use them for building until they were at least a week old.⁶³ The hardening process of stabilised laterite went on slowly for a considerable period. To avoid damage after erecting, special “charifered blocks” were cast for building in it all corners where doors and windows were properly fixed without having to collapse any part of the structure.⁶⁴ The strongest part of the block was the smooth face which had been trowelled in the moulds. Blocks were laid on the foundations up to the underside of all floors. Filling between walls was damped and thoroughly consolidated. Floors were laid to the outside of the walls, forming an ant-proof course. They were made of concrete using 10 parts of washed alluvial quartzite stone with sufficient sand to one part cement. The thickness of floors in rooms and verandas were 2” whereas kitchen had 3”. To harden the wearing surface, a little mortar (5 parts of washed alluvial to 1 part of cement) was trowelled into the surface after screeding.⁶⁵

Door and window frames were made to sizes which were multiples of 9” that is, block height plus joint thickness.⁶⁶ There were two types of windows that dominated the building programme in Kumase throughout the

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 6/15/87.

twentieth century.⁶⁷ The first was the jalousie type of window which was fixed and could not be opened to various degrees like the closely related louvre type which was later introduced to add up to the types used in construction. The second type was the casement window, whose opening depended on the location of the hinges. It was different from the louvre type window which opened up and down.

Special air bricks made from laterite were cast equal to the size of an ordinary block of laterite and cement. The material composition of an ordinary block, which was about 5 inches, was 10 parts to 1 part washed laterite and cement respectively.⁶⁸ Each brick contained 11 tapered holes from 3" diameter to 2" diameter. The blocks were laid with the larger diameter of the holes outside. The air bricks were built into every room at ceiling level and were meant to increase the amount of air and light that passed through the rooms. As a practice, exteriors of walls were later touched up and given one coat of cement wash and one coat of laterite wash with the latter coat exhibiting a decorative feature. It was anticipated that redecoration with laterite wash would be enough for annual maintenance of exteriors. From the ground to one course above floor level, all exteriors were tarred to form a plinth.⁶⁹ Interiors of all walls were plastered with one coat of sand, china clay and cement in the proportions 20:4:0.5. The average thickness was 0.5".⁷⁰ All angles were coved to a 3" radius. All interiors were given two coats of lime wash including the ceiling, except latrines and bathrooms which were tarred throughout.

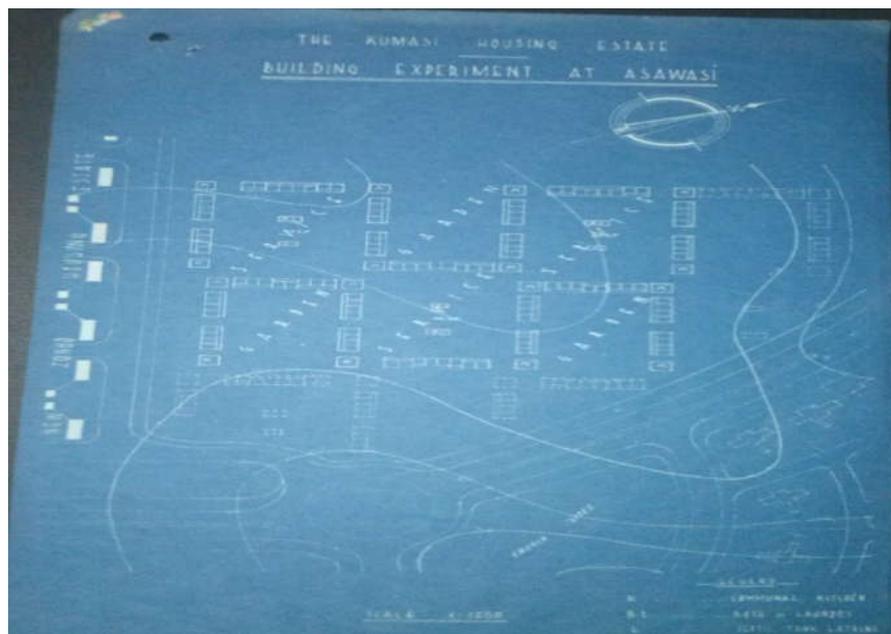
⁶⁷Interview with Kojodarko-Asante, Ashanti Regional Architect, 40+ years, at his office at the Public Works Department, Adum-Kumase on 26th February, 2016.

⁶⁸PRAAD, Kumase, ARG. 6/15/87.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

In all, the layout of the estate type of house assumed a repeated decorative design of “garden and service compounds” which followed an interchanging pattern. For the detached houses, the rooms faced the “garden compound” whereas the back view of the house fronted on to the “service compound.”⁷¹ This pattern was adapted to suit the general character or nature of the estate community.



Source: PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 6/15/87: Housing Plan for Ashanti and the Colony (including Asawase Experimental Housing Estate).

Plate 5: An illustration of the repeated decorative design of “garden and service compounds” at Asawasi in 1944.

The Town Engineer of Kumase, in a report of the project in July, 1945, made a contradictory statement following his conclusion that the rooms should assume a “figure of three persons per room, that is, two adults and two children under the age of adolescence.”⁷² Clearly, the Engineer submitted a self-contradictory report owing to the fact that he recommended three persons for each room, however, in a further explanation he concluded with

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

four persons. As to whether the two children were to be counted as persons is not known. However, the engineer's report should have read three persons per room considering the nature of the rooms constructed and the recommendations by the colonial government to limit the number of persons per room. The floor space per person was 48 square feet while the air space per person was 432 cubic feet⁷³ for the rooms; and so to have four people in a room would have compromised on the authoritative recommendation from the colonial government. Conversely, the minimum laid down rule in the colony's Building Regulations were 36 square feet and 360 cubic feet respectively. Thus, the Engineer, who represented the colonial government, could not follow the laid down rules for buildings. Consequently, it lowered and affected the colonial government's integrity with respect to rules and regulations in Kumase.

The roof of the block houses was designed as one unit to cover both the room and veranda. This was obviously one of the cost cutting measures in the building experiment. To the colonial government, it provided a pleasing arrangement saving both in lintels and wall area. The concrete bases were omitted from the veranda posts, which were dowelled to the concrete floor. The idea was to ensure conservation of resources by spending as little money as possible and yet achieving "improvement in appearance." The two concrete shelves, the hanging rod, and the wooden higher shelf all fixed in a wall projection in the rooms served the purpose of a wardrobe room. The successful execution of this experiment provided a springboard for future building projects in the city.

⁷³ Ibid.

The first housing experiment programme started at Asawase and it became a good model for others that followed. Thus, having successfully experimented the construction of the Kumase housing estate with local materials in Asawase, the British continued with another building programme at North and South Suntreso. In 1948, the Asantehene, the custodian of Asante land, granted a lease of both these areas to the colonial government for development as a Housing Estate.⁷⁴ The project was divided into two: North Suntreso and South Suntreso. The North Suntreso project contained houses that were designed for rent on a monthly basis to persons whose income fell in the range of £84 and £250.⁷⁵ The South Suntreso Estate was specially designed to cater for the better class as well and to house the veterans of World War II thereby making it a relatively expensive dwelling.⁷⁶ It is important to note that African neighbourhoods planned under colonial administration emphasised singular land uses, which was basically for residential purposes. In this regard, the North and South Suntreso Estates served the purpose of solely providing accommodation for the Africans. Inhabitants of these areas were thus expected to ply their trade outside and in particular the commercial hub of Kumase. The North and South Suntreso building programmes were the first successful attempts for the construction of houses using the prefabricated approach, manufactured from heavy concrete panels.⁷⁷ According to Stephan Schmidt, the North and South Suntreso structures were built on curvilinear roads at low density. He claimed the housing programme was modelled on a single family

⁷⁴ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/15/2/6.

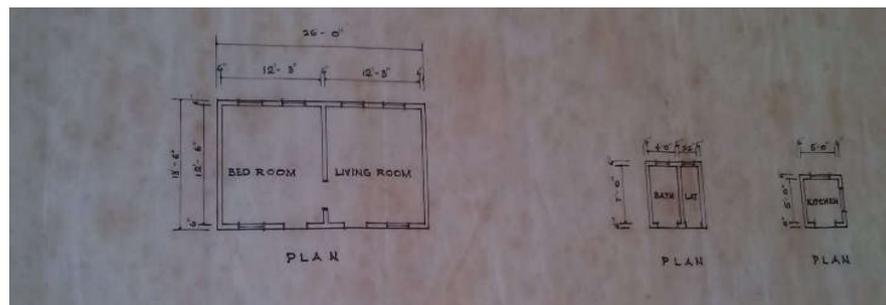
⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Interview with Afia Nkrumah, 90years, at her residence at South Suntreso on 26th February, 2016.

⁷⁷ Schmidt, "Cultural Influences" 353-370.

residential plan.⁷⁸ This claim, however, was inaccurate because the buildings included long blocks of twelve rooms—following the earlier Asawase architectural design—where each family had its separate section comprising of a bedroom and a living room.

The long block of twelve rooms was also made up of a hall and a bedroom without a veranda.⁷⁹ Like the Asawase project, washrooms and toilets were communal and hence, there was no privacy at all. They were like public places of convenience. Furthermore, the kitchen was also detached from the house unlike the single detached houses whose kitchen was close to the living and bedrooms thereby causing inconvenience and proving to be a nuisance to members of the household during cooking.



Source: PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/15/2/5: Suntreso Housing Estate.
Plate 6: Building plan of a single family residential structure at Suntreso in 1948.

K. Sarpong of the Suntreso Tenants' Association reported in a letter to the Chief Commissioner that the Suntreso Estates were fixed with windows that prevented an unbroken flow of air circulation in the rooms, and made the rooms hot like an oven especially when they were closed.⁸⁰ He lamented that,

Sir, I beg to invite your attention to the Government Housing Estate at Suntresu-Kumasi and humbly ask your consideration to draw the

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Interview with Mrs. Janet Adu-Gyamfi, 50years, at her residence at North Suntreso on 27th February, 2016.

⁸⁰ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/15/2/6.

attention to whosoever responsible for the building of such Bogus Houses.

One wonders when one compares things done here with those at the Coastal lines 'or even closer, those at Danyame and Nhyeaso residencies'. In Sekondi-Takoradi and Accra there are more Estates houses being built by the Government, but those types seem to be more habitable and superior to those at Kumasi. I pause therefore to ask what has caused such anomalies to all things in Kumasi. This indignation should be stopped and the sooner the Government considers such vital problems the better.⁸¹

Conversely, the condition at the European residential area was surprisingly different from what K. Spong expressed. The condition was more humane at the European side. So why was there even the need to create a separate zone for the Europeans with more conducive conditions?

Arguments for European Residential Areas

Schmidt and other European scholars have argued that "the primary influences in the creation of European residential areas 'after the destruction of the city' were first, concerns for sanitation and health; second, the segregation of European districts from indigenous ones; and third, the desire for a culturally familiar landscape."⁸² He added that the goals were not mutually exclusive, and in fact, often overlapped. This study deviates from this argument by identifying the division on the grounds of race borne out by the objective of providing a friendly environment for the European officials as the fundamental consideration for the creation of European residential areas.

In fact, the reports of Europeans who visited Kumase for political, economic or religious purposes conveyed a vivid picture of the city. Going by this report, one wonders why the British, in an attempt to provide justification

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Schmidt, "Cultural Influences", 353-370.

for the segregation of the black and white races, used poor sanitation as a basis for the segregation in residential settlements in the city. Generally, a critical examination of the sanitation and environmental reports of the city by Europeans themselves defeats the claim that Kumase was a dirty place which is what the British used in justifying the enforced separation of the British officials in particular and Europeans in general from the indigenous African inhabitants in terms of its residential settlements.

An examination of the sanitation reports by Europeans has shown two contrasted and divergent views. There were those who were impressed with the sanitation situation in the city and accordingly expressed it in their writings and reports. For instance, the account of Bowdich, one of the early writers on Kumase, gives the impression of how particular attention was paid to waste management in the city in the nineteenth century: “The rubbish and offal of each house was burnt every morning at the back of the street, and they were as nice and cleanly in their dwellings as in their persons.”⁸³

Henry Morton Stanley confirmed this state of hygiene in 1874 when he stated that, “It is little extraordinary that we never saw a mosquito in Ashantee”.⁸⁴ This presupposed that the indigenous city administrators paid particular attention to proper waste management in the city.

On the other hand, there were those who were not really impressed with the sanitation situation of the city and as a result voiced their disappointment upon arrival. One of such reports is found in the account of

⁸³T.E. Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee*, (3RDed). London: Frank Cass and Company Limited, 1966, 306.

⁸⁴Stanley, *Coomassie*, 105.

William Hutton, who visited Kumase shortly after the end of the Gyaman War⁸⁵ in 1820. He remarked that:

The town, at the first glimpse we had of it, appeared, at a short distance, much the same as other towns on the coast ... But I must confess, that, on entering the capital, and passing through the principal streets, I felt disappointed from the impression Mr.Bowdich's drawings had made upon my mind ...⁸⁶

Hutton was objective enough to report the opposite side of the city:

I have observed only a few houses in good order and these were built upon a largescale, with open porches in front and kept extremely clean. Mr.Bowdich's observations, regarding the houses being provided with cloacaes, and the general cleanliness of the Ashantis, are correct; and there can be no doubt, that, in the arrangement of their dwellings, they are superior to their neighbours⁸⁷

Austen Freeman on his part in 1889 expressed that,

Kumasi was a great disappointment to me, and my disappointment increased as I walked round and examined the town... The paths were dirty and ill kept, and between the groups of houses large patches of waste ground intervened, and on these, amidst the tall, coarse grass that covered them, were to be seen the remains of houses that had once occupied them...⁸⁸

Indeed, Freeman and Hutton, according to Donkoh, were on point with their observations as she argued that there were particular periods when the architectural landscape and appearance of the city “was not so attractive.”⁸⁹ These included periods immediately after a war. The reports of Freeman and Hutton, gave a poor impression of the city in relation to its sanitation. For instance, Hutton even after expressing how dirty Kumase was, went ahead to unearth the reason why his view of Kumase was different from what

⁸⁵ The Gyaman War was a war fought between Asante and the Gyaman, subgroup of the Bono people.

⁸⁶ W.J.Donkoh, “Kumase: Ambience of Urbanity, Tradition and Modernity”, *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No. 8 (2004), 167-183.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Freeman, *Travels and Life in Ashantee*, 109.

⁸⁹ Donkoh, “Kumase: Ambience of Urbanity”, 167-183.

Bowdichearlier reported. He concluded that the ruinous condition of most of the houses at the time of his visit was because the Asante had only recently returned from the Gyaman War.⁹⁰

Also, Freeman's visit took place after a very turbulent phase in the history of Kumase and Asante. Freeman noted that, the British invasion of Kumase in 1874 wreaked much havoc and this was followed shortly by the five year civil war by opposing groups in Asante that ended in 1888. From these pieces of evidence, the British had no strong basis for the claim that poor sanitation was the primary factor that underpinned the segregation of the city into European and African residential areas each of which has its own architectural designs. This was only a pretext to engineer an architectural and social apartheid. In addition, the control and administration of the British in the Gold Coast meant a halt in the expansionist mission of Asante. Therefore, with Britain in charge, Kumase was supposed to have a clean and impressive environment because it was war—product of the expansionist mission—that made the city dirty. For this reason, if one is to rely on the reports of writers like Hutton and Freeman, there would not have been any reason for poor sanitation in the city because British presence in Kumase meant a halt in the expansionist objective of Asante, hence a clean environment. Clearly, Kumase was divided into European and African residential areas because of the imperialist's aims of the British.

Neighbourhoods designed for occupation by colonial officials, and for that matter Europeans, were constructed to provide them with a “culturally familiar and easily recognisable environment which was a formal and visible

⁹⁰ Ibid.

symbol providing psychological and emotional security in a world of uncertain events".⁹¹ Also, this was the time the Ministry of Commerce pursued a policy of encouraging European industries to establish factories in the colony, thereby, coming up with measures which attracted European investors to the colony and ensured great economic benefits, of course, to the Europeans.⁹² The Gold Coast Government therefore recognised the fact that experienced expatriates were essential for the supervision of the factories and businesses. In view of this, it was agreed that suitable living accommodation should be available as without the prospect of such accommodation, it would be difficult and impossible attracting the expatriate staff required. Further, it must be noted that the granting of plots to private enterprises by the colonial government for the erection of European bungalows was influenced by strategic, cultural and over-riding economic reasons. For these reasons, building plots were given to some European companies on rental basis for the construction of bungalows to accommodate their European Managers and the so-called experts sent out from the United Kingdom. For instance, in September 1950, the colonial government decided to let out Plot No. 5 of the European Residential area to the United African Company.⁹³ Later in 1952, Pioneer Tobacco Company Limited, Socony-Vacuum Oil Company Limited, Bank of British West Africa Limited, Cocoa Purchasing Company Limited, and J.S. Raffoul applied for building plots at the Nhyiaeso Residency⁹⁴ in order to provide accommodation for their staff. Providing accommodation for European expatriates was characterised with the importation of twentieth

⁹¹ Schmidt, "Cultural Influences"353-370.

⁹²PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/17/9: Kumasi Residential Area, Nhyiaeso Layout.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

century features in English town planning, such as landscaped parks and various garden city ideals, as well as the architectural designs which dominated the European landscape in that century. Thus, residential areas originally designated for European habitation were characterised by curvilinear street patterns, large lots, setbacks, and mostly detached, single family homes, and were also driven by sanitary concerns. The spaciousness associated with this particular settlement had implication for healthy living.

Apart from the general rules and guidelines for the erection of buildings in Kumase, European residential areas had a general policy which was to restrict lessees to one single house per plot. There were exceptions, however, where a number of companies including Messrs. S.C.O.A., and Messrs. C.F.A.O. on one hand and the West African Industrials Limited on the other constructed multiple houses and double quarters respectively.⁹⁵ The Bank of British West Africa also obtained permission to build a third bungalow on their two plots of land. Clearly, the colonial government was willing to compromise on their own rules which, to some extent, lowered the standard of the rules, yet they went ahead in order to attract and retain investors in the colony. The acting Chief Regional Officer for Ashanti supporting the erection of more than one bungalow on a plot of land stated that “each application should be considered on its merits.”⁹⁶

The typical residential structure in such areas was the bungalow, a type of house originally built for Europeans in Bengal,⁹⁷ India, and later in other

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ A.D. King, “The colonial bungalow compound-complex: a study in the cultural use of space,” *Journal of Architectural Research*, Vol. 3 No. 2, (1974), 30-43.

colonial areas including Kumase. These types of houses were mostly constructed by raising “some 10 feet or more off the ground on iron pillars or concrete columns which were built on sanitary sites away from these towns (old town centre), much to the promotion of health and comfort” Such practice “...was common prescription for the tropical housing in India and the West Indies as well as Africa.” Below is a picture showing a European bungalow built on stilt at the Nhyiaeso residency.



Photograph by Tony Yeboah

Plate 7: European bungalow built on stilt at the Nhyiaeso residency.

A typical European bungalow may comprise of a lounge, dining room, bedroom, dressing room, kitchen with a pantry and bathroom and toilet. On the same compound was found a boy's quarters or servant's quarters which were mostly built with the measurement of 12' x 12' for each of the two rooms.⁹⁸ In most cases, both rooms opened unto a common veranda. Construction of boy's or servant's quarters was necessary as they provided general cleaning of the house as well as securing the property of the European

⁹⁸PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 1/9/1/215.

staff. Between 1924 and 1929, the Gold Coast Government constructed the following types of houses:⁹⁹

1. Bungalow double-storeyed “B” type
2. Improved double-storeyed “B” type
3. Battleship type
4. Small “A” type bungalows and
5. Semi-detached bungalows, each containing 2 single quarters.

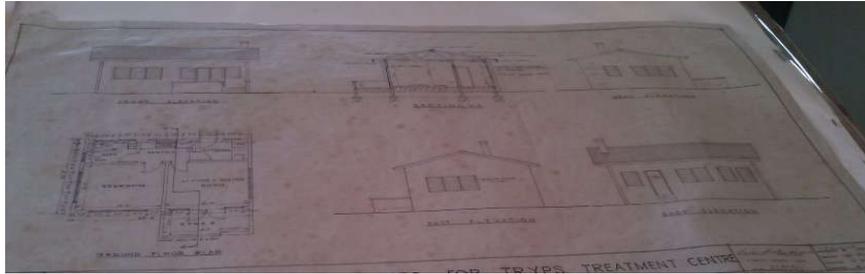
Bungalows built initially were mostly made up of one or two bedrooms as the European officials were discouraged from bringing their families to the colony. In particular, there was no provision of bedrooms for children. However, it was anticipated in the 1950s that there was going to be an increasing number of African top civil servants of the colonial regime who would be privileged to secure government bungalows at the residencies and thus the call was made by the Assistant Commissioner of Lands to the Chief Commissioner of Ashanti to reconsider the construction of government bungalows to suit the needs of the Africans.¹⁰⁰ The recommendation was effected which actually altered the architectural designs of new bungalows. Even the existing ones were renovated to meet the needs of the Africans who occupied the facility with their families. As at 1960, a majority of the bungalows consisted of three bedrooms, and a few four bedrooms.¹⁰¹ A small fraction of the originally designed one and two roomed bungalows built for the

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/1/32: Housing Policy General.

¹⁰¹ Interview with Dominic Kofi Tawiah, Chief Works Superintendent, 55 years, at the Public Works Department, Kumase on 26th February, 2016.

European expatriates were retained but they were few. Below is an example of a building plan of a one roomed bungalow:



Source: Archives, Public Works Department, Kumase.

Plate 8: Plan of a one-room bungalow for an European expatriate at the European residency in Kumase, (c. 1950)

The bungalow, which is now occupied by the Subin Sub-Metropolitan Council in Nhyiaeso, Kumase, is an illustration for this type which was built on stilt and originally comprised a hall, a dining hall, a bedroom, dressing room, kitchen and pantry. Its main entrance contained a staircase that ushered one into the various compartments within the house. The first point of call, when using the main entrance, was a big veranda, which extended along the outside wall of the house. The veranda was connected to a big hall which was divided into a living room and a dining hall. Here, the hall became a sort of entrance room with doors that connected one to the other rooms in the building. Apart from the main entrance, there was also another entrance at the back of the house where one got to the kitchen and pantry before climbing a staircase into other sections of the house. To the right side of the hall, entering from the main entrance, was a door that opened unto the originally built one bedroom in the house. The bedroom was big and spacious which ensured effective ventilation. Across the face of the bedroom was a corridor which had a series of other rooms opening unto it. First, after the bedroom, was a small room which in the estimation of Peter Aidoo, caretaker of the said house at

Nhyiaeso, was the dressing room/wardrobe room where the clothes and shoes of the occupant were kept.¹⁰² Next to the dressing room were the bathroom and toilet in that order. The corridor then turned to the left where there was a staircase that descended to the kitchen and pantry. But before the staircase, there is another small room which was used as a store room where certain items were kept. This house was originally built with two boy's quarters, both of which did not open unto a veranda, and a garage. Three bedrooms were later added to the house after Ghana's independence in 1957. This later development, even though attached to the original plan, was distinguished by the fact that it was built on ground level. This description indeed reveals a sharp departure from the traditional architecture of Kumase which has been examined in the previous chapter.



Photograph by Tony Yeboah

Plate 9: Original plan of the bungalow, (built on stilt), which is now occupied by the Subin Sub-Metropolitan Council in Nhyiaeso, Kumase.

¹⁰²Interview with Mr. Peter Aidoo, caretaker of the house at Nhyiaeso, 67 years, on 28th February, 2016.



Photograph by Tony Yeboah

Plate 10: Three bedroom extension of the bungalow, (built on ground level), which is now occupied by the Subin Sub-Metropolitan Council in Nhyiaeso.

In 1955, an African government—represented by Kwame Nkrumah as the Prime Minister of Ghana— under the mentorship of the British colonial government, constructed 23 bungalows, which were known as the N.T. 400 type bungalow. They were built at Danyame out of the region’s allocation of £137,400 from the amount of £500,000 authorised by the government’s cabinet in April.¹⁰³ This supports the claim of the Ashanti Regional Architect that houses in the Danyame and Nhyiaeso residencies were built during colonial rule and that the differences in the architectural designs is as a result of the different uses and purposes for which these houses were built.¹⁰⁴ This is true but it cannot be accepted as the sole reason for the different types of architectural designs observed in the Danyame and Nhyiaeso residencies. The fact is that these houses were not built within the same year and as such issues

¹⁰³ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/15/2/9: Bungalow Building Programme, Kumase.

¹⁰⁴Darko-Asante, interviewed on 26th February, 2016.

of time, taste and materials used from the beginning of the building programme to the end, influenced the different architectural designs in these places.

Furthermore, colonial records which are related to the development of Danyame and Nhyiaeso Bungalow Building Programmes have demonstrated the reasons for the different architectural designs observed in these areas. Thus, a combination of government and private investments led to the development of these areas as first class residential areas. Private enterprises which needed accommodation for their European officials applied for plots of land with the building plans attached to the application. These private entities, which met the requirements, were allowed to construct their respective houses of different architectural designs. For instance, in March 1950, Messrs. John Holt and Company (Liverpool) Limited obtained a permit to develop on plot. No. 75 on the Government Residential Area following an approval of its building plan by the Kumase Planning Committee.¹⁰⁵ In this same year, the colonial government also built many bungalows in these areas. Thus, a combination of government and private bungalows contributed to the fashion of buildings in the residencies which accounted for the different architectural designs and plans. The houses in these areas were structurally different from the rest of the building programmes in the city as they depicted European architecture of the twentieth century. It must however be emphasised that some of the houses, government bungalows especially, assumed the same

¹⁰⁵PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/1/11.

architectural designs. For instance, in 1955 28 N.T. 400 type bungalow houses were constructed to provide housing accommodation for senior officers.¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

The creation of space for living, and colonial control and administration by the British has been identified as the main contributory factor for the transformations that the architectural landscape of Kumase witnessed after 1874. The chapter has established that the British used space to express absolute authority in Kumase thereby, effectively initiating policies that brought striking changes to the architecture of the city. This new architecture profoundly altered the built environment and aspects of social life in Kumase. For instance, the disregard shown to the traditional architecture of Kumase saw the absence of the courtyard and other key compartments of houses built in the city. The result was that, it affected the culture of the people as the opportunity offered by these compartments in the traditional architecture for the observation of certain cultural values among the people were absent. The unfortunate thing in the building enterprise of the British was that houses for the Africans were bogusly constructed and as people speak through architecture, the study states that the British used the construction of these houses to propagate the view that the European was superior to the African and hence required better accommodation than the African. The Africans who at this stage attached great worth to the homegrown architecture did not want to lose it completely. For this reason, there was a blend of the traditional building technology with that of the British/European building

¹⁰⁶PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/15/2/9.

ideas to produce what is termed the *hybrid Akan courtyard*. An exposition of this new building design comes in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE
SELECTION, INCORPORATION AND APPROPRIATION OF
EUROPEAN ARCHITECTURE IN KUMASE

Introduction

The previous chapters have examined ideas and philosophies that birthed traditional architectural designs as well as the introduction of British and European architectural design following the imposition of British political authority on Kumase after the 1874 war. This chapter examines the diverse creativity and versatility with which the locals of Kumase approached the transforming circumstances of British and European world views in the post-destruction era of the city up to 1960. The locals creatively selected, incorporated and appropriated British and European architectural ideas that suited their intention and needs without putting aside traditional building styles that occupied an important functional position in the social and political worldviews of Asante. Consequently, an interesting blend of local architectural style and British and European architectural designs was introduced and it particularly produced the popular hybrid Akan courtyard house. The architectural landscape of Kumase, especially the European residential areas, also became inundated with typical British and European architectural structures. The hybridized architectural structures also existed, especially in the African residential areas.

Factors that Encouraged the Appropriation of European Architecture

Kumase of the twentieth century was characterised by what AsamoahDarko, described as the “building craze”.¹ The city experienced the erection of many houses by leading Asante chiefs, cocoa farmers, traders and merchants. These people benefited greatly from the opening up of Asante to the so-called legitimate trade² with the Europeans after 1874. Consequently, the “building craze” secured fixed rents for owners of buildings. The monies accrued from the rents increased the interest of the owners for the well-being of the city. The “building craze” was accompanied by competitive house building³ especially among the Asante chiefs and the wealthy inhabitants. The competitive house building provided an avenue for merchants and families to express their wealth and to display improvements in their status, mostly commoners, who achieved much success in the world of trade and commerce as well as in the agricultural sector. The “building craze” invigorated a situation of competition that altered the building style of Kumase. The competition promoted the deviation from the established and traditional way of building to the incorporation, selection and appropriation of European architectural designs which was made possible by several factors and circumstances that prevailed at the time. These several factors are discussed below.

¹ Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, Occasional Report No. 13, 1970: Documentation and Conservation Report on the Vacation Training Programme.

² Legitimate trade was the European terminology for the trading activities in natural products including cotton, palm oil, and groundnut which supposedly replaced the slave trade.

³ K.A., Busia, *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti*, London: Oxford University Press, 1958, 26.

Population Growth, (1944-1960)

In 1944, the population of Kumase was estimated to be 40,256. This subsequently increased to 70,755 in 1948.⁴ By 1960, the population had risen to 218,172.⁵ A large proportion of the people who made up the population were born outside the city. According to the statistics of the 1960 census, only about 38% of the people in Kumase were born there.⁶ 19% of the residents in Kumase were born elsewhere in Asante while 30% were born elsewhere in Ghana but outside Asante.⁷ The remaining 13% constituted international immigrants who were born outside Ghana.⁸ Thus, a majority of the people in the city were from outside Asante, and nearly half of the population were not autochthonous to the city. In all, there were 44,331 persons of foreign origin in Kumase by 1960.⁹ 40% of these people were born in Ghana while 60% were born abroad. Largely, the anticipation of securing jobs and doing business respectively in the city was what attracted many of the non-autochthons to Kumase.¹⁰ The tremendous growth of the population of the city after the war in 1874 necessitated the provision of additional houses to cater for the influx of people into the city. The colonial government did not want to provide the houses needed for this huge number of immigrants. That is why it encouraged the people to prioritise the erection of houses.¹¹ The first post-colonial African government led by Kwame Nkrumah developed a number of estates in an

⁴Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology, Occasional Report No. 13.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰D. Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism 1850-1928*. London: Clarendon Press, 1963, 143.

¹¹ The British encouraged the wealthy Africans especially to build houses, in fact, mansions in order to have more space to provide living accommodation to their less endowed brothers and sisters.

attempt to deal with the situation. Apart from the Asawase and Suntreso estates, other new estates were built at Kwadaso and other places from 1957. The Nkrumah-led government also added a few of such houses to the existing stock at the Asawase and Suntreso estates.

However, the provision dealt with just a fraction of the people who needed living accommodation. Thus, government's efforts mitigated the housing problem but did not deal with it in its entirety. Majority of the housing needs of the city was thus met by the private creativity and entrepreneurship of some Asante people. Many of such persons were those who made enough profits through the new economic opportunity and built beautiful dwellings, and hence improved the accommodation challenges.¹² The population increase and the disproportionate accommodation created an incentive for people who needed an avenue to invest their capital as they built houses for leasing purposes. The houses built for rental purposes mostly combined components of traditional Kumase architecture and European architecture. The demand and pressure on accommodation as a result of the influx of immigrants who were prospecting for business—trade and commerce—in Kumase therefore contributed to the increase in the number of houses built, which in effect contributed to the transformation of the built environment in the city.

Trade and Commerce

Following the 1874 destruction of Kumase and the removal of Prempeh I in 1896, the military power of Asante no longer formed an effective barrier to direct trade between the coast and the interior. Due to this, some

¹²*Statesman*, Vol. 7, No. 15, Week Ending October, 19th 1997, 10.

enterprising Asante, and foreigners were able to explore both the inland and coastal routes.¹³ Indeed, trade which declined was resuscitated towards the last quarter of the nineteenth century following the opening up of the area to trade.¹⁴ Thus, the British colonial government's hope of opening up this new territory to trade was successful. The period between 1881 and 1882, for example, saw the opening up of the routes that circumvented Asante to the east and west of the Gold Coast.¹⁵ In his address to the Legislative Council in 1897, Sir William Maxwell, (a British official), virtually invited traders and business prospectors to extend their operations to Asante.¹⁶ In response to the invitation, foreign traders and merchants including Europeans, Syrians, Lebanese and Hausas, who recognised the great purchasing power of the Asante people, came with great expectations. Traders from Syria and Lebanon especially increased in number, wealth and influence.¹⁷ Their functional role in the economy of Kumase significantly contributed to the extension of the commercial areas through the building of stores as well as the construction of grand and imposing residential structures. These houses, especially those at the commercial districts, had inscriptions that gave details of the house as to the names of the owners and dates for the construction of these houses.¹⁸ Many of such houses can still be seen today in Kumase. The invitation further witnessed the gradual return of traders who had earlier abandoned trading in Kumase because of war. They included traders from Fante, Krepi, Kwahu and

¹³ Kimble, *Political History*, 23.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 23-26.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁷ Interview with OpokuFrefre III, (aka Nana Buabasa), OtumfourGyaasehene, 68years, at his palace, Ash-Town on 10th December 2015.

¹⁸ W.J.Donkoh, "Kumasi: Ambience of Urbanity, Tradition and Modernity", *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No. 8 (2004), 167-183.

others from around the Gold Coast.¹⁹ Other African traders from the northern part of Asante brought their trading items such as cattle, sheep, shea-butter, and hides which were exchanged for salt, cloth, kerosene, and kola. Some also settled in Kumase and traded in kola which they exported to Nigeria and other parts of West Africa.

Adult members of Kumase largely took advantage of the business opportunities. Even though, customarily, chiefs in Kumase were not supposed to own private properties²⁰ some participated effectively in the trading activities. This enabled them to acquire private properties, thereby, enriching themselves to meet the needs of their people and community.²¹ This became necessary because of the change in the disposition of the people towards their customary services to the chiefs, even when the social services provided by the latter remained unchanged. It was in this regard that the chiefs adjusted their status by engaging in businesses and acquiring private properties like owning houses for rental purposes which suited the circumstances of the day.²² The Colonial Report of 1906 cited in Busia,²³ stated: “Building operations have been the rule throughout the year. All the principal Asante chiefs now own large European houses...”²⁴ This was made possible because the area was opened to trade and commerce which the chiefs as well as the people took advantage of to acquire wealth for themselves. The acquisition of wealth made it possible for the appropriation of European architectural designs because

¹⁹ Faculty of Architecture, Occasional Report No. 13.

²⁰ Interview with Baffour Asabre Kogyawoasu Ababio III, Otumfour Nsumankwahene, 64 years at his palace, Ash-Town on 29th November 2015.

²¹ Busia, *The Position of the Chief*, 200.

²² See Busia, *Position of the Chief* for more on the change in the chief's economic position. 199-217.

²³ Busia, *Position of the Chief*, 107-110.

²⁴ Ibid.

money was needed to purchase certain materials and to also employ the services of technical people. Cocoa money was also another factor that assisted many chiefs, who owned cocoa farms, to acquire houses of European architectural designs.

Cocoa

Cocoa production was the single most important and leading agricultural development that was facilitated by the new political and economic structure of the British in Kumase. The colonial government encouraged the production of cocoa as a cash crop in Asante and other parts of the Gold Coast because it needed the cocoa for use in Europe.²⁵ Between 1896 and 1900, the land of Asante recorded its first cocoa production with an export unit of 179 tons.²⁶ Production of this cash crop expanded rapidly between 1905 and 1911. For instance, the production unit for the 1911 farming season catapulted such that export for that year rose to 4,170 tons.²⁷ The prospect of the cocoa business diverted attention from the cultivation of food crops including cassava, and plantain among the many farmers for the reason that there was not much money in their cultivation as compared to cocoa production. Thus, as the farmers remarked, it was not sufficiently rewarding to spend time and energy over the production of foodstuffs. From the early twentieth century, cocoa production became the determinant for the prosperity and wealth of the city as the standard of living was contingent on the quantity of money that circulated every farming season. Asante exported products like rubber, kola, cattle, and hides but cocoa soon outstripped all other exports in

²⁵W. Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, Abuja: Panaf Press, 2005, 86-96.

²⁶Busia, *Position of the Chief*, 122.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 122.

importance and value.²⁸ This farming business remained in the hands of the small-scale African farmers, but it was the colonial regime that supervised the entire cocoa economy.

In 1898 the colonial government introduced some measures to boost the economic activity of Kumase and the entire colony. Firstly, a marketing scheme for both coffee and cocoa was instituted which made room for the advancement of money on the produce to the farmers. The marketing scheme sold the produce on behalf of the African farmers in England. The marketing scheme finally paid out any balance after expenses had been deducted. This scheme, however, did not last very long, partly owing to criticisms from the West African Trade Association.²⁹ The improvement of transport facilitated the spread of buying stations farther up country, and this, in turn, encouraged the diffusion of cocoa growing over a wider area.³⁰ The rise in cocoa income was perhaps the most important aspect of the growth of the money economy, which had been proceeding rapidly towards the end of the nineteenth century. The greater part of the profit made, however, seems to have been reinvested; as farmers' income rose, the farmers acquired more land and employed more labour, in a "benign spiral" which was broken only by the severe onset of swollen shoot in the 1940s. Apart from this, there was considerable investment in housing.³¹ The opening up of Kumase to legitimate trade led to the arrival of diverse people, especially the Europeans who succeeded in persuading the indigenous people with their way of life.

²⁸Ibid., 121-123.

²⁹Ibid., 34.

³⁰Ibid., 35.

³¹Ibid., 37.

Trade and commerce and cocoa production indeed contributed greatly to the development and the transitional change of the art and science of designing and constructing buildings in Kumase. This explains why the wealthy merchants and cocoa farmers built improved and beautiful houses for themselves. They also earned money, as a majority reinvested their surplus capital in the construction of houses. House construction in the estimation of Kimble became an enterprise for surplus capital.³²

Nuclear Family

The British occupation of Kumase was characterised by certain conditions which brought a new perspective about the close-knit social system of Kumase leading to the promotion of nuclear family relations.³³ These conditions included the gradual development of a competitive trade and of a money economy; the construction of new roads that encouraged migration and immigration; and most importantly, the introduction of the English way of life.³⁴ From the late nineteenth century, emphasis was placed on the nuclear family, a phenomenon which undermined communal values and sanctions. This weakened kinship ties and influenced the development of new architectural designs in Kumase.³⁵ To this end, Darko-Asante, the Ashanti Regional Architect, saw the family system as a key factor in the designing of building plans.³⁶ He argued that house construction before the twentieth century was basically done for the interest of the extended family. In view of this, the traditional Akan courtyard type of house was preferred as it provided

³² Kimble, *Political History*, 143.

³³ Ibid, 143-158.

³⁴ Ibid, 158.

³⁵ Interview with Afia Konadu, royal of the Oyoko Clan at Manhyia, 70 years, at her residence at Ash-Town on 10th March, 2016.

³⁶ Interview with Kojo Darko-Asante, Ashanti Regional Architect, 40+ years, at his office at the Public Works Department, Adum-Kumase on 26th February, 2016.

several sections which enhanced the sharing of one compound by members of an entire family, including parents, children, grandparents, cousins, aunts and other relatives. The superimposition of colonial administrative systems upon this purely indigenous culture initiated a gradual change from the emphasis placed on the extended family to the European nuclear family, thereby affecting the Asante cultural values. Hence, people started building houses to accommodate either their spouses and children or their spouses and children and their extended families in one compound. The extreme situation was that some neglected the ancient practice of building houses for their extended family and prioritised the construction of houses for their nuclear family like those kinds of houses built by the Europeans at the Danyame/Nhyiaeso residencies. The social and urban circumstances of the time greatly influenced the kind of architecture in Kumase.

The houses built were mostly based on the circumstances that evolved around the owner. Thus, there were houses which were designed with two floors. The idea for such houses was for the builders to occupy one floor with their spouses and children while the other floor was occupied by other members of the builder's extended family or given out for rent. In some cases, men who married two wives built two-storeys where one floor was given to one of the wives and children whereas the other was given to the other wife and her children. The issue of family system influencing the architectural landscape of Kumase effectively began at the beginning of the twentieth century.³⁷ In the urban landscape, the change was so profound that there was virtually no trace of purely pre-European or traditional architecture in

³⁷OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

Kumase. The difficulty in identifying traditional Kumase architecture continued into the independence era as the people were encouraged by state institutions to construct houses with elements of European architecture as a way of improving the building design of the city.

First Gold Coast Building Society

In 1956, the government of the Gold Coast established the First Gold Coast Building Society (F.G.C.B.S.).³⁸ Certainly, the creation of the society was part of the government's policy to help overcome the terrible housing shortage in the colony.³⁹ In view of this, the government proposed a number of measures to deal with the accommodation challenges. Firstly, the government, through the society's purse, provided assistance to people to buy houses for themselves. In this way, the government was able to reduce the demand for rented properties. It also reduced the strain which was placed on the existing stock of houses. This brought an attitudinal change as people's perspective changed from renting to home-ownership. Secondly, the government built houses for sale through its statutory boards as some of the people bought their houses through the loan facilities offered by the Society. Thirdly and most importantly, loan facilities were provided to individuals to build their own houses as well as those specifically given to landlords to erect houses for rental purposes.⁴⁰ The establishment of the F.G.C.B.S. therefore played a supplementary role in moulding the fashion of houses built between 1956 and 1960 and thereby contributed significantly to the change that the architectural morphology of Kumase witnessed in that period.

³⁸PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/1/32: Housing Policy General.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Closely connected to the objective of promoting home-ownership was the encouragement given to landlords and prospective builders to improve the standard of the built environment by providing modern sanitation facilities and good designs.⁴¹ In the estimation of Mr. E. Akuffo-Addo, the first chairman of the F.G.C.B.S

...Any improvement in design is worthwhile even if it adds something to the cost, which is not always the case, as a house is durable commodity which the owner will probably live in for the rest of his life. By taking these factors into account the type and design of house construction will undoubtedly undergo many changes during the next generation. The Board believe that this attitude is the right one to adopt and it is hoped that suggestions made to applicants on these matters will be accepted in the spirit in which they are given.⁴²

Corroboratively the deputy chairman stated that:

One of the things which has been most noticeable is the public's interest in the design of houses, and they are very critical. This is a very healthy sign and I feel sure that all the professional men and women engaged in house design will be thankful for it. A good many popular magazines and newspapers, particularly women's magazines, make a feature of publishing designs of houses, including plans and elevations. I believe we want more of this in Ghana because it is all to the good, and an active public interest will do much to encourage better standards in the design and building of houses. Better houses mean better security for our Society in its mortgage dealings, although we must not overlook the wider and more important aspect of public benefit.⁴³

The F.G.C.B.S was established in Kumase to help the poor build their own houses. However, the society could not make much headway compared to the coastal cities like Accra.⁴⁴ On this, SarkodieMensah argued that the society's failure in Kumase was as a result of the people's indifference toward saving with an institution without any track record and also because the people

⁴¹ Good design denotes the adoption of European architectural designs but not an improvement in indigenous designs of the people of Kumase.

⁴² PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 2/1/32.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Faculty of Architecture, Occasional Report No. 13.

were not enlightened on the advantages of the society. Nonetheless, the efforts of the F.G.C.B.S. in Kumase were noticeable because it made contribution towards the acceptance of the new architectural design of the *hybrid Akan courtyard* house in Kumase through the few people that the society reached out to.

The Hybrid Akan Courtyard House and its Characteristics

The people who built the hybrid Akan courtyard house⁴⁵ considered it useful and suitable. Thus, in their adaptation of foreign architecture, the people of Kumase were guided by their needs and goals and therefore carefully selected those architectural elements that fitted their condition and circumstances. This was done on purpose as it preserved the bond among siblings and relatives.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, house construction witnessed a transition from thatch-covered houses to houses of swish, brick, or cement, and roofed with iron and shingles.⁴⁷ The single-storey Akan courtyard houses built before European intrusion into Kumase experienced a number of modifications from European architectural designs in the last quarter of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Firstly, the hybrid Akan courtyard type of houses built were raised, (about 70cm high), from the ground level. In view of this, a small staircase was often built at the entrance of the houses for easy access to the house. The elevation created some kind of a base which was in response to the changes in the tropical climate and the increased heavy rains. The creation of the base was primarily aimed at preventing erosion and flooding of the inner

⁴⁵ Hybrid Akan courtyard denotes the few modifications that the traditional Akan courtyard witnessed in the architectural reconstruction of Kumase after the 1874 destruction. In the reconstruction certain sections including store and veranda were introduced and incorporated to meet the demands and circumstances of the time and thereby produced a mixture of the traditional one storey-courtyard house and European architecture.

⁴⁶ Busia, *Position of the Chief*, 125-127.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 124.

courtyard which provided the platform for various functions. Providing functional roles explains why the courtyard was retained during the process from local architecture to the hybrid Akan courtyard house. Secondly, unlike the previous courtyard design, the hybrid Akan courtyard did not just have one entrance to a house. There were at least two entrances that led to a house. The striking feature of this new architectural design was the incorporation of a veranda, which mostly projected outside a house, as well as a corridor with a series of rooms opening onto it. Also, for the first time, there were houses that served both residential and commercial purposes through the inclusion of stores at the front of the modified courtyard houses. Rooms in the traditional architecture were all single rooms that opened solely onto the courtyard. However, following the selection and incorporation of European architecture, the *pie ne asa*, (translated as “chamber and hall”), was introduced. Usually, the *pie ne asa* had a veranda that projected outside the building and provided additional entrance into the house apart from the main entrance. It is important to note that the *pie ne asa* found in the houses were occupied by financiers and owners of houses.⁴⁸ When a financier or owner of a house died, the one who, by Akan custom, succeeded him by assuming his role and responsibility, took the *pie ne asa* like the case of OpaninKwabenaOfori of H/No. 4 Blk. F. on the Cecilia AbenaDapaah Street, Bantama, whose *pie ne asa* was occupied by his successor and nephew following his demise.⁴⁹ Thus, the *pie ne asa* section served as an important element in determining owners and custodians of houses.

⁴⁸Interview with Kwame Donkor, resident of a two-storey compound house, 64 years, at Asokwa, (Stadium), on 20th April, 2016.

⁴⁹Interview with Akua Mansa, daughter of OpaninKwabenaOfori, a two-storey compound house owner at her residence at Bantama on 25th April, 2016.

Later within the twentieth century, a different type of the hybrid Akan courtyard, in the form of a two-storey courtyard house emerged. This type of building was prevalent from the 1940s because people became richer through the cocoa business and gold-related works and therefore could afford the construction of a relatively sophisticated edifice. The selection, incorporation and appropriation of European architecture were purposefully done to suit the needs and circumstances of the people of Kumase rather than just fancying foreign architecture. For instance, Opanin Kwabena Ofori's two-storey hybrid Akan courtyard house on Plot No. 4 Block F. on the Cecilia Dapaa Street, Bantama was built in 1952 on purpose rather than the beauty of the architectural design. He lived in a single-storey traditional courtyard house at Kwadaso with his family before he constructed the two-storey *hybrid Akan courtyard* house.⁵⁰ However, as his family increased, he saw the need, firstly, to secure extra sources of income which led him in the cultivation of cocoa. Secondly, as his family increased it was necessary for him to provide large space through the construction of a house with enough rooms to accommodate all his children and wives. It was in this regard that he secured a plot of land from the chief of Bantama, who was by then pursuing the policy of leasing land to indigenous wealthy young Africans for the construction of houses with "improved design and plan."⁵¹ This was obviously an incentive and a deliberate attempt by the chief to improve on the architectural landscape of the renowned Bantama Township. This move believed to be an inspiration he took from the Asantehene, Otumfuo Osei Tutu Kwame who after the Gyaman War encouraged and indeed assisted his captains with resources from

⁵⁰Interview with Yaa Nyamekye, 90 years, (wife of a two-storey compound house builder at Bantama) at her residence at Bantama on 26th April, 2016.

⁵¹ Ibid.

the Asante public treasury for the improvement in their houses, which subsequently affected the building designs of Kumase.⁵² Indeed creating enough space for his family was the main reason that informed Ofori's decision to build a two-storey hybrid Akan courtyard house. Thus, this house was basically built to accommodate the wives and children of the builder while he built one for his extended family at his hometown, Twenease in the Asante Region. The structure consisted of 16 single rooms and four pie ne asa totaling 26 rooms. Four of the pie ne asa were found upstairs while the remaining one was located at the ground floor. The single rooms either had one entrance which opened unto a corridor within the house or had two entrances which opened unto a corridor within the house or unto a veranda which projected outside the house. The house also had a garage, boys' quarters and two kitchens, which were all detached from the main house. There were two toilet facilities each for the top and ground floors. The bathroom facility was however two for the top floor and one for the ground floor. Even though the house found itself within the geographical space of Kumase, it deviated sharply from local architectural ideas and creativity. These types of houses were basically built by Asante and found in the indigenous residential areas. Undoubtedly, it dominated the architectural landscape of Kumase. This was because the Asante were in the majority with respect to population and the fact that most of them—individuals and families—preferred the *hybrid Akan courtyard* to the typical European self-contained architectural design.

The statistics presented in the Maxwell Fry/Jane Drew book, *Tropical Architecture in the Humid Zones*, gives a breakdown of the different types of

⁵²T.E. Bowdich, *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee*, (3rd ed). London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1966, 309.

houses built and demanded most in Kumase. The number of persons per house ranged around 25 from 1932 to 1944. This number rose to 28 in 1960. In the latter part of 1960, there were a total of 7,820 houses in Kumase. Of these, 43% contained 20 or more persons each, which clearly represented the two-storey type of the hybrid Akan courtyard, 17% contained between ten and nineteen persons each, representing the single-storey type of the hybrid Akan courtyard, 20% contained between five and nine persons each which also represented the estate houses built by the British in the Kumase Building Experiment, and another 20% contained between one and four persons each, representing the typical European architectural designs at the Kumase residencies where the Europeans lived.⁵³ Hence, almost half the number of houses in the city contained 20 persons or more. Fry and Drew's reports therefore confirm the view that the two-storey hybrid Akan courtyard was prevalent in the 1940s and after because it was this type of architectural design that had the highest percentage figure of 43. It further supports the claim that the Asante did not completely do away with their architecture, which was the product of their worldview.

Benefits Associated with the Hybrid Architecture

The two-storey hybrid Akan courtyard house provided a solution to men who desired to accommodate their wives and children under one roof despite increment in the population of families in the city.⁵⁴ Also, it made it relatively easier for husbands to share property between two wives or between a wife with her children and an extended family while avoiding frequent

⁵³Faculty of Architecture, Occasional Report No. 13.

⁵⁴Interview with Nathaniel SarkodieMensah, 78years Retired Personnel Officer and son of Mr. KwabenaMensah at his residence at Asem on 20th April, 2016.

quarrels presented in the case of a single-storey courtyard house.⁵⁵ The legal rule of inheritance amongst the Asante was that property should be passed on in the matrilineal line. It is in this way that individual property became lineage property especially after death. However, in the twentieth century, this practice, through acculturation, became unpopular among the Asante. This was because house builders saw it as a moral obligation to leave some sort of property for their wives and children who assisted them on the farm or any other economic venture. Dividing single-storey houses seemed challenging unlike a two-storey structure where each floor had virtually the same facilities. The two-storey courtyard house was particularly helpful to those men who married more than one wife because it had enough rooms to accommodate the numerous children and for proper division between two groups when it became necessary.⁵⁶

As at 1960, most of the single-storey hybrid Akan courtyard houses were occupied by people belonging to one family group as well as in-laws with few rooms for outsiders on a tenancy agreement. The two-storey hybrid Akan courtyard house on the other hand had a section, often the ground floor, which was used for renting purposes. In this type of courtyard house, the owners who belonged to one family occupied top floors and actually became the established users of that section while the ground floor had people from diverse backgrounds and families because renting was not restricted to a particular group or family.⁵⁷ Owners of houses preferred top floor for many reasons. Firstly, and as argued by KwakuNyamekye, the reason was because

⁵⁵Interview with KwabenaBoateng, trustee of a two-storey compound house at Amakom, 64 years, on 20th April, 2016.

⁵⁶YaaNyamekye, interviewed on 26th April, 2016.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

by standing or sitting at the veranda of the top floor owners/custodians of houses had the opportunity to observe activities and developments that happened on the ground floor and even in the town.⁵⁸ The choice for the top floor was also influenced by the fact that there was more adequate ventilation than the ground floor provided. Also, as remarked by Boateng, *wotesoro a wompraefieyem*, (translated as people who occupied top floors were exempted from sweeping “and doing other general cleaning” at the open space of the ground floor.)⁵⁹ He stated further that it was not appropriate for owners of houses and their families to sweep and also do general cleaning of the house while tenants did nothing.

Furthermore, staying upstairs was also for security concerns as it protected landlords from experiencing minor theft cases because of the fact that the ground floor was opened to all inhabitants of the house as well as the entire community. Most importantly, families and people who occupied top floors were usually considered as owners of houses.⁶⁰ For these reasons, builders and owners preferred occupying top floors so long as their health condition permitted them.

The ground floor also offered some advantages to tenants. The architectural design of the hybrid Akan courtyard was such that all the rooms opened onto the courtyard. The tenants lived together and shared basic facilities at the ground floor. This brought them together as brothers and sisters. Even though the sharing courtyard facility with others was perceived depriving one of privacy, it also provided a high level of social interaction,

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Kwabena Boateng, interviewed on 20th April, 2016.

⁶⁰ Opoku Frefre III, interviewed on 10th December, 2016.

control and safety. Moreover, the courtyard provided a platform for the inhabitants to build social networks which brought advantages such as jobs and business opportunities.

Settlement Pattern and the Relative Architectural Styles in Kumase

By 1960, Kumase had been divided into commercial, administrative, and residential areas.⁶¹ The residential area covered most of the built environment of the city. It must, however, be noted that settlements were scattered owing to the racial settlement policy of the British colonial government. The separation of different races and the different ethnic groups were important factors in the planning policy of the British in Kumase. The separation was not solely restricted to the distinction between European and African communities, but also among the numerous ethnic groups following the opening up of the area to trade. “Separate the races, keep the peace” became both the political and economic ideology that was used by the British in exploiting and dividing the African communities. Also, it was used to justify the layout of many communities where groups of people belonging to one ethnic group settled. For instance, Asante New Town was predominantly an Asante community and mostly inhabited by families displaced by the war of 1896 between Asante and the British.⁶² Also, the relatively small Fante New Town was settled by Fante migrants from the coastal areas of the country. The neighbourhood at the Danyame/Nhyiaeso residencies were settled by the European administrators. However, the areas were no longer predominantly European as at 1960. This was as a result of the intensive Africanisation policy

⁶¹ K.K.Adarkwa, (ed). *Future of the Tree: Towards growth and development of Kumasi*, Kumase: University Printing Press, 2011, 51.

⁶²BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabioIII, interviewed on 24th November, 2016.

pursued by the government after 1957 and the removal of restrictions on (African) people who met the standard and conditions for constructing houses in the unoccupied lands. Apart from the houses at the Danyame/Nhyiaeso areas which displayed an artistic tradition of European architecture, houses in the remaining residential areas displayed elements of traditional Kumase architecture. Nevertheless, some of these residential areas witnessed the introduction of new building designs which contributed greatly to the change that the architectural landscape of the city experienced.

A careful examination of buildings in the indigenous residential areas, except in few cases, revealed some degree of differences in the building plans and designs. These were because of the purposes for which buildings in these areas were meant to serve. For that reason, house construction in Kumase was essentially driven by two main purposes: commercial and residential use. The residential houses were those houses that provided living accommodation. They were those houses that strictly provided accommodation to people belonging to one kin or group of people who traced their ancestry to one individual. This was the customary living arrangement of the Asante and for that matter the people of Kumase. Even though there was a change in this kind of settlement after 1874, a majority of the households still adhered to this old practice as at 1960. House construction for commercial use became prevalent as a result of the circumstances engendered by the measures introduced by the British after they had superimposed their authority on Asante. The structure for the purposes of construction— residential and commercial— were structurally different from each other.

For instance, the kind of courtyard houses that were built in the commercial districts like Adum and Asem on the New Town-Ejisu Road were essentially different from those built in areas like Bomso. The reason was that houses built in the commercial districts served two purposes of commercial and residential uses whereas those at the residential areas, except in a few cases, served one purpose of providing accommodation to people. To this end, the courtyard houses built in the commercial areas had stores in front which opened onto a street. This was not the same as those courtyard houses built in the typical residential areas; with few exceptions, they had no stores attached to them. It is important to note, however, that the areas marked as residential or commercial areas did not strictly follow that designation in function. In practice, the residential and commercial areas had mixed functions. In this case, one was sure to observe a designated residential area house carrying out petty commercial and light industrial activities. Likewise, a (purely) designated commercial area had houses that provided accommodation to people on a permanent basis.⁶³ For example, the two-storey Akan courtyard house on plot number A.A. 73 at Asafo was built to provide living accommodation to people on a permanent basis, however, a store was included in it for commercial activity.⁶⁴ Thus, the houses built in the commercial areas for business-related activities were also seen at residential areas and vice versa.

In terms of design, the kind of houses built in these areas exhibited some degree of differentiation from one another. For instance, the two-storey

⁶³Interview with KwasiYeboahNkansah, 64yrs. at his family house at Asafo on 25th October 2015.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

courtyard houses in Asante New Town were purely built of concrete whereas some of those built at Fante New Town had its top floor built with wood with a continuous veranda that stood on a high plinth at the top floor and front view of the house. This kind of architecture was associated with the coastal towns particularly Cape Coast and Elmina. Thus, the Fante immigrants in Kumase and those at the coast influenced the architecture of Kumase both directly by their technical know-how for the erection of such houses, and indirectly by serving as referent model to the people of Asante in general and residents of Kumase in particular. The townships with high concentration of non-Asante therefore witnessed structural changes in their architectural setting. These non-Asante (of different ethnicities and) with their distinct experiences travelled with their architectural knowledge which contributed to the influences in the transformation of building designs in Kumase. The Fante communities in Kumase especially and those at the coast provided an ideal illustration that inspired the Asante in both architectural and cultural ways.

In the Gold Coast, the two-storey structure whose upper floor was entirely built of wood could be attributed to or described as a product of European building ideas and invention. In Kumase, it was predominant in Bompata, Fante New Town and Asem. About five houses with this architectural design have been identified in these three communities. There was only one in Fante New Town and surprisingly, it was not built by a Fante just like the remaining four houses in the other two communities. However, Fante influences played a major role in the construction of this type of architecture in Kumase. For instance, Kwabena Mensah was a trader and cocoa

farmer who built a two-storey house in 1920⁶⁵ on plot number N.T.E.R. 150/151 on the Edwaberem Avenue, Asem. His choice of this type of building was greatly influenced by his association with the Fante community in Kumase through his active participation in the activities of the Methodist Church, which had a large Fante following.⁶⁶ Apart from his association with the Methodist Church and the Fante immigrants, his trading activities took him to the coastal areas, specifically, Cape Coast and Elmina, where he was exposed to this European-influenced kind of architecture. These experiences influenced the design of the house that Mr. Mensah built at Asem. The design of the house also became an inspiration for other people.

The Incentive for Building in Kumase

People adopted European architecture to achieve certain profitable objectives. To some, it became fashionable and added some kind of recognition and status for them to build and own houses in Kumase. This explains why the colonial government, through the Chief Commissioner for Asante in April 1943 remarked that, "...a rich citizen of Kumawu builds in Kumasi and of Somanya in Accra. I may say that I consider this tendency inevitable and inexorable..."⁶⁷ However, it should be noted that in Asante, a majority of those who fancied and placed much premium on building in Kumase were guided by the opportunity to invest in a profitable venture. Reference is made to Kwabena Mensah who gave more premium to building in Kumase than in his hometown. He built at two different places: Asante New Town and Asem with the same architectural design and plan. Both houses had

⁶⁵ Nathaniel Sarkodie Mensah, interviewed on 20th April, 2016.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 6/15/87: Housing Plan for Ashanti and the Colony (including Asawase Experimental Housing Estate).

big courtyards with just one entrance situated at the side view. The use of one gate had security implications owing to the fact that it ensured proper security of family members and inhabitants, especially at night.⁶⁸ Every family house had time for closing its one and main gate. The one responsible for closing the gate ensured that everyone was inside before it was locked. However, a member who could not enter before the closing time was expected to call the one in charge or anyone to open it for him/her. Those inside relied on the voices they heard before opening so it was necessary for members to recognise the voice of each and every member in a household. This was a good measure used in avoiding the occurrence of any unfortunate happenings like attacks, especially in the evening and at night.

The ground floor for each house had eleven rooms, all opening onto the courtyard, while the five stores for each of the house were strategically positioned such that they all opened onto the busy streets. He used the house at Asante New Town for residential purposes and as such lived with his wives, children and a few people from his extended family. The house at Asem on the other hand, was used for residential and commercial purposes. He rented out the rooms and stores for residential and commercial use respectively. This fetched him money and supplemented his monthly income. Many people were encouraged to build in Kumase because it was not as difficult as elsewhere in Asante in getting people to rent the rooms or stores following the influx and growth in the city's population from 1874. Indeed the demand for living accommodation exceeded supply so once completed, people rushed to get a room or store to rent.

⁶⁸Kwabena Boateng, interviewed on 20th April, 2016.

How the Hybrid Architecture Facilitated the Intentions of People

For many reasons it was ideal for family members to live in the same house. In view of this, family heads and wealthy farmers and businessmen built houses with many rooms in order to accommodate all members of the extended family. Wealthy farmers particularly built such houses with an added reason, (besides) the ultimate reason of ensuring easy flow of communication and broader participation in family meetings among family members.⁶⁹ In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, most farmers relied on their family members for labour despite the nascent development of employed labour. And so by building huge and large compound houses, they were able to accommodate virtually all the members of their nuclear family as well as members of their extended families. Through this, they were able to easily organise their children, nephews and other family members to their *akura*, (a very small village mostly close to a farm where a farmer grows crops), to help clear the land for cocoa production.⁷⁰

Aside the attraction to European architectural style and investing their capital in its construction, the people were also enthused about the fact that such style aided their intentions and ideas for proper family coexistence and life in totality. In this case, it became common for wealthy people to build houses to accommodate not just their wives and children but also the extended family in to which one was born. The wealthy individuals built to meet their needs. For example, a well-established man with two or more wives preferred building multi-storey courtyard houses in anticipation of equal distribution

⁶⁹ Interview with Mr. Opoku Emmanuel, 56yrs. Employment Officer, Labour Office-Kumase and nephew of a compound house owner (Opanin Yaw Gyamfi Memorial House, AffulNkwanta- Kumase), at his office at Asafo on 20th April, 2016.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

among his wives, (each for an entire floor), as and when it became necessary. It has been observed that the people who built the two-storey courtyard houses mostly divided the two sections, ground and top floors, between two wives or between a nuclear family and an extended family.⁷¹ This was aimed to limit, if not avoid completely, conflict that could arise between two families as observed in the single-storey courtyard houses. Dividing two-storey courtyard houses equally between two families or households was therefore easier as compared to the single-storey courtyard house, especially for those houses whose facilities did not ensure a well-balanced distribution. The construction of single-storey courtyard houses from the late nineteenth century was mostly built for a single one family, mostly an extended family and not to be divided between a nuclear family and an extended family.⁷² For instance, the single-storey courtyard house, ME 158 built at Asante New Town in 1940 was distributed among members of the extended family while the owner built a different house for his wives and children.⁷³ It had nine single rooms with two *pie ne asa*. Because of the elevation of compound houses in the twentieth century, there were at least two staircases that connected the various rooms on ground floors. All the rooms opened onto a corridor before the courtyard. The *pie ne asa* rooms had two entrances; there was a door that opened onto a corridor and another door that opened onto a veranda, which projected outside the house.

⁷¹Interview with KofiNyame, 55yrs, (resident at ME 158, Ash-Town) on 3rd March, 2015 at his residence.

⁷²Interview with Mr. Akwasi Asante, 40+yrs. ex-drummer at Anyano Shrine House, at his residence at Kentinkrono on 13th December, 2015.

⁷³ Kofi Nyame, interviewed on 3rd March, 2015.

House Construction in Kumase; Individual or Corporate Responsibility?

Sarpong has suggested that the courtyard houses for families were mostly built with resources belonging to a particular *abusua* (*abusua* is the name in Akan culture for a group of people that share a common maternal ancestor) who together became owners of the house.⁷⁴ Such a view may be appropriate in the days before the 1874 destruction of Kumase where materials and labour needed for the construction of houses were secured at no cost. However, during the reconstruction of Kumase, new methods, techniques, and materials were introduced which demanded the acquisition of capital aside the availability of labour before building. It is in this regard that Opoku disagreed with Sarpong, arguing that family houses in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries were built by *adefoo*, (wealthy members) of families. Opoku's view is appropriate due to the fact that by 1960, many of the houses that belonged to the extended families in Kumase were built by the effort of single individuals. The case of Agya Atta, one of the prominent builders in the twentieth century Kumase, is illustrated. He constructed at least five houses, all of which were two-storey of the *hybrid Akan courtyard* in Ashanti New Town alone. The rest of the houses were scattered in other suburbs of Kumase including Krofrom and Dichemso, where he stayed on the top floor of a two-storey *hybrid Akan courtyard* structure.⁷⁵ Agya Atta's sister married an Asantehene and because of her outstanding service to the chief, she received gold as her reward. Agya Atta received the gold as a gift from his sister but he saw it as a moral obligation to improve upon the lives of members of his extended family with

⁷⁴ Faculty of Architecture, Occasional Report No. 13.

⁷⁵ Interview with AmaSerwaa, 54yrs. granddaughter of Agya Atta on 20th February, 2016 at her residence at Ashanti New Town.

respect to accommodation.⁷⁶ Accordingly, he sold the gold and used the proceeds for cocoa cultivation and also as a money lender. These economic enterprises made him rich and placed him in an advantageous position to construct many houses in Kumase including a rare semi-detached two-storey hybrid Akan courtyard house.

The architectural landscape of Kumase before British colonial rule was characterised with the construction of one house on each compound. Each house had its own compound which followed a repeated pattern. However, Agya Atta's two-storey hybrid Akan courtyard house at Asante New Town, like others, deviated from this pattern. It was a semidetached house built on a big compound and it followed the architectural style introduced by the British during the Estate Housing Programme. Single rooms that opened onto a corridor dominated in both houses. However, some of the rooms had doors that linked it to the next and immediate room so it was simple for some to be converted into a *pie ne asa*. Two of the rooms used by one person or family were therefore used as a *pie ne asa* because of the door that linked one room to the other. Nevertheless, there were few originally built *pie ne asa*. Each of the floors had its own bath and toilet facilities.⁷⁷ These houses were distributed among members of his family both the nuclear and extended family.⁷⁸

Financiers and owners of such houses willed the rooms or houses to family members in the presence of small gatherings. Witnesses were present in the gathering where the owner shared the rooms to the family members including his wife and children. Recipients were expected to present drinks for

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

the pouring of libation in a rite which was called *watu so nsa*, (lit. he has opened a drink on it) to seal the gift. The ancestors were also invited to be witnesses through the libation. The rooms allocated to family members became their lifelong property and were passed on to their offspring in the case of death. This explains why as at 1960 no single individual could claim ownership over most of the houses in Kumase. An example is the two-storey compound house built by KwabenaMensah on plot number N.T.E.R. 150/151 in 1920 at Asem on the New Town-Ejisu Road.⁷⁹ Before Mensah's death he divided the house into two main sections and gave them to his first two wives and their children. In a broader sense therefore, the house belonged to two families for which they both could claim ownership without one fully making such ownership claim. It must be noted that the performance of libation gave legitimacy to the lifelong claim of possession by recipients in the distribution or sharing of house facilities as the people revered their ancestors and avoided any practice that attracted their wrath.

The Exclusion of African Residential Areas from the 1910 Building

Regulations

In 1910, the colonial government introduced rules for the regulation of towns leading to the promotion of public health in Kumase specifically and Asante in general.⁸⁰ Rules for the construction of houses were published in the Government Gazette of that year to be perused by all prospective builders and landlords. These rules were made for the entire Kumase dwellers, however, its implementation was virtually restricted to the areas developed by the

⁷⁹ Nathaniel SarkodieMensah, interviewed on 20th April, 2016.

⁸⁰ The 1910 rules for building regulations in Kumase have been extensively discussed in the previous chapter.

Europeans including the Danyame/Nhyiaeso residencies. Unfortunately, these rules were absent in the African residential areas even though an African had to secure approval, (using title of land secured from a chief or traditional ruler), from the Chief Commissioner before constructing a house. One would supposed that Africans who built during the administration of the British until 1957 secured approval with respect to the land to be built upon as well as the building plan. Nevertheless, the houses built by the Asante defeat this logical conclusion as none followed the building rules. For example, none of the houses built at Bantama, Asante New Town, Asafo and Amakom followed the conditions under which the houses built at the European residential areas found themselves. All the houses built at the residencies did not occupy the entire plot rather they were built in the centre of a vast stretch of land; however virtually all the houses built at the indigenous residential areas occupied the entire land and were very close to the streets. Furthermore, as enshrined in the 1910 Government Gazette regarding the rules for building, prospective builders were to notify and secure approval from the Sanitary Board or the officer in charge of the public streets and open places before beginning any building project.⁸¹ Thus, even though the rules were introduced for the entire Asante some places were deliberately ignored when it came to the implementation. The study therefore posits that, on paper, the rules were meant for the entire Asante but in practice it was reserved for the European residential areas. It presupposes that the colonial government was interested in the well-being of the British and the European administrators in Kumase, and made that to take precedence over that of the indigenous people.

⁸¹ PRAAD, Kumase, ARG 1/26/3/1: Rules for the Regulation of Building in Kumasi.

Conclusion

The chapter has so far built on the previous chapters by examining the creativity and inventiveness with which the local people responded to the transition from their traditional way of building to the hybridized architecture which took into consideration their cultural values. The chapter has established that the hybridized architecture was created from the blend of certain British and European architectural ideas and local building philosophies and ideologies which suited local needs and objectives. This appropriation, nevertheless, exacted cost on the cultural values and worldview of the people of Kumase as it brought new perspectives about household composition and modifications in the general worldview of the local people. The transformation in the architectural landscape of Kumase, even though it improved traditional building styles, also affected the culture of the people. The next chapter therefore examines the cost that was exacted on Asante cultural values as a result of the emergence of foreign architectural ideas.

CHAPTER FOUR

ARCHITECTURE AND THE CULTURAL VALUES OF ASANTE

In the rival mythologies of European imperialism and colonial nationalism, change was an innovation introduced by European rule into so-called traditional societies. To imperial apologists change, as applied to colonial peoples, suggests progress, a dramatic and beneficial linear transition from a static and barely productive traditional culture to a dynamic and limitless modernism. But to colonial nationalists the word primarily connotes 'disruption', the process by which unsympathetic and uncomprehending imperialists shattered the idyllic world of colonial peoples...¹

Introduction

The physical and social conditions that existed in any geographical space combined with the people's worldview determined the prevailing building technology.² The people of Kumase developed a building style based on their cultural values and the materials that were readily available for the construction of houses. However, their interaction with different groups of people had a great influence on their outlook towards the built environment which led to the adaptation and appropriation of architectural ideas and forms that were different in philosophy and alien in structure from their indigenous architectural notions and building technology. Undoubtedly, Asante's encounter with the British and other European styles and ideas about the built environment engendered a great impact on the architectural landscape of Kumase, because the foreign was able to impose its worldview on the local. This led to a switch from local building designs to British and European models and later a syncretism of local and European building technologies

¹ A.A. Boahen (ed.), *General History of Africa VII: Africa under Colonial Domination, 1880-1935*, London: UNESCO Publishing, 1985, 487.

² L. Prussin, "An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture", *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 33, No. 3. (1974), 182-205.

which produced the hybridised Akan courtyard. The architectural switch consequently had repercussions on the cultural values of Asante. The rest of this chapter therefore examines how the development of architecture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries affected the practice and notion of social interaction among the people of Kumase and their cultural values too.

Architecture and Politics

The traditional architecture of Kumase was a product of the people's worldview which politics played a significant role in. To put it blatantly, the building style of Kumase, (specifically, the composition of palaces), was created to match its political system. Many buildings in Kumase were politically and socially engendered, but palaces were more political than others. Palaces consequently became the storage houses for important indigenous political and social institutions and principles of the Asante.³ One of such principles was democracy, which was highly esteemed within the political framework of Asante.

Asante politics acknowledged and recognised the thoughts, and will of the people as essential for the administration of the nation.⁴ Hence, the Asantehene—who being a democratic ruler and bound by the principle of democracy—and other divisional chiefs had to rule with the consent of the people which was expressed through their representatives, namely *Abusuampanyinfo* (lit. heads of family) (singular *Abusuapanin*), or directly by the people in judicial cases. The people's will was formally expressed in

³Interview with KwakuOwusu-Karikari, BekwaiBretuoAbusuapanin, 62years, at his residence at Kentinkrono- Kumase on 6th June, 2016.

⁴Interview with BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabio III, OtumfourNsumankwahene, 64 years, at his palace, Ash-Town on 29th November, 2015.

the political system during the meeting of the councils of the chiefs and other gatherings where the people were free to express their opinions. The expression of opinions took place within the space provided by traditional architectural design of the indigenes.⁵ It was within a particular building space that the political processes of Asante found expression and manifestation. The building space offered people the opportunity to hear and be heard. At the basic level, it provided the avenue for open discussion where consensus was reached in meetings involving members of a clan or an extended family.⁶ This method, as noted by Gyekye was highly valued and democratic.⁷ This shows that Asante had been a democratic nation long before their encounter with European political ideas about democracy. The Asante concept of democracy thus meant “continuous and active participation of all the citizens in the affairs of government.”⁸

The well-known Akan maxims which translate as, “One head does not go into council” and “wisdom is not in the head of one person”⁹ found expression within the democratic ideas and the built environment of Asante palace or architecture. The maxims stress the need for consultation and the wider involvement of the people, especially those knowledgeable in matters of public concern for an effective and peaceful political system. From this perspective, chiefs were not supposed to solely deliberate and make decisions

⁵Interview with OpokuFrefre III, (aka Nana Buabasa), OtumfourGyaasehene, 68years, at his palace, Ash-Town on 10th December 2015.

⁶Interview with Comfort Asante, 60+ years, lecturer and expert in Akan cultural values, Department of Ghanaian Languages and Linguistics, University of Cape Coast, at her office on February, 2016.

⁷ K.Gyekye, *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*, Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company, 2003. 116.

⁸Ibid.,116.

⁹Ibid., 116.

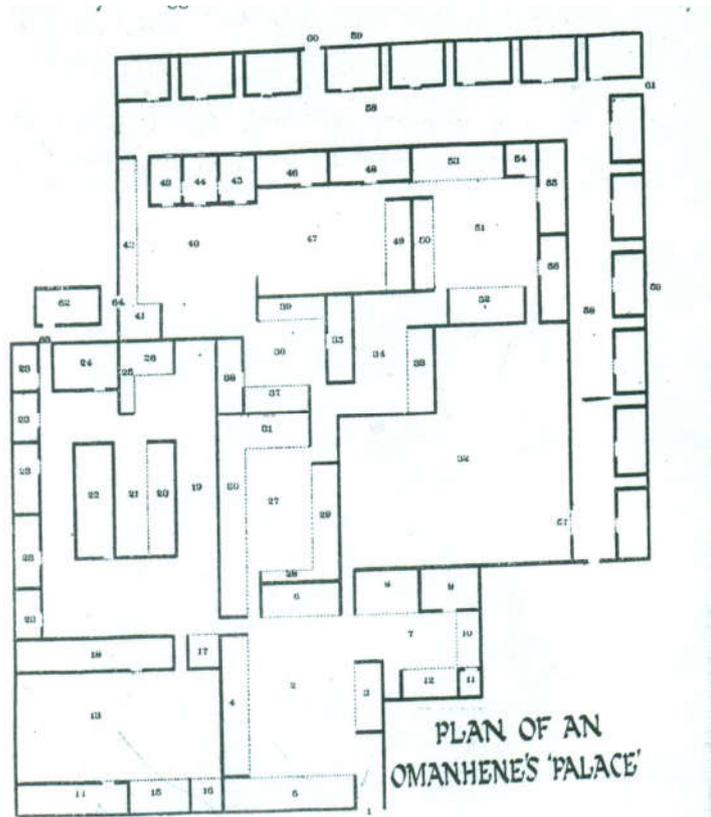
or take actions without consulting the council of elders.¹⁰ The reason was that, in the Asante political system, wisdom was not the prerogative of one individual and for that matter it was not advisable for one person, in the person of a chief, to decide on issues without the consent of his council.¹¹ The chief was not deemed more knowledgeable than the council in the customs and traditions of the people. In view of this, the arbitration of cases and other traditional judicial practices were done at the *pato*, the three-walled open veranda room, which ensured broader participation of the people, an open pronouncement of free and fair judgements.¹² Therefore, the Akan courtyard became the preferred type of building design among the people as it provided the big space needed for the supporters of those involved in cases to be witnesses whilst the traditional leaders sat at the *pato*.¹³ The traditional architecture of Kumase therefore provided the space for the observation and realisation of the practice and performance of aspects of Asante politics. The plan of the palace of an Omanhene (Paramount Chief), below pictorially illustrates the normal form of an Asante palace and its inherent function as a space for the performance of democracy.

¹⁰Owusu-Karikari, interviewed on 6th June, 2016.

¹¹OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 30th November, 2016.

¹²AsabreKogyawoasu, interviewed on 4th December, 2016.

¹³ R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1929, 57-60.



14

Plate 11: Plan of an Omanhene's Palace

There are twenty-four *pato* in the diagram above. Four of them were strictly for political functions while two of them were used for both religious and political functions.¹⁵ For example, key no. 29 on the diagram shows a *pato* which accommodated the paramount chief during the hearing and trial of cases. There were other *pato* that accommodated other sub-chiefs including krontihene, akwamuhene, okyeame, adontenhene, and gyaasehene as can be observed on key no. 30 as they assisted the paramount chief in the arbitration and passing of judgements. Evidently, the exercise of power in the political system of Asante was done by a paramount chief or an odikuro, (headman of an Asante village), and a council. The council at the national level in 1960

¹⁴Ibid., 57-63.

¹⁵Ibid., 57-63.

consisted of the Asantehene, the Asantehemaa, (female chief of Asante), and all the paramount chiefs of Asanteman including the chiefs of Nsuta, Juaben, Bekwai, Kokofu, and Mampong.¹⁶ The chief was therefore bound by his oath to consult the council of elders on all matters, and to obey their advice. The key actors in the government at the national level were the Asantehene and his elders who were themselves chiefs in other divisions. These chiefs could be categorised into two for the purpose of court hearing at the Kumase palace. They were those who flanked the Asantehene during the adjudication of cases in one *pato*. There were those who sat in a different *pato* from where the Asantehene sat. This explains why numerous *pato* existed in the national palace of Asante. The views of the chiefs who sat in different *pato* were assembled and formed part of the final decision of the Asantehene.¹⁷ Because the *pato* played a role in Asante politics and democracy, the traditional architecture of Kumase, which birthed the *pato*, therefore was a springboard from which Asante political system derived meaning and reality. However, the destruction and subsequent control of Kumase by the British witnessed the introduction of a new architecture in the built environment of the city. This new architecture was essentially different from the traditional way of building. An example was the construction of a two-storey self-contained house, now Manhyia Palace Museum, for the occupation of Asantehene, Nana Agyemang Prempeh I.

The house was a two-storey and a two-bedroom structure built at Manhyia by the British in 1925, a year after Nana Agyemang Prempeh I

¹⁶D. Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism, 1850-1928* London: Clarendon Press, 1963, 266.

¹⁷Owusu-Karikari, interviewed on 6th June, 2016.

returned from exile in the Seychelles to Kumase. The building was a compensation to Asante following the demolition of the traditional palace in present-day Adum during the 1874 war.¹⁸ However, the Asante people rejected it as a compensation package and rather paid for the full cost of the building before their long awaited leader, NanaAgyemangPrempeh I was allowed to occupy the facility.¹⁹ The house therefore provided living accommodation for the *Asantehene* following his return from the Seychelles on a deportation plot schemed by the British colonial government. AgyemangPrempeh I was initially accommodated at the Asafo palace until the British completed the house. It is therefore not surprising that the kingdom of Asante was at a point in time administered from Asafo, a suburb of Kumase.²⁰ The residence of an Asante chief therefore served as the physical representation of the chief's political authority. The Manhyia residence of the *Asantehene*, now Manhyia Palace Museum, differed from the traditional palace²¹ of Kumase in terms of form and design and the ultimate effect it had on the state of governing.

The house was a two-storey self-contained structure which deviated completely from the local architectural style. It consisted of living rooms, dining rooms, bedrooms, kitchen, and a toilet and bath room.²² The ground floor was made up of five rooms, two of which were living rooms. The first of the living rooms using the back entrance was the administrative office where

¹⁸Interview with Justice Brobbey, Curator, Manhyia Palace Museum aged 50+, at his office at Manhyia Palace on 3rd June, 2016.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰Interview withFiakoAbabio III, AsafoGyasehene, aged 50+, at the Asafo Palace on 31st May, 2016 at Asafo, Kumase.

²¹ See chapter one of this thesis- the examination of the traditional architecture of Kumase in relation to its form and structure in order to better appreciate the changes and effect that this European contact had on the local building technology.

²²Brobbey, interviewed on 3rd June, 2016.

the king transacted business on behalf of the Asante nation.²³ The room being the office of the Asantehene provided him the opportunity to host people for both private and public conversations. Next to the administrative office was the first living room which was used to receive ordinary and non-official visitors whereas the second living room was used to receive special local, national and international dignitaries and statesmen.²⁴ Next to the second living room was the dining room where the chief ate. The other room on the ground floor was quite disconnected from the four rooms and actually served as an unintended bedroom for the children of the chief.²⁵ It was adjacent to the administrative office and likewise opened unto the big veranda at the back entrance. The house had two big verandas; one was located at the back of the house while the other one was situated at the left elevation section of the house. It also had two roof tops situated at the left elevation section, on top of a veranda, of the house and the other at the right elevation side of the house. An extension of a big space that depicted an *aduh* was made at the back of the house. That space was meant to serve the functions that *pato* in the traditional Akan courtyard offered. The upper floor had four rooms; two halls, two bedrooms and a washroom. It was on this floor that the chief's bedroom was located. For this reason, the halls or living rooms were strictly for meetings involving people very close to the chief. For instance, it was at this section that family meetings involving the Kumase Oyoko family were held. The house, which the British built to replace the national palace which they destroyed in 1874, in no way depicted a traditional Akan courtyard house. It came into being after earlier attempts by the British to hitch indigenous political systems

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

which found its physical expression within the context of indigenous Gold Coast architecture.²⁶ An example is when cases involving Africans were referred to the colonial authorities for settlement within a “European space” at the castle on the coast of the Gold Coast and later to other parts of the Gold Coast colony.²⁷

The house built for AgyemangPrempeh I assumed typical European architectural style in form and plan with no regard for the worldview of the Asante people, especially, in the art of governance because at this time, the powers of an Asante chief had been reduced and incorporated into a new institutional framework.²⁸ Accordingly, the house with its new architectural design abandoned the political space that facilitated the observation of Asante politics in the traditional Akan courtyard house. This affected the active participation of both the court attendants and the entire citizenry in the governance process of Asante. Brobbey, curator of the Manhyia Palace Museum, has argued that this structure was built to serve as the private residence of the ‘Kumasehene’²⁹ and for that matter a palace for the

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ SeeBoahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (46-48 and 57-59); Buah, *A History of Ghana*, (80-81), and Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana*, 201-205, for how the British Colonial Government demanded that cases involving Africans be brought to the Cape Coast Castle for trial instead of an African court in an African built space. The British first used the built environment to undermine the authority of an African leader and the dignity of an African court in 1844 when about eight African leaders agreed for certain cases including murders, robberies, and other crimes and offences to be tried at the Palaver Hall of the Cape Coast Castle before the British officials. It continued in 1865 when the court of John Aggrey, ruler of Cape Coast, was reduced as a subordinate of the British courts, where cases from the former went on an appeal at the latter’s courts. In 1876, the use of architecture in undermining the authority of an African leader reached Kumase following the introduction of the Supreme Court Ordinance which empowered district commissioners to exercise the powers of a judge of the Supreme Court within their areas of jurisdiction. The aim was to progressively shape African customs to the general principles of British Law.

²⁸ Kimble, *Political History*, 131.

²⁹ “Kumasehene” was a unique office created by the British colonial government. It was limited to the then Asantehene, AgyemangPrempeh I. The office was created to replace the office of the Asantehene following the British refusal to recognise AgyemangPrempeh I as

Kumase division of Asante, but not necessarily a palace for the person of the Asantehene and the Asante nation. He however argued that the absence of the architectural elements, like *patoand aduho*, within the house, which supported the system and manner of governance in Asante did not affect the political process. In other words, the structure was adversarial to the art of governance which palaces provided in Asante in particular and its cultural values in general. However, the opposite of the views above is true. This is because in Asante, the residence of a chief was supposed to be the palace³⁰ of that leader and state.³¹ Thus, practically, that structure which the British built became the palace of the Asantehene which clearly affected the process of hearing and administering cases in the traditional setup and sense of court proceedings as well as the influence it had on the architectural landscape of the city. The acceptance of the house by Nana AgyemangPrempeh I and Asanteman needs to be interrogated. It implies that firstly, under the indirect rule system of the British, indigenous rulers like the Asantehene were expected to lead the campaign of practices acceptable to colonial authority for reforms in the various colonial territories.³² Securing the endorsement of a traditional leader for British and European ideas and culture was an easy way of securing endorsement from the entire populace in any given colony, particularly, Asante where the people revered and followed the decisions and steps of their leader, who was considered divine. This accounted for the reason why Nana AgyemangPrempeh I was taken to the Seychelles for nearly twenty-eight years after which he returned with a new identity: first as an ordinary person, or

leader of the entire Asante nation. The powers of Prempeh was therefore limited to Kumase hence the creation of that office, "Kumasehene" which literally means "chief of Kumase".

³⁰ Traditional conception of a palace has been delineated in chapter one.

³¹ Comfort Asante, interviewed on 3rd November, 2016.

³² Boahen, *General History of Africa*, (eds.), 489.

‘private citizen’, in 1924, and two years later assumed the newly created position as “Kumasehene.”³³ His return, in the estimation of Brobbey was made possible after the British had succeeded in “brainwashing” his thinking pattern into accepting British and European ideas and discarding certain Asante traditions he had previously upheld and defended.³⁴ Therefore, by building a European-style house for Nana AgyemangPrempeh I in Kumase, the British anticipated the opening of a floodgate of British and European architectural ideas and creativity across the built environment of the city. The outcome was the changes of Eurocentric colonial modernity it brought to the indigenous political and social institutions especially under the aegis of the scheme and agenda of indirect rule, a rule which L.P. Mair described as the “progressive adaptation of native institutions ‘and technology’ to modern conditions.”³⁵ The aim of using the “Kumasehene” especially his European house, to influence the entire citizenry was actually achieved as many people, especially those chiefs who were subordinate to the chief built similar kinds of houses as a way of identifying themselves architecturally with their leader. The construction of a European-style house for Nana AgyemangPrempeh I had adverse effects on Asante politics as those traditional architectural elements that functionally supported politics and role of a leader were neglected in this new house.

³³ M.A. SeiwaaOwusu, *AgyemangPrempeh I II and the Making of Modern Asante*, Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2009, 54.

³⁴ Brobbey, interviewed on 3rd June, 2016.

³⁵ K.A. Busia, *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti*. London: Oxford University Press, 1958, 105.



Photograph by Tony Yeboah

Plate 12: Front view of the Manhyia Palace Musuem

The British did not factor in the worldview of the Asante before constructing the edifice. The customary architectural compartments which facilitated the art of governance were omitted and the rooms did not open unto a courtyard. The house was structured without recourse to traditional architectural building designs and imperatives, which shows that there was a lack of understanding or respect for the politics and the culture of the people. Was it therefore a true compensation to the Asante for the loss of their palace in 1874? The house which the British built was elegant but irrelevant, and even worse, it was manipulative and denigrating to the nuances of Asante traditional system of governance. The construction of a European-style house for the leader of Asante was part of the colonial designs to weaken effective process of political administration in the nation. The British had an agenda to suppress Asante civilisation. The regime did not have an understanding and appreciation of the space within which Asante local customs and institutions were practised. The regime generally condemned the local political customs and systems. This position is supported by Governor Nathan's observation about past colonial administrators who failed to appreciate the,

...complicated system of administration, hallowed by antiquity and historic precedents, which our ignorance and policy have alike tended to break down, and a deep-rooted superstition which we are unable to understand and from which our presence in the country has detached a portion of the people³⁶

Indeed the introduction of European architecture succeeded in separating, as Nathan remarked, a section of the people from their traditional leader because the kind of house built for their leader discouraged the observation of certain practices which was previously an incentive for many people to see their chief in the former official residence and palace. From the observation of H.T. Ussher, who was the Gold Coast Administrator in 1868, the conspicuous agenda of the British to expunge any civilisation associated with the Asante was revealed thus, "...the time has come for us to get rid of many of the old institutions which come directly into conflict with modern ideas of civilisation... A list should be made of all the customs and institutions which should be abolished."³⁷ The European-style house built for Nana Agyemang Prempeh I was an adverse onslaught on local political practice in favour of a new political framework under colonialism.

From a different perspective and in the British assessment, Nana Agyemang Prempeh I returned first as an ordinary person, or 'private citizen', in 1924 and two years later assumed the newly created position as Kumasehene.³⁸ The status of Nana Agyemang Prempeh I as a "private citizen" and later as "Kumasehene" when he returned perhaps accounted for the type of house that was built for him. This was because his powers were reduced which necessarily affected the number of officials needed in the court

³⁶ Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana*, 132.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 133.

³⁸ Seiwaa Owusu, *Agyemang Prempeh II*, 54.

proceedings as well as the number of people to serve him. Furthermore, the number of chiefs who sat to deliberate and discuss issues that affected the Asante nation was reduced. For these reasons, there was no need building a gargantuan palace with a huge section for traditional court proceedings; discussing matters that affected the entire nation and a section for servants. Consequently, the large number of *pato* was no longer needed. There was no need providing Nana AgyemangPrempeh I with numerous *pato* because of his new identity, hence, his court officials and stool attendants as well as the number of cases to be resolved reduced substantially. Also, as cases of previous subordinate states were no longer brought to the traditional capital for adjudication, it rubbed out the leader's hope of large subordinates or organising multitudes in a war against the British. It further ensured that the British lived without any thought of insecurity and panic in a territory which had fiercely resisted their settlement in the initial attempts.³⁹ This study thus postulates that the British authorities, among other things, used architecture to physically communicate the limitation of the powers of the Asantehene. Be that as it may, the European-style house for NanaAgyemangPrempeh I was not appropriate for the political tradition of Asante.

Even though the building had sections that provided the functions of a traditional architecture, it was certainly unsuitable for the political processes that existed in Kumase. This was because it was designed to provide space for a limited number of people, hence, unsuitable for traditional court hearings in relation to the Asante political system. One can observe a similar situation in the context of the Bangla politics through the opinion expressed by the

³⁹ See Kimble, *A Political History of Ghana*, 151-160 and Boahen, *Ghana: Evolution and Change* for how the Asante resisted British settlement in Kumase.

interviewer of the “politically active Bengali architect”, Mazhrul. The interviewer in a response to Mazhrul’s argument that architecture had been used to control politics in Bangladesh remarked, “Good news! At last architecture is controlling politics!”⁴⁰ The Bangladesh National Assembly building could only accommodate 350 people. Meanwhile the population of the country was almost 100 million. Mazhrul’s position was that it was a deliberate political decision to limit the size of the chamber hopefully in favour of the president. Similarly, the European-style house for the “Asantehene” with the limited space “problem”, which the carriers of a foreign political system built, was an infringement on the people’s democratic space and a political disadvantage to them.

On the other side, the payment and occupation of the house by the Asante leaders communicates acceptance of Western architectural ideas to the detriment of traditional architectural development. This is because earlier Asante reaction towards the British and European, which is expressed by McCaskie, revealed that, ‘Nothing was ever adopted that first had not been subjected to close scrutiny in the light of two constant criterion of obvious utility, and the notion that anything introduced should not rock the status quo of Asante society.’⁴¹ The Asante leaders, and indeed the entire nation, did not allow Nana AgyemangPrempeh I to occupy the house until they had fully paid for it cost. By this act, it is presumed that Asante accepted the architectural worldview of the British and therefore anticipated its effect on their political system of governance. Had they wanted preservation of their architectural

⁴⁰ L.J. Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity*, Massachusetts: Routledge, 2008, 297.

⁴¹ E.Akyeampong, “Christianity, Modernity and Weight of Modernity in the Life of ‘Asantehene’ AgyemangAgyemangPrempeh I I, c. 1888-1931”, *Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 69, No. 2, 1999, 279-311.

worldview, particularly the structure and composition of their traditional palace design, they would have rejected the British-style house and rather built a house modelled on the previous palace at Adum and thereby preserved the traditional building design which was best for the adjudication of cases and other customs and institutions of the people. Brobbey and Darko-Asante however, have different views why Asante accepted the European-style house. Their arguments deserve to be widely discussed.

Brobbey argued that Asante was by this time under British rule and so they could not have really challenged the British.⁴² Asante had been defeated and brought under British rule, so they were to accept, without objection, any directives and guidelines from the British. However, this was not the case; without a doubt, the Asante objected to anything deemed detrimental to their pride as one of the prowess nations in West Africa. It is in this regard that they refused to even allow their chief to occupy the house built by the British until they had fully paid for it cost. This was to prevent any future claim of the British to the house.⁴³ The question then is: why did Asante refuse the house for free at a time when they were under British control? The fact that they had the courage to prevent AgyemangPrempeh I from occupying the house until payment was done meant they could have rejected the house outright in light of its failure to incorporate traditional Asante building elements which supported the art of governance. Brobbey's argument does not really justify and vindicate the Asante leaders' decision to accept the European-style house.

⁴²Interview with Justice Brobbey, 40+ years, curator at Manhyia Palace Musuem, at his office, on 3rd June, 2016.

⁴³ Ibid.

Secondly, Brobbey argued that the acceptance of the house could be attributed to the fascinating circumstances that surrounded the new identity of AgyemangPrempeh I.⁴⁴ He was exiled and lived in a European designed house for all the twenty-eight years he stayed at the Seychelles. His return, in the estimation of Brobbey, was made possible after the British had succeeded in transforming him mentally, religiously and physically to suit British and European ideas. Therefore, AgyemangPrempeh I might have opted and agreed to accept this house. This position is apt due to the fact that the former Asante king came with a new identity; he had adopted many European and western ways of life and so he wished to continue that way of life with slight modification. For instance, he accepted the religious faith of the people who took him hostage for nearly three decades and actually concluded that, ‘...the world had changed and if Asanteman was to survive, Asanteman and her leadership had to be educated and technologically inclined.’⁴⁵ AgyemangPrempeh I’s preference and acceptance of the European-style house therefore underscored the new attitude with which he approached Asante history and tradition. Thus, it was not a big deal for him to accept the house. He was therefore aware of the effect and actually anticipated modifications in the Asante political system as well as his relationship with his people. It is clear that AgyemangPrempeh I at this point had ‘forgotten’ the ancient practice of subjecting any new idea to close scrutiny in the light of Asante tradition and culture.

Conversely Darko-Asante argued that the functions that those architectural elements: *i. epato*, and *aduho* served within the traditional

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Seiwaa Owusu, *AgyemangPrempeh II*, 40.

Kumase palace were catered for within the European-style house for Nana AgyemangPrempeh I.⁴⁶ For instance, the patowhich also served as the place where a chief ate in the traditional Akan courtyard house, was not found in the new architectural design, however, its functions, (not all though) were catered for. Thus, the dining hall replaced the pato as it served as the eating place within the new built environment for Nana AgyemangPrempeh I. It must be noted, however, that the space within the new architecture could not offer the multipurpose role that were observed in the traditional architectural elements. Furthermore, not all the spaces found within a traditionally Asante built palace were found in the new architecture. Above all, providing spaces for the observation of traditional practices did not necessarily mean it preserved the status quo of Asante society. Thus, the purpose and functions could be served within the new architecture. However, its traditional attachments were not served. For instance, court proceedings were performed within the house of a traditional palace. However, in the new architecture they were performed outside the house in an extension created at the back of the house. Spaces indeed were created for the observation of traditional practices in the new architecture; nevertheless, the traditional connotation attached to its performance within the house was lost. Darko-Asante's position therefore is untenable. What is plausible is that the absence of the traditional elements within the new design meant the new structure was not constructed to perform the customary functions for which it ought to have performed.

⁴⁶Darko-Asante, interviewed on 3rd June, 2016.

The Interplay between Architecture and Social Institutions in Kumase

Traditional architecture in Kumase was carefully designed to support the social institutions of the local people. The aduho, courtyard, especially played an important role in this regard. It was within the architectural space of families and communities that the observation of these institutions which supported education and social organisation became possible, visible and convenient.

The household was an important agent in the transmission of Asante cultural values to its younger generation because it served as the primary point of contact or interaction for every individual. It was within a household or a built space that families and societies first and foremost inculcated their cultural ideas to a person.⁴⁷ The instruction came in direct forms through instruction from elders including folktales, and indirectly through the emulation of the deeds⁴⁸ of the people who lived together in a household. Thus, an architectural space provided favourable conditions for children and family members to learn societal norms, values, among others which guided them to conform to societal expectations. It was this practice that sustained the history and tradition of a group of people as the cycle of imparting knowledge to the young ones continued⁴⁹ and found demonstration within the traditional

⁴⁷Interview with Mr. Akwasi Asante, ex-drummer at Anyano Shrine House, at his residence at Kentinkrono on 13th December, 2015.

⁴⁸D. D. Kuupole and D.V.N.Y.M. Botchway, (eds). *Polishing the Pearls of Ancient Wisdom: Exploring the Relevance of Endogenous African Knowledge Systems for Sustainable Development in Postcolonial Africa. A Reader*, Cape Coast: University Printing Press, 2010. 85.

⁴⁹Ibid.

built space.⁵⁰ In no time, when Britain superimposed her authority on Asante, the European self-contained architecture inundated the topography of Kumase.

This new architecture affected the traditional mode of spreading knowledge and cultural values because it was designed to support small size family of parents and children. In fact, children who lived in the European self-contained houses like those at the Danyame/Nhyiaeso residencies were fundamentally deprived of the opportunity that the traditional Akan courtyard house provided for interaction with other members of the extended family.⁵¹ Children in the European self-contained architecture did not have the opportunity to observe the techniques, skills and the complete character of the elders in their families. This was basically because the unbroken flow of interaction provided by an Akan courtyard house was lacking. Thus many of such children exposed their cultural ignorance whenever they attended special family gathering, where there was the display of culture and tradition.⁵² Also, their parents alone could not teach them all the societal norms, and values. Effective transmission of knowledge and the cultural values of Asante therefore found a perfect expression within the architectural space provided by the traditional Akan courtyard house where they imbibed traditional wisdom and knowledge which integrated them perfectly into the family and the entire community.

Rattray in his book, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, makes a controversial conclusion about the built environment of Asante after the 1874

⁵⁰AkwasiAsante, interviewed on 13th December, 2015.

⁵¹Darko-Asante, interviewed on 3rd June, 2016.

⁵²Interview with Nana Amoaten, 48 years,AcheamfourNtoohene, Akwamu Stool-Asafo at the Asafo Palace on 6th June, 2016.

destruction. He observed that, “Illustrations in Bowdich prove that the typical Ashanti house has remained unchanged through the last hundred years.”⁵³ This assertion is not applicable to the traditional capital of the famous Asante nation. This conclusion is made in the light of the following reasons. Firstly, there was nothing like the retention of traditional Kumase architecture during the reconstruction of the city after 1874. The architectural reconstruction of Kumase involved two methods. The first was the emergence of building plans, methods and structures which were essentially alien to the built environment of the city. The second involved a combination of both foreign and local architectural ideas and creativity. This was because African elements under the colonial administration merged with elements of European building styles and traditional Kumase architectural notions to produce the popular hybrid Akan courtyard house in a creative and dynamic way.

Secondly, the architectural landscape of Kumase as at 1929 when Rattray’s book was published supported the position that Kumase had been transformed and assumed different building plans, methods and structures as against Rattray’s position that “...Ashanti house has remained unchanged through the last hundred years.”⁵⁴ The change in the building style of Kumase, especially those built by the Europeans, necessitated a transformation in the composition of the various households in the city. The outcome was that it affected the bond that existed among members of the extended family. Even those houses appropriated enthusiastically and successfully to promote certain values could not function exactly as the traditional courtyard would do.

⁵³ R.S. Rattray, *Ashanti Law and Constitution*, London: Clarendon Press, 1969, 56.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

Likewise, the observation of certain social and political practices including the settling of disputes, *efisem*, by an *Abusuapanin*, or trustee of a house were hindered. The reason was that, among other things, a household contained people from different backgrounds, some of whom, especially tenants, would not want cases to be settled by an *Abusuapanin* or trustee of a house especially when the case was between a family member and a tenant. Eventually, the practice where settling of disputes among family members within a household faded away because of urbanisation. Thus, due to urbanisation, immigrants rented houses and mixed up with people related in terms of ‘blood’ relations in Kumase leading to an increased patronage in the services of arbitration by the police and the courts. This practice whereby an *Abusuapanin* settled disputes within a household ceased in some households and family houses. This is attributed to urbanisation where immigrants lived in rented houses with family members. Thus, members of many of the households were not related in terms of ‘blood’ relations in Kumase.⁵⁵

The men and women of a lineage were expected to help one another in every possible way. Their unity was clearly expressed during marriage ceremonies, outdoorings, funerals and other social gatherings. It was in these situations that family members – even those who lived away from the community— came together to support and perform the rites.⁵⁶

Some social gatherings like marriage ceremony and outdoorings in the Asante society were mostly a family affair with few invited friends and neighbours. It did not involve a huge number of people such that the

⁵⁵FiakoAbabioIII, interviewed on 31st May, 2016.

⁵⁶*BusiaPosition of the Chief*, 7.

aduh was just enough to provide the needed space for its observation, hence searching for bigger space outside the house was highly limited.⁵⁷ Performing a marriage ceremony within the house had some interesting attachments to it.⁵⁸ It must be established that marriages in Asante were done in a household. In case of misunderstanding in the marriage, the affected person knew the exact geographical and building space to lodge a complaint or where the drinks and others were to be sent in the event of divorce. That is to say, in case of any marital problems on the part of the woman, the man knew where to report. On the other hand, the woman knew the exact geographical and building space to report issues affecting the progress of the marriage to the man's family house.⁵⁹ Even though the marriage ceremony was not held at the man's family house, where to locate him and his external family was announced within the wife's family house as part of the marriage rituals. For this reason, marriages especially were to be received within the family house of a bride.

Architecture and Household Bond

It must be reiterated that Asante society laid emphasis on communal values. Communal values, according to the eminent African philosopher Gyekye, are the,

...appreciation of the worth and importance of the 'large group', those values that underpin and guide the type of social relations, attitudes, and behaviour that ought to exist between individuals who live together in a 'household', sharing a social life and having a sense of common good.⁶⁰

⁵⁷OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2016.

⁵⁸Brobbeey, interviewed on 3rd June, 2016.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰Gyekye, *African Cultural Values*, 35.

Showing concern for one another, reciprocal exchange of obligation, and depending on each other, were some of the objectives for living together in a household as individuals who belonged to one household with common interests and goals. It was this conception of communalism that influenced the sense of large household settlement that ensured social relations among a relatively large group of people within the domain of a traditional Kumase architecture. Members of the household recognised the existence of common values, obligations, and appreciation for the needs of one another.⁶¹ The recognition engendered the commitment and willingness to advance the interest of every member within the household. To this end, members of a household showed concern for the well-being of others, and also did what they could to advance the common good of the household. It was within the traditional architectural setting and the hybridised architectural space that this practice became potentially successful as it produced the desired or intended result.⁶² Concern for one another, to some extent, informed the nature of architecture in Kumase.

Those who built the Akan courtyard houses did not only think of providing living accommodation for their children and spouses, rather they factored the care of the poor people in their extended family who could not afford the construction of houses to accommodate themselves as well as others. So in Kumase, the well-to-do built the Akan courtyard houses in order to provide enough rooms to accommodate all members of the extended family. The design and composition of the Akan courtyard house supported the Asante principles and practices for communal living. It further strengthened

⁶¹ Comfort Asante, interviewed on 13th November, 2016.

⁶² Ibid.

the unity and bond among members of a family as they lived happily in one household.

The traditional Akan courtyard house in the city of Kumase provided the space for the realisation of the bond that existed among members within a household in the lineage system of Asante. Each household and the blood lineage in it was a political unit headed by an *Abusuapanin*, (head of family).⁶³ Household ties formed the basis of communal life in Kumase particularly and Asante in general. The members ate together on a daily basis with each individual identifying himself/herself with the group for which he was accepted. Thus, all men, both married and single met and ate together in a particular section of the *aduhoo*.⁶⁴ Doing this on a daily basis strengthened the kinship ties and love among them. Hence, the space within traditional architecture made room for the realisation of the unity among family members. It also aided the fulfilment of family/social obligations and responsibilities.

In the Asante society, a child was bound by religious and educational ties to his father, but the greater part of the rights and duties were derived through the mother because of the matrilineal inheritance system. A child's rights and duties found meaningful manifestation within the architectural space of the family to which he/she belonged.⁶⁵ For instance, as a member of a family, a child had direct access to his family house and its facilities without having to seek permission as an 'outsider' will do. Also, it was within the architectural space of the family that a child became more effective in the

⁶³Busia, *Position of the Chief*, 22

⁶⁴Owusu-Karikari, interviewed on 6th June, 2016.

⁶⁵FiakoAbabio, interviewed on 31st May, 2016.

performance of his/her duties to the family as they were easily assembled for duty calls like helping a family member on their farms.⁶⁶ It was within that space that members helped each other in every possible way, thereby illuminating the very strong and cherished attitude of the local people to household ties. This is corroborated by K.A. Busia that: “Lineage, ‘household’, ties were so strong that, even when a man had to spend most of his life in another town or Division, he looked upon the ‘household’ of his lineage as home.”⁶⁷ The unity of a family or household was thus conspicuously expressed within the built environment of that particular group. The strong attachment to household settlement which ensured strong social relations among individual members witnessed modifications following the introduction of a new settlement pattern and building technology from Europe.

The building design of the European in Kumase gives clear evidence to support the view that they built to accommodate a nuclear family. Indeed, none of the estate houses they built in the Kumase Housing Programme had more than two rooms. However, these houses were meant to provide accommodation for the Africans, who traditionally lived in households in one compound with huge numbers of people including the head of the household, wife or wives, the unmarried children of both sexes, married sons and their sons and children.⁶⁸ The European-style houses did not encourage the bonds of kinship that existed and manifested within the Akan courtyard house as it tended to offer living accommodation to couples and their children and later, their paid housekeepers. In this regard, Nana Amoaten, *Ntotoehene* of the

⁶⁶OpokuFrefreIII, interviewed on 10th December, 2015.

⁶⁷Busia,*Position of the Chief*, 7.

⁶⁸Ratray,*Ashanti Law*, 3.

Akwamu Stool, Kumase, remarked that, “*Abrofodanamoā Asante abusuankabom; eboanyemnyonosuban, aseebusuaanaapaepaemogya mu*” (lit. European architecture has not helped the household settlement of Asante; it destroyed kinship and separated individuals belonging to same blood relations).

In the twentieth century, the people, especially the youth and the more enterprising members of the household, saw the extended family system with its obligation towards one another as burdensome. This new attitude was engineered by the economic and social changes orchestrated by Western schooling, and new trade/commercial opportunities and employment and Christianity under the British— and Islam, to some extent. The common way, as remarked by Darko-Asante, in coming out of such family entanglement was for one to detach himself from the family space and instead rent or build a European-style house which supported himself, spouse and children. In this way, he distanced himself from those issues that exacted cost, be it financial or time.

Consequently, by 1960, many people had turned away from customs they had been taught as inferior by the British. As the new settlement pattern and building technology saturated the architectural landscape of Kumase, it contributed to the individualistic ideals among the people. The effect was that it undermined the cherished extended family system vis-à-vis large household settlement of the Asante whiles it replaced it with the individualistic nuclear family system with its accompanying self-contained house of the European. The economic development from the nineteenth century has been recognised

as the main catalyst for the individualistic tendency in Kumase particularly and Gold Coast in general.

Kimble has identified the economic development that followed European presence in the Gold Coast as the main avenue through which European and American values, including the individualistic, competitive, acquisitive attitudes permeated the African society.⁶⁹ This economic development brought opportunities to everyone and therefore removed the earlier monopoly of wealth accumulation among the ruling class. The opportunities brought increment in money incomes among the younger men, especially. This category of people was the one which comprised persons who were easy-going and more vulnerable to outside influences including the incorporation of European architectural ideas.⁷⁰ Evidently, the chief of Bantama in the early twentieth century resorted to the young men in his quest to improve the town's architectural landscape with modern and European designs.⁷¹ He therefore granted plots of land to those young men who had the capital to build those kinds of houses. By virtue of the external influences, the kinship group or extended family members who lived in one household began to lose its importance as an economic unit, and hence to some extent its social self-sufficiency. Instead of identifying oneself through same 'blood' lineage, new associations began to emerge based on common economic, or political interests.⁷² The needs of people were achievable with the new associations and so there was no need for people to build and live in one household for mutual

⁶⁹ Kimble, *Political History*, 128.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 128.

⁷¹ Interview with YaaNyamekye, 90years, (wife of a two-storey compound house builder at Bantama) at her residence at Bantama on 26th April, 2016.

⁷² Busia, *Position of the Chief*, 130.

support. Thus, the by-products of the economic opportunities that accompanied European presence brought fundamental changes to wealth acquisition and association, and eventually obliterated the security measure associated with the Akan courtyard house.

In terms of design, the traditional Akan courtyard structures were self-generated security and policing units. Because it was around one courtyard, it was not really difficult for occupants, even in their rooms, to perceive happenings at the courtyard. Thieves were easily identified, especially because there was no space for hiding. This discouraged armed robbery and well-executed crime cases. The large number of people also added some level of security to the household. The Akan courtyard house had many rooms that accommodated large numbers of people. With such a huge number of people constituting a household, there was always someone in the house to ensure the safety of individual and family properties. Therefore, although petty pilfering by members of the household could occur, burglaries were minimal.

It is important to note that the selection and incorporation of European architecture in Kumase provided functional roles and advantages to the built environment of Kumase. Two of these benefits are discussed in this section. First of all, the landscape of Kumase—residential purpose especially— was noted for the construction of one-storey structures but with enough rooms to provide living accommodation for every member of a family. However, the two-storey structure became prevalent following the British takeover of Kumase with its accompanying architectural ideas. Construction of this type of house coincided with an increase in the population of the city where non-Asante looked forward to securing living accommodation in order to facilitate

their hopes of benefiting from the economic prospect of the city. In most cases, landlords offered the ground floor of their houses for rent while they occupied the top floors with their families. This became possible after the local people had incorporated British and European architectural ideas in their local building technology. Thus, by building two-storey structures, landlords were able to lease the rooms on the ground floor while maintaining the privacy of the family at the top floor.

Secondly, physically and philosophically, the foreign designs and structures supported the new family system—nuclear family—embraced by the local people. The nuclear family consisted of a mother, a father and their children. This was a relatively smaller unit as compared to the extended family so there was no need building Akan courtyard houses of at least ten rooms for such families. This was why after independence, the government of Ghana constructed European self-contained houses, mostly in the form of bungalows, to accommodate its staff. Private individuals who embraced the nuclear family system also promoted the construction of the European self-contained houses instead of the traditional Akan courtyard house or the hybridised form. Thus, the acceptance of British and European building technology supported and suited the change in the cultural behaviour and the new perspectives toward family system among the local people. Be that as it may, the Western colonialism-birthered designs and forms had adverse reconfiguration on the customary social and political arrangement, interactions and landscape of the Kumase locality.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the role architecture played in the cultural values of Asante. It has been established that traditional architecture, especially the Akan courtyard house, was designed to meet the expectations of the religious, social and political organisations of the people. This ensured an expedient and unbroken flow of the custom and tradition of the people as and when it became necessary for its observation. Furthermore, the chapter has shown the outcome of Kumase's encounter with British imperial dominance. At the political level, the colonial government used foreign architecture to communicate the reduction in the power and authority of the Asantehene. The change in the interaction of the people following the introduction of British and European self-contained architectural design has also been highlighted. This change affected the bond and unity found in the lineage system of Asante. Indeed, European-style houses profoundly modified social norms and orientation which undermined communal values and sanctions in Kumase.

CONCLUSION

The preceding chapters of the thesis up to this section have shed light on the phases in the art and science of building plans in Kumase from 1874 to 1960. They also examined the built environment and the architectural landscape of Kumase and the transformation that they experienced following the establishment of British political control in Asante. The socio-cultural consequences of British political rule led to the growth of a plurality of building designs and styles which included the typical European architectural designs and a form obtained from a syncretism of local Asante architecture like the Akan courtyard house and designs that the British introduced in Kumase. A classic syncretic form was the hybrid Akan courtyard house.

Operating within the objectives of the study, the discussions in the early chapters have brought out information about how the worldview of the local people influenced the development of their traditional building technology and the architectural and cultural consequences of the 1874 war between Asante and the British. The victorious British became managers and planners of the city of Kumase, the capital of the defeated Asante. This facilitated the British intention of shaping the city's architecture with European building technology. The outcome of this was that European architectural designs had an impact on the cultural values of Asante. What is discernible in this work is that there were different types of houses for different purposes in the traditional Kumase architecture. These types of houses were distinguished from one another by their distinct architectural styles. For instance, the partitioned space within a shrine was structurally

different from those observed in palaces and residential houses. The reason was that they served different purposes. A shrine, unlike a palace or residential house, normally did not have numerous rooms as it was built to house a deity and a priest— who was the immediate worshipper of a deity. However, palaces and family residential houses were built with numerous rooms. The idea for palace construction was that it belonged to the entire society and as such there was the need for it to have more rooms in order to provide accommodation for citizens on a temporary basis whenever the need arose or to provide temporary accommodation for foreigners who visited for diverse reasons. This work has thus succeeded in delineating the plurality of architectural designs and houses for different uses in Kumase.

Moreover, it is clear that the construction of large scale houses of European architectural styles began after 1901 when Kumase was brought under the authority of British imperial rule. From this time, the built environment of Kumase experienced the construction of “block of houses” by the British colonial government for Africans. The families who secured accommodation within the “block of houses” had their respective sections situated with other units in the larger building on one compound. Construction of the “block of houses” began with the Asawase Housing Estate which involved the building of two cottage types of houses. The housing programme of the British continued with the North and South Suntreso housing estates which were actually an improvement on the Asawase Housing Estate. The North and South Suntreso housing estates were characterised by two main forms: detached and semidetached houses. It was in this building programme that the architectural landscape of Kumase first witnessed the construction of a

semidetached house. These houses were built not only to accommodate entire families but they were at best two bedroom structures which obviously communicated that they were intended to accommodate a nuclear family of husband, wife and children.

Similarly, after the 1874 destruction of Kumase, there was the need for the British colonial government to construct houses to accommodate its officials including the Medical Officer of Health and the Town Surveyor who were put in charge of the city's administration. British and Europeans traders were also encouraged to take advantage of the economy of Kumase. This resulted in the construction of houses by both the British colonial government and European trading firms and companies. It therefore necessitated the construction of houses to accommodate these European staff in order to effectively execute their political and economic functions after 1901.

Consequently, the construction of houses for European occupation took place at the Danyame/Nhyiaeso residencies. The houses built in these areas were fundamentally different from those houses built at Asawase and other housing for Africans. They were largely bungalow type made up of a one-storey house with a veranda and a wide, gentle sloping roof. Its architectural landscape also had some interesting features such as garage, and boys' quarters. In the time of colonial occupation of Kumase, there was limited knowledge among Europeans as to how diseases spread. The causes and effect of bacteria and viruses still remained a mystery. The Europeans therefore assumed that disease was spread when there was no fresh air and sunshine. Thus, they believed that poor ventilation contributed to the spread of certain diseases, especially contagious airborne ones. For this reason, many of

the houses built in the Danyame/Nhyaeso residencies were placed in the centre of huge plots of land which would allow air and sunshine to circulate. The houses were also raised on stilt to allow air to go under it, and they had verandas all around them to allow the air to circulate. By this, the colonial agents ensured cool breezes in their respective houses for their comfort in the humid and hot tropical weather.

The large scale construction of houses with European architectural designs was made possible when the British assumed control over the administration of the city after the 1874 ransacking of Kumase. The aftermath of the event was marked by conspicuous changes within the built environments and the architectural set up of the city. The outcome was adversarial to the traditional architecture of Kumase because the people could not retain in totality their local building technology following the architectural acculturation by the imperial power of the British. All in all, this study has succeeded in unearthing the extent of change that British control brought to the architectural make-up of the city.

Be that as it may, the local people, who were themselves agents of the city's reconstruction, did not completely abandon their local architecture. European architecture caught their interest and attention. For this reason, the local people combined local building technology with British and European building ideas to produce a hybrid form of the Akan courtyard house which blended local building designs such as *pato*, *aduh* and the elements of European architecture including veranda, and corridor. This form of architecture composed of a single storey hybrid Akan courtyard house and a two-storey hybrid Akan courtyard house. A majority of the houses built in the

twentieth century – especially in places like Bantama, Asafo, Asante New Town, Amakom, Fante New Town – had a veranda, store and a corridor added to the local designs in a single storey or two-storey structure, and hence it is concluded that the efforts of Europeans and Africans contributed to the development of new architectural designs during the rebuilding of the burnt city of Kumase.

It must be mentioned that the destruction of Kumase in 1874 demonstrated the relationship between the built space and the exercise of authority. The palace of Asanteman provided the physical representation for the authority of the chief. Meanwhile, the British were determined to bring an end to Asante supremacy in the Gold Coast. In achieving this objective, the British burnt Kumase and demolished the palace of Asante even when the leadership of the nation had surrendered and committed themselves to the dictates and authority of the former.

Lastly, what is also true, as could be gleaned from this work, is that the infiltration of European architecture and building ideas influenced Asante cultural values. For instance, the kind of houses built in Kumase by the British did not have enough room for extended family residence. Rather it was a “household” for father, mother and children. This had consequences on the communal living of the Asante, especially, at the basic level. People used architecture to communicate their intentions. Accordingly, by building a two-storey structure with two bedrooms for the Asante leader, Agyemang Prempeh I, in 1925 the British sought to communicate to the nation that there was a change in the status of their former chief who actually returned from exile in Seychelles as a “private citizen” and later became the “Kumasehene” (lit.

Kumase chief) in 1925 – chief of a Kumase whose architectural topography experienced structural changes from 1874, and whose architectural character and built space were never going to be the same.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Archival Sources.

Public Records and Archives Administration Department, (PRAAD), Kumase:

ARG 1/15/1 Erection of buildings in the town of Kumase.

ARG 1/15/36 New Bungalows Kumase Site.

ARG 1/15/90 Progress of building programmes.

ARG 1/15/6/1 Housing Estates Allocation of Plots.

ARG 1/15/6/2 Kumase New Zongo Housing Scheme.

ARG 1/15/6/3 Asawase Second Estate.

ARG 1/15/6/1 Government Housing Estate Suntreso.

ARG 1/15/6/ Suntreso Housing Estate- Building Programmes.

ARG 1/15/6/8 Progress Report Suntreso Housing Estate.

ARG 1/17/6 Town Layout Coomassie.

ARG 1/26/3/1 Rules for the Regulation of Building in Kumase.

ARG 1/1/113 Town and Administration of Coomassie.

ARG 1/1/246 Town Planning, Kumase.

ARG 2/1/11 Kumase Residential Area.

ARG 2/1/32 Housing Policy General.

ARG 2/1/102 Housing Loans.

ARG 2/2/10 KumaseZongo Affairs.

ARG 2/2/35 KumaseZongo Affairs part II.

ARG 2/8/60 Town Planning.

ARG 2/11/5 Kumase Town Council.

ARG 2/15/2/4 Second Estate- Asawase.

ARG 2/15/2/5 Suntreso Housing Estate.

ARG 2/15/2/6 Bungalow Building Programme, Kumase.

ARG 2/15/7/8 Bungalow Building Programme, Kumase.

ARG 2/17/1/3 Town Planning Kumase.

ARG 2/17/1/9 Kumase Residential Area- Nhyiaeso Layout.

ARG 6/15/87 Housing Plan for Ashanti.

PRAAD, Accra:

ADM 11/1903: Desecration of the Golden Stool.

Oral Sources

Oral Interviews Conducted by the Researcher.

Abdulai, GardiSanusi Mohammed. 57years,AsawaseZongohene, at his residence on 27th February, 2016.

Adams, Mohammed. 45years, at his workshop at Asawase on 27th February, 2016.

Adu-Gyamfi, Janet. 50 years, at her residence at North Suntreso on 27th February, 2016.

Aidoo, Peter. 67 years, caretaker of a Bungalow at Nhyiaeso on 28th February, 2016.

Amponsah, Kofi. (OtumfourTumtuni). 38years, at his residence at Bomso on 24th November 2015.

Asante, Akwasi. 40+ years Ex-drummer at Anyano Shrine House, at his residence at Kentinkrono on 13th December, 2015.

Asante, Comfort. Lecturer at the Ghanaian Language Department, 60+ years, University of Cape Coast on 3rd November, 2015.

BaffourAsabreKogyawoasuAbabio III. OtumfourNsumankwahene. 64years, at his palace, Asante New Town on 29th November 2015.

Boateng, Kwabena, trustee of a two-storey compound house at Amakom, . 64 years, on 20th April, 2016.

Brobbeey, Justice. Curator, Manhyia Palace Museum, 40+ years, at his office at Manhyia Palace on 8th December, 2015.

Darko-Asante, Kojo. Ashanti Regional Architect, 40+ years, at his office at the Public Works Department, Adum-Kumase on 26th February, 2016.

Donkor, Kwame, resident of a two-storey compound house, 64 years, at Stadium on 20th April, 2016.

Konadu, Afia. Royal of the Oyoko Clan at Manhyia, 70 years, at her residence at Ash-Town on 10th March, 2016.

Larbi, Kwaku. 49years, at his residence at North Suntreso on 27th February, 2016.

Mansa, Akua. 50+ years, daughter of Opanin Kwabena Ofori, a two-storey compound house owner at her residence at Bantama on 25th April, 2016.

Mensah, Kwaku. *Nsumankwafo* at Tano Yaw Shrine, 87years, at the shrine on 30th November, 2015.

Mensah, Nathaniel Sarkodie. 78years, Retired Personnel Officer and Son of Mr. Kwabena Mensah at his residence at Asem on 20th April, 2016.

Nana Amoateng. Acheamfour Ntotoehene, Akwamu Stool-Asafo, 48 years, at the Asafo Palace on 6th June 2016.

Nana Dwamena. Okyeame of Asantehene Gyaasehene. 60years, at Nana Opoku Frefre's Palace, Asante New Town on 16th December 2015.

Nana Fiako Ababio III. Asafo Gyasehene. 50+years, at the Asafo Palace in Kumase, on 31st May, 2016.

Nana Kwaku Nyina. (Abirem Gyaasehene). 51years, at his residence at Abirem on 6th December 2015.

Nana Opoku Frefre III. (Nana Buabasa). Otumfour Gyaasehene. 68 years, at his palace, Asante New Town on 10th December 2015.

Nkansah, Kwasi Yeboah. 64years, at his family house at Asafo on 25th October 2015.

Nkrumah, Afia. 90years, at her residence at South Suntreso on 26th February, 2016.

Nyame, Kofi. 55 years, (resident at ME 158, Ash-Town), 2015 at his residence on 3rd March, 2015.

Nyamekye, Yaa. 90 years, (wife of a two-storey compound house builder at Bantama) at her residence at Bantama on 26th April, 2016.

Nyarko, Komfoo. 100 years, (priestess at the Tano Subunu Shrine), Abirem on 13th December 2015.

Opoku, Emmanuel. 56 years, Employment Officer, Labour Office-Kumase and nephew of a compound house owner (Opanin Yaw Gyamfi Memorial House, AffulNkwanta- Kumase), at his office at Asafo on 20th April, 2016.

Owusu-Karikari, Kwaku. 62 years, Bekwai Bretuo Abusuapanin, at his residence at Kentinkrono- Kumase on 6th June, 2016.

Serwaa, Ama. 54 years, granddaughter of Agya Atta, 2016 at her residence at Ashanti New Town on 20th February, 2016.

Tawiah, Kofi Dominic. 55 years, Chief Works Superintendent at the Public Works Department, Kumase on 26th February, 2016.

Yaa, Komfoo. 80 years, (priestess at the Tano Yaw Shrine), Besease on 11th December 2015.

Published Primary Sources (Books)

Austen, R.F. *Travels and Life in Ashanti and Jaman*. London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1967.

Beecham, J. *Ashantee and the Gold Coast*. London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1968.

Bowdich, T.E. *Mission from Cape Coast Castle to Ashantee* (3rd ed). London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd, 1966.

Brackenbury, H. *The Ashante War: A Narrative*. Edinburgh: W.

Blackwood and Sons, 1874.

Dupuis, J. *Journal of a Residence in Ashantee*, (2nd ed.). London: Frank

Cass and Co. Ltd., 1966.

Ramseyer, F. and Kuhne, J. *Four Years in Ashantee*. London: James

Nisbet & Co., 1874.

Newspaper

Statesman, Vol. 7, No. 15, Week Ending October 19, 1997

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books

Printed Books

Adarkwa, K.K. (ed). *Future of the Tree: Towards growth and development of Kumasi*. Kumase: University Printing Press, 2011.

Ade, J.F. and Espie, I. (ed.) *A Thousand Years of West African History*.

Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1965.

Agbodeka, F. *Ghana in the Twentieth Century*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1972.

Amenumey, D. E. K. *Ghana: A Concise History from the Pre-Colonial Times to the 20th Century*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2008.

Arhin K., and Afari-Gyan K. *The City of Kumasi, Handbook: Past, Present and Future*. Accra: The Institute of African Studies, 1992.

Boahen, A.A. (ed.), *General History of Africa VII: Africa under Colonial Domination, 1880-1935*. London: UNESCO Publishing, 1985.

....., *Ghana: Evolution and Change in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, London: Longman Group Ltd., 1975.

Buah, F.K. *A History of Ghana*. Oxford: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 1980.

Busia, K.A. *The Position of the Chief in the Modern Political System of Ashanti*. London: Oxford University Press, 1958.

Dickson, K.B. *A Historical Geography of Ghana*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969.

Fuller, F. *A Vanished Dynasty Ashanti*. London: Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 1968.

Fynn, J.K. *Asante and Its Neighbours 1700-1807*. Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1971.

Gyekye, K. *African Cultural Values: An Introduction*. Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company, 2003.

Hailey, L. *Native Administration in the British African Territories*. London: Kraus Reprint, 1979.

Hill, P. *Migrant Cocoa Farmers of Southern Ghana*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1963.

Kimble, D. *A Political History of Ghana: The Rise of Gold Coast Nationalism 1850-1928*. London: Clarendon Press, 1963.

Kuupole, D.D. and Botchway, D.V.N.Y.M. (eds.) *Polishing the Pearls of Ancient Wisdom: Exploring the Relevance of Endogenous African*

Knowledge Systems for Sustainable Development in Postcolonial Africa, A Reader. Cape Coast: University Printing Press, 2010.

Mae-ling, J.L. *The Brazil House.* Accra: Surf Publications Limited, 2010

McWilliam, H.O.A. and Kwamena-Poh. M.A. *The Development of Education in Ghana.* London: Longman Group, 1975.

Osei, K. *An Outline of Asante History* (3rd ed.) Kumase: Cita Press Ltd. 2004.

Rattray, R.S. *Ashanti Law and Constitution.* Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1929.

Reindorf, C.C. *History of the Gold Coast and Asante* (3rd ed.), Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1985.

Rodney, W. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa.* Abuja: Panaf Press, 2005.

SeiwaaOwusu, M.A. *Prempeh II and the Making of Modern Asante.* Accra: Woeli Publishing Services, 2009.

Stanley, M.H. *Coomassie: The Story of the Campaign in Africa, 1873-4.* London: Sampson Low, Marston and Company, 1896.

Swithenbank, M. *Asante Fetish Houses,* Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1971.

Webster, J.B. *The Revolutionary Years: West Africa Since 1800.* Harlow: Longman Group Ltd, 1980.

Wilks, I. *Asante in the Nineteenth Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

Electronic Books

Freund, B. *The African City*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

McCaskie, T.C. *Asante Identities: History and Modernity in an African Village. 1850-1950*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000.

Salm, J.S. and Falola T. (ed.), *African Urban Spaces in Historical Perspective*. New York: Rochester University Press, 2005.

Vale, J.L. *Architecture, Power and National Identity*. Massachusetts: Routledge, 2008.

Journal Articles

Adeyemi, A.E. "Meaning and Relevance in Nigerian Traditional Architecture: The Dialectics of Growth and Change". *Covenant University's Public Lecture Series*, Vol. 21, April 24, 2008, 1-33.

Akyeampong, E. "Christianity, Modernity and Weight of Modernity in the Life of 'Asantehene' AgyemangPrempeh I, c. 1888-1931". *Journal of the International African Institute*, Vol. 69, No. 2, (1999), 279-311.

Donkoh, W.J. "Kumase: Ambience of Urbanity, Tradition and Modernity". *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*, New Series, No. 8, (2004), 167-183.

Farrar, V.K.T. "Some Comments on Indigenous African Building Technology", *Archaeology in Ghana* (1993), 45-49.

Hess, J.B. "Imagining Architecture: The Structure of Nationalism in Accra, Ghana" *Africa Today*, Vol. 47, No. 2 (2000), 35-58.

..... "Imagining Architecture II: "Treasure Storehouses" and Constructions of Asante. *Africa Today*, Vol. 50, No 1 (2003), 27-48.

Hyland, A.D.C. "The Architectural History of Cape Coast", *Transactions of the Historical Society of Ghana*. New Series, No. 1 (Vol. 16, No. 2, January, (1995), 163-184.

King, A.D., "The colonial bungalow compound-complex: a study in the cultural use of space", *Journal of Architectural Research*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (1974), 30-43.

Monroe, J.C. "In the Belly of Dan: Space, History, and Power in Pre-Colonial Dahomey". *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 52. No. 6. Dec. (2011), 769-798.

Prussin, L. "An Introduction to Indigenous African Architecture". *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, Vol. 33, No. 3. October, (1974), 182-205.

Schmidt, S. "Cultural Influences and the Built Environment: An Examination of Kumasi, Ghana". *Journal of Urban Design*, Vol. 10, Issue 3, (2005), 353-370.

Magazine Article

Herbert, M.C. and Ross, D.H. "The Arts of Ghana," *Museum of Cultural History*, University of California, 1977.

Unpublished Theses, Dissertations, and Papers.

Courtney, M. "African Coastal Elite Architecture: Cultural Authentication during the Colonial Period in Anomabo, Ghana". PhD. Dissertation, Graduate School, University of Florida, 2010.

Faculty of Architecture, University of Science and Technology. Occasional Report No. 13, 1970: Documentation and Conservation Report on the Vacation Training Programme.

Nmadili, N.O. "Architectural Retention and the Development of Modern African Design in the Works of Architect Demas Nwoko". History Dissertation, University of Atlanta, December 2006.

Wilhelm, H.V.H. "Euro-African, Afro-Brazilians and the Evolution of Social Space in the Nineteenth Century Accra". M.Phil Thesis, Department of History, University of Ghana, June 2014.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: "The Palaver Hall of Asantehene Palace at the Time of the Takeover of Kumasi" in 1874.



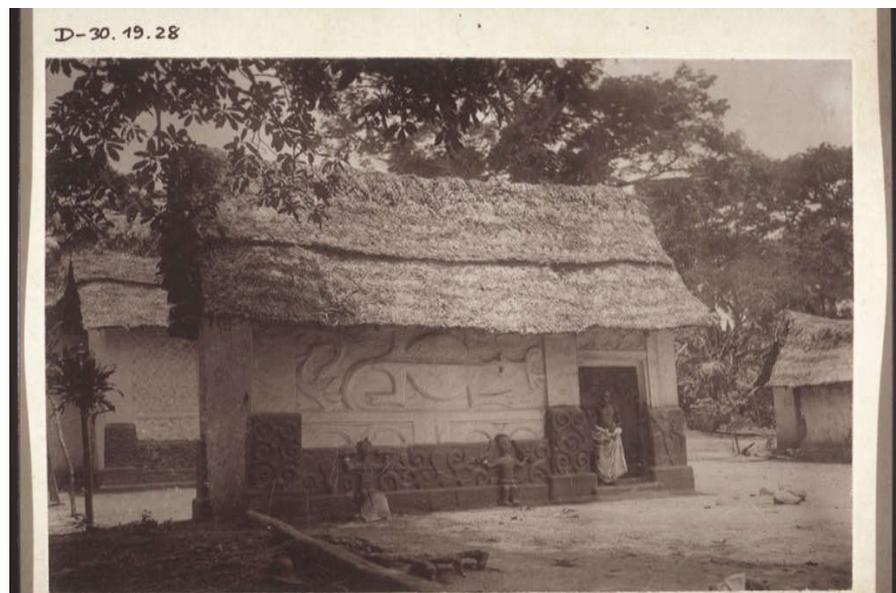
Source: Basel Mission Archives, D-30.18.047

APPENDIX B: Ruins of the Royal Mausoleum in Kumasi, c. 1874-1896.



Source: Basel Mission Archives D-30.18.49

Appendix C: House of a priest in Asante, c. 1901



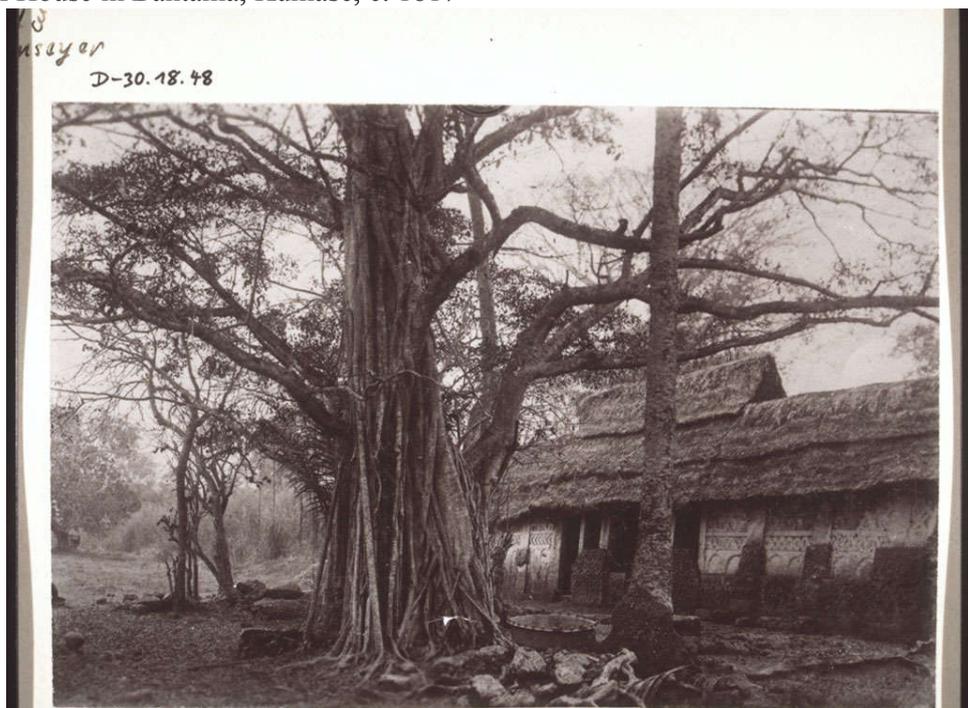
Source: Basel Mission Archives, D-30.49.28

Appendix D: The fort at Kumase and the road that led to Bantama, c. 1902



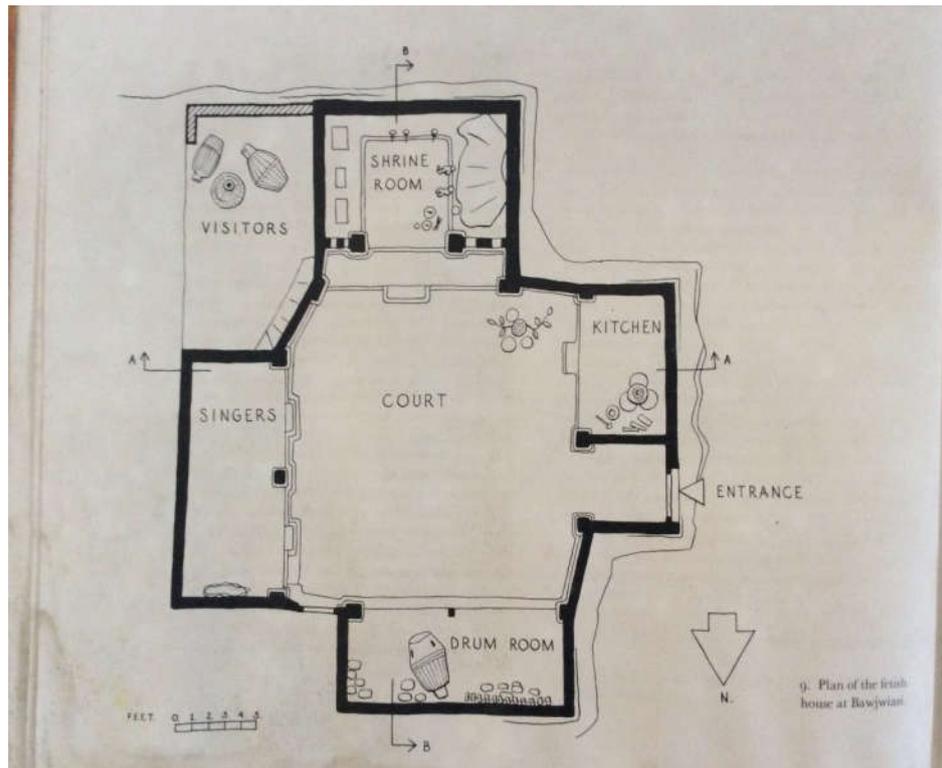
Source: Basel Mission Archives, D-30.63.012

Appendix E: A House in Bantama, Kumase, c. 1817



Source: Basel Mission Archives, D-30.18-48

Appendix F: Plan of a shrine in Asante.



Source: Michael Swithenbank, *Asante Fetish Houses*, Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1971.

Appendix G: The Kumase fort from within, c.1902.



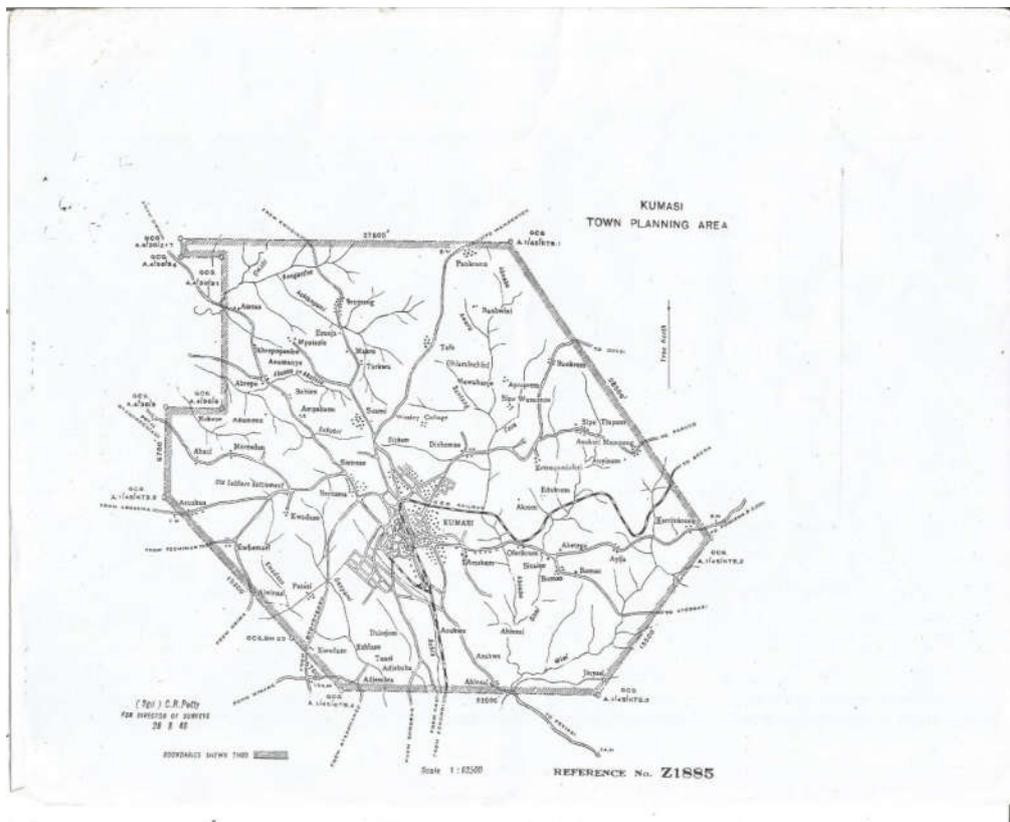
Source: Basel Mission Archives, D-30.18.017

Appendix H: Mission buildings with an open space in Kumase, c. 1950.



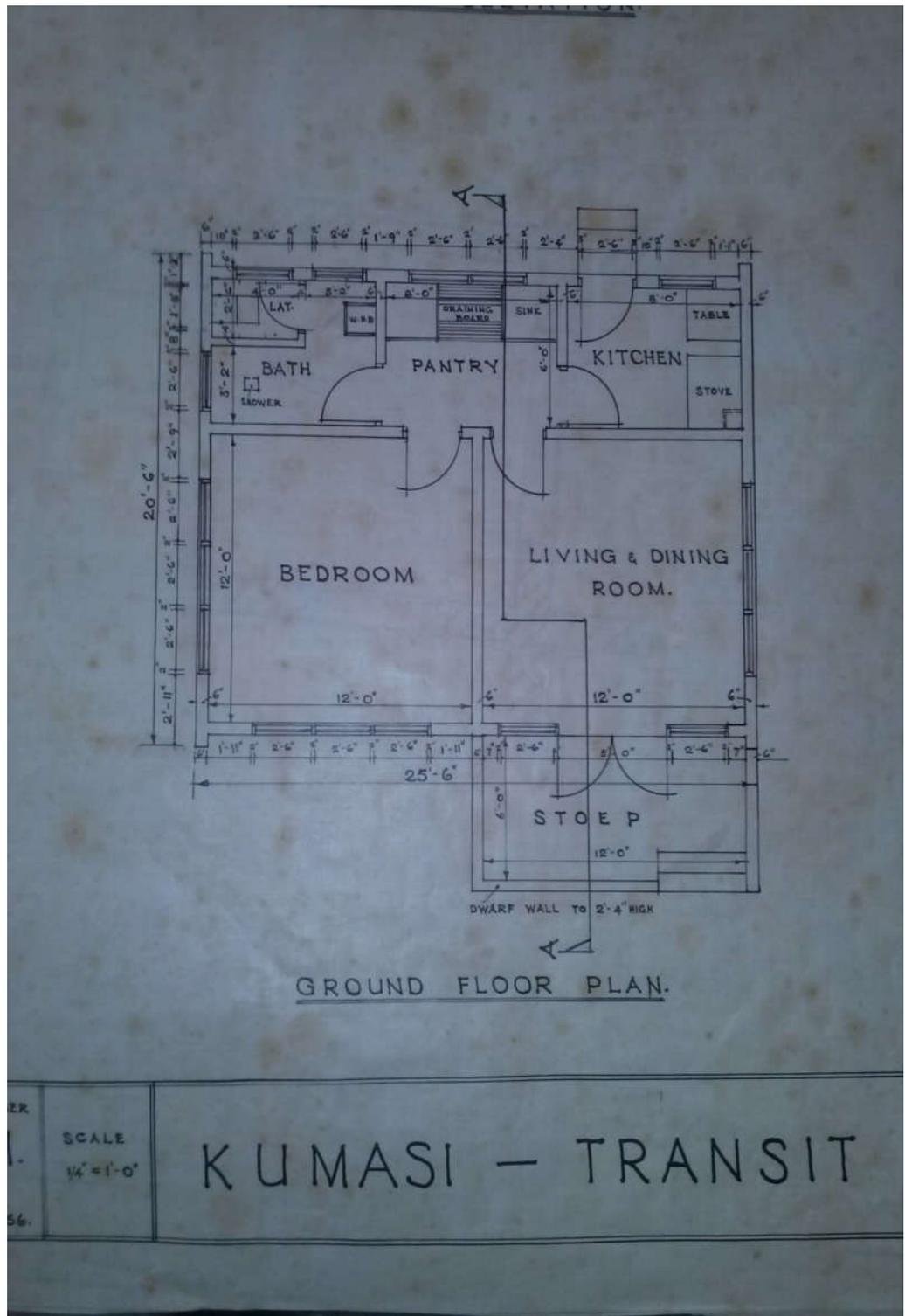
Source: Basel Mission Archives, D-30.16.038

Appendix I: Kumase Town Planning Area



Source:PRAAD,Kumase

Appendix J: Plan of a house at the European residential area at Danyame, Kumase, c.1950.



Source: Archives, Public Works Department, Kumase.

Appendix K: An Experimental House at Suntreso, Kumase.



Photograph by Tony Yeboah

Appendix M: Bungalow for a European expatriate at Nhyiaeso residency, Kumase.



Photograph by Tony Yeboah