

A Descriptive and Historical Analysis of *Sanga* Traditional Dance of the *Asantes*

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Abstract: *Asante* traditional dances bear and portray some aspects of *Asante* culture; albeit, less number of these traditional dances are much performed and mostly known within *Asante* and other places in Ghana and overseas. The internet; being a suggestive abode of information for educational, preservation and other purposes mostly host *Adowa*, *Kete* and *Fɔntɔmfɔm* amongst the vast number of *Asante* traditional dances. *Sanga* is less performed and quite uncommon as it had been orally passed down as a means of preservation. Most people have neglected *Sanga* and there is basically less knowledge on the dance making it currently recede. This study therefore investigates the problem to understand the embedded meanings behind *Sanga* dance and to also advance the need and means for the preservation of *Sanga* traditional dance. In using the qualitative research method, interviews and observation were the main forms of data collection instruments used for the study. Data were collected from the Head of Performing Arts and the *Ammamereso Agofoomma* of the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi and the then *Entrepakuo* and the head teacher of the R/C JHS, *Atwima Nerebehi*. Most respondents are indigenes of the Ashanti Region and had in-depth knowledge on *Sanga*. A sample size of 16 was selected through purposive and snowball sampling. The results of the study proved that *Sanga* dance forms part of *Asante* culture and is mostly embedded in its related cultural elements; appropriate means to accurately document such receding traditional dances are in both photography and video formats. It was recommended that the chiefs and elders of various ethnic groups in Ghana should include receding Ghanaian traditional dances to public gatherings; and bridge the gap of preserving traditional dances by using documentary videos.

Keywords: *Asante* Traditional Dances, Cultural Elements, Preservation of Perception and Receding Traditional Dance

1. Introduction

Dance, is one of the oldest art forms fused in various aspects of people's daily lives [1]. Especially with Africa, traditional dances are wholly known and appreciated in the contexts of the specific cultures the dance performances relate to. Traditional dances trace their roots to the culture of the people who perform them; hence depicting their cultural values and identities. African traditional dances are translations of rhythms into gestures; making an absence of rhythm in African dance *Agomum*, literally meaning African dance without music (D. Amponsah, personal communication, March 23, 2017) in *Asante Twi*. The

embedded meanings of traditional dances are to be understood in order to comprehend the entire dance enacted even if the subject matter is unknown. The human body conveys messages through various gestures mostly based on rhythms made or related themes of the traditional dance performed [2]. Other cultural elements such as costume, drum instruments and even language used in accompanying songs for dance performances hold respective cues which when known would better expound on the dances in relation to the culture they originate from [3]. *Asantes* have varied traditional dances. These include *Adowa*, *Kete*, *Bɔsoɛ*, *Sikyi*, *Adakamu*, *Fɔntɔmfɔm*, *Adenkum*, *Dansuom*, *Asenua*, *Akosua tuntum*, *Sanga* and *Kanbɔnwaa*.

Asante traditional dances are highly neglected among the

youth now as they specifically learn and perform more western and contemporary dances [4]. This proves that with time some traditional dances get corrupted, neglected and extinct as western dances are much adapted. Also serving as war loots, traditional dances tend to be corrupted and recede with time when they are successively passed on. The learners of the traditional dances might have different backgrounds, i.e. different cultures altogether and hence have an influence on the state of traditional dances being taught. Cultural based television programs patronised much in Ghana including TV3's "Ghana's Most Beautiful", UTV's "Heritage Ghana" and other beauty pageants keep portraying the common and much performed *Kete*, *Fɔntɔmfɔm* and *Adowa* of *Asantes* without showing the less known and quite uncommon *Asante* traditional dances like *Sanga*. Other factors like cultural alienation also threaten the contents and entire performance of traditional dances [5]. It is claimed that many contemporary Ghanaians are known to relate culturally and traditionally related things to ritualistic activities [6]. As indigenes move away from their various cultures for modern ones, less number of people opt to learn the traditional dances. Griots also keep dying out making the knowledge of the dances, intrinsic rhythms, languages and movements which make the traditional dances distinct also die out with time. The absence of dance leaders in Ghanaian traditional dances as compared to other African societies also makes the dances recede with time [7], as some Ghanaian traditional dances tend to be show-offs when the performances are purposely economically driven thereby distorting the contents of the traditional dances enacted [8]. The Centre for National Culture (CNC), Kumasi is a cultural institution which helps preserve *Asante* culture with *Asante* traditional dances being part. It owns the *Ammamereso Agofomma* cultural group which focuses on encouraging interest and participation in traditional drumming and dances of the literate classes of *Asantes*; and is hired for social functions such as funerals and other ceremonial occasions [9]. *Sanga* is presently receding in *Asante* communities and is only performed occasionally by the *Ammamereso Agofomma* as it is less known and uncommon to most indigenes in *Asante*.

The future of *Asante* culture is further questioned as the less performed and quite uncommon *Asante* traditional dances keep receding to the past until they are no more. The researchers therefore intended to describe, document and analyse the symbolic functions of the cultural elements in *Sanga Asante* traditional dance. In view of adding to the rare and extinct knowledge of the traditional dance, the dance's meanings, its receding history and some aspects of *Asante* culture and Ghana as a whole was preserved. The research questions used were as follows:

1. What is *Sanga Asante* traditional dance and how best can it be documented for educational and preservation purposes?
2. What are the symbolic functions of the cultural elements in *Sanga Asante* traditional dance?

2. Materials and Methods

The study focused on the description and analysis of *Sanga*, pointing out its histories, related cultural elements and symbolic meanings in enacting the dance. The qualitative research method was used with interviews and observation as the main forms of data collection instruments. A sample size of 16 was selected through purposive and snowball sampling. The respondents were the Head of Performing Arts Department and the *Ammamereso Agofomma*, all of the Centre for National Culture, Kumasi in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Most indigenes are from the Ashanti Region and had in-depth knowledge on *Sanga*. In gaining primary data, observations and interviews were made and other literary sources served as secondary data.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. History of *Sanga*

Sanga Asante traditional dance is said to be a gift to *Asantes* from *Dagombas* due to the good relationship which existed between them. An *Asante* king learnt and brought *Sanga* dance from *Dagombas* to *Asantes* (K. Asuo, personal communication, October 31, 2017). Accounting to the past, *Dagombas* at times went to war with *Asantes*, and even helped *Asantes* obtain the title "*wo kum apem a, apem beba*" during several wars fought. It is claimed that *Sanga* was performed as an *Asante* traditional dance from the eighteenth century (M. Issah, personal communication, February 1, 2018). The dance was originally hosted, performed and bore traits of the *Dagombas* until it was gifted. Some aspects of *Asante* culture were then incorporated into themes, gestural movements, instruments and even costumes of *Sanga*. It is revealed that the then *Asante* king to whom *Sanga* was gifted and the then *Dagomba* king who gifted the dance are unknown due to less knowledge of the history of the dance and no form of documentation on *Sanga*.

3.2. *Sanga*, a Dance Performance

Based on observations held at the field; thus, CNC, Kumasi, this section vividly describes how *Sanga* is performed comprising rhythms made, space used, time, force and the general performers who perform *Sanga Asante* traditional dance. In describing the entirety of the dance as a performance, the researchers considered the Choreologist Aesthetic Theory. It comprises the designing sequences of movement in which motions and form are specified based on movement analysis and dance notation [10]. The researchers adapted this theory to give a descriptive report on the dance movement analysis of *Sanga*, considering other dance elements as well within the dance performance. Other art theories such as Formalism and Emotionalism were identified to describe the dance in terms of its compositional elements and emotional contents respectively.

Rhythms started the entire performance with a blend of instruments played and accompanying songs sung. The

instruments played were the *brekete* (master drum), *donno* (hour glass drum), *dawuro* (single bell) and *tontonsansan* (double bell). Among these instruments, the single bell led the others. Female accompanying song singers followed suit with accompanying songs while playing *ntorowa* or hand clapping; hence making the accompanying songs oral, instrumental and corporeal. This means that the songs were sung, together with the instrument *ntorowa* and the use of hands in clapping. The dancers then entered the dance space. The rhythms did flow throughout the performance and did not change from the beginning to the end of the dance performance. Some movements enacted portrayed that of a boar and at some points mimicked *Adowa* dance movements. Hops and jumps dominated the dance making the movement levels a blend of medium and high as noted in northern Ghanaian dances. The dance movements have been clustered into sub groups below based on the basic nature of the movements.

Round: Dancers entered the space with both genders hoping round beside each other. The right arms of the males were by their bodies and their hands rested on their thighs. Their left arms waved whisks sideways towards the female dancers. With the females, the right palms were placed above the left palms alternatively with the palms above facing upwards and the left facing downwards. Their legs moved with their hands; i.e., right leg with right hand and vice versa.

Diagonal: Females hoped in place as males bypassed to lead the females in a diagonal line. Males turned to face females at opposite direction through their left 90° with the same movement. Dance movements changed to the sway of arms from left to right, facing where their foot went whereas sliding their arms away. Genders slid in opposite directions.

Sideways: Both genders switched to the initial dance movement and moved forward to get side by side still facing the opposite direction. They then swayed in opposite directions.

Circular: Both genders hoped 180° through their left behind each partner and landed at their initial positions. They repeated the sway and the hops alternatively thrice.

Run/ Side by side: The females hoped in place, males hoped along females in a forward direction from their left to right sides. Both genders then hoped along in round at the space.

Reverse: Females hoped in place at the right side of the space in a reverse position whereas the males faced the opposite direction until they got closer to each other.

Forward: Both genders turned 90° facing each other. Males turned through their right swaying with their whisks and females turned through their left. The males hit their right fists on their left fists twice and slid their whisks towards the females. Females hit their right fists on their left fists twice and extended their arms towards the males.

Circular: In two circles, the males formed the outer circle with the females by their left sides making an inner circle. Both genders slid. In a circular motion, the females flair with their *atofo* whilst the males chased their backsides focusing on hitting them with their whisks. The females teasingly

repeated this running away from the strokes of the whisks and still looking like they enjoyed what they were resisting. Both genders twisted their hips back and forth facing each other with their arms hanging at their waist level, one before and behind them alternatively. They then changed to the opposite direction making the males face outwards and females inwards, facing them. To end the dance, both genders happily waved in pairs, males left hands held the right hands of the females and waved their whisks with their right hands. The females waved their left hands above their head until they all left the stage.

3.3. Some Asante Cultural Elements in Sanga

This section tells the reader about some *Asante* cultural elements within *Sanga* and also describes their features and how they are used. The cultural elements are dance themes, gestures and movements made costumes worn, props used, instruments used and accompanying songs sung within the dance.

3.3.1. Dance Themes in Sanga

Themes in *Sanga* are the central and dominating ideas communicated through its related cultural elements. Cultural elements identified to easily communicate *Sanga* themes are gestural movements, costumes and accompanying songs, and other factors such as where and why *Sanga* is to be performed at a point in time (M. Issah, personal communication, February 8, 2018). Based on observations held, specific themes portrayed in *Sanga* are advisory/ motivational; procreation related themes and generally about daily lives of *Asantes*. Although some cultural elements like the *brekete* and *donno* under instruments, the use of whisks as props and the hops and jumps in movements are related to *Dagomba* descent, all others submerge to communicate *Asante* cultural related themes.

3.3.2. Gestures and Movements in Sanga

In expressing feelings, thoughts or themes, dancers use their bodily movements to communicate them. Gestures are hence noticed by audience when the bodily movements connote feelings, thoughts or themes. With respect to the *Sanga* performance by the *Amammereso Agofomma*, the researchers had analysed series of its dance gestures pointing out their symbolic functions. Arguably, most movements in *Sanga* trace back to its origin as the characteristics of *Asante* traditional dance to be “the intricate and subtle manipulation of hands, arms and legs, body sways and tilts in polyrhythmic combinations-expressive miming with rich symbolic undertones- and typical *Asante* hauteur.” [11] There are more of the reverse of this stated features of *Asante* dance in *Sanga* as the dance movements observed were more of northern Ghanaian dance traits. Per the observation made, movements in *Sanga* were locomotive as there was less use of kinesphere (personal space) but rather general space used by all dancers, making the dancers not stationary. Forward, backward, diagonal and in circle direction of movements were also observed. It was sequenced, systematic and clear in relation

to time. The pulse of rhythm was fast making the speed of dance movements also fast. The duration of various movements was medium; i.e. they were in shorter phrases. There was a free flow of dance movements in *Sanga* and in depicting relaxation and energy, tension and soft movements were enacted. The former depicted heavy movements and the latter vice versa. All performers had cheerful facial expressions depicting they enjoyed the performance and the dance gestures by dancers also proved so. Equal number of genders danced *Sanga*, 3 each and not all performers were *Asantes*.

To begin with, the dancers entered the dance space with both genders hopping side by side in a clockwise direction. Depicting the belief system of *Asantes* that life cycle is circular and never ends, it also tells unity among both genders, i.e., a cluster of partners ready to be selected or select for marriage. The left arm movements of the males also portrayed the features of males in *Asante* culture which are superiority, authority, prowess and riches as they flaired with their whisks towards the heads of the female dancers. The female dancers simultaneously changed their hand movements where right palms faced up and left down. This movement is *tefre ayeyanna*, literally meaning a lying down cockroach facing upwards and connotes the attitude of progress and rebound even in hard times. It is noted that in *Asante* culture, even if a cockroach dies prostrate it still finds a way to lay on its back. The movement is in *Adowa* and *Kete* dance movements and it looked like the female dancers were in a way begging the males for partnership/ to be selected for marriage. Both genders leg movements were the same as they hopped, denoting traits of northern Ghanaian dances. Below is Figure 1 showing the dance movement earlier analysed and performed by the *Amammereso Agofomma*.



Figure 1. *Amammereso Agofomma* dancers hopping side by side in a clockwise direction.

In a diagonal line, the male dancers turned facing the female dancers in the opposite direction and later side by side; still facing the opposite direction. Both genders swayed their feet from left to right directions facing where their foot went respectively whereas sliding away their arms. In doing so, both genders tended to look at each other for a while and away continuously. Both genders also checked the physiques of their partners, as to how good they would be for marriage in a shyness mood (that is when they continuously looked at and away from each other). Both genders further hopped 180 degrees through their left behind each partner and landed at

their initial position. The males also hopped around the females and all these portrayed how both partners were checking for features in selecting partners for marriage. Figures 2, 3 and 4 below are pictures of what has been analysed.



Figure 2. Both genders look at each other.



Figure 3. Both genders look away from each other.



Figure 4. Both genders hop 180 degrees around each other.

The males hit their right fists on their left fists twice and then slide their whisks to the direction of the females whereas the females hit their right fists on their left fists twice and extended their arms towards the males. This movement is also similar to *Adowa* and *Kete* movements and is a means of telling either partner that they give their all to each other as they vibrantly smiled. Figure 5 below consists of two pictures depicting the analysed dance movements.



(a)



(b)

Figure 5. Both genders telling either partner that they give their all.

In a circular motion, the females teasingly twirled with their *atofo* from the males whereas the males focused on the *atofo*s to hit them with their whisks continuously. Depicting some aspects of marriage, sexual prowess of men were shown. Other procreation related movements were the twisting of hips back and forth by both genders and facing each other. Figures 6 and 7 depict the procreation related movements stated.



Figure 6. Females teasingly twirl with *atofo* as men hit them with their whisks.



Figure 7. Hips twisting back and forth by both genders, facing each other.

The dancers then happily waved in pairs telling they were done with the performance, meaning they had gotten their partners and had perfectly passed all tests and were off to marry. Figure 8 is a picture depicting the dancers happily waving in pairs ending the entire dance performance.



Figure 8. The dancers happily wave in pairs ending the performance.

Dance movements are presently created, taught and performed upon request at CNC, Kumasi, hence making *Sanga* a choreographed dance. Movements therefore vary within the few troupes who perform *Sanga* (M. Issah, personal communication, February 8, 2018).

3.3.3. Costumes and Props Used

One of the ways of depicting merry making as *Sanga* basically does is the colour of costumes worn for a *Sanga* dance performance. *Asantes* term brightly coloured cloths *sika* and these are worn mostly for naming ceremonies, marriage rites and when women freshly give birth as a sign of goodness, freshness and newness (M. Issah, personal communication, February 1, 2018). The *Amammereso Agofomma* performers adorned themselves in *sika* to depict the dance was performed on a basis of selecting partners to marry; hence connoting marriage/ courtship. The colour of the cloths (costume) was yellow, white, and orange; a whisk for male dancers and large white scarfs for female dancers hung at the waist level. The cloths were wrapped as done in *Asante* culture – *Jumper* shorts were worn underneath flowery patterned orange cloths by all male performers apart from the male dancers. The male dancers were in the same cloth as the female dancers; wrapped around their left shoulders and draped down to their ankles leaving their right shoulders uncovered. The yellow hair scarf of the females had been used to tie the wrapped cloth of the male dancers on their shoulders. With the female performers, they were all wrapped in yellow hair scarf. The accompanying song singers were in yellow cloth wrapped from the chest level to the ankle level and a black and white cloth (with white dominating), wrapped over the yellow cloth from chest to waist level. The female dancers were in white and yellow cloths with white dominating, wrapped from the chest level to the ankle level with a black scarf tied around their bellies and beneath their breasts. The black scarf secured the large white scarfs hung at their waist level. The female dancers also wore *atofo* to dense their backsides in making them to be selected as beautiful partners. This also traces back to *Asante* culture where denser backsides and curvy shapes determined

the beauty of *Asante* women (K. Asuo, personal communication, October 31, 2017). Figures 9 and 10 are images depicting the costume of the *Amammereso Agofofoma* of CNC, Kumasi.



Figure 9. Amammereso Agofofoma performers in Sanga costume.



Figure 10. Amammereso Agofofoma dancers in Sanga costume and props.

3.3.4. Instruments Used in Sanga

Instruments used add to the rhythms made in performing *Sanga*. Below are features and uses of individual instruments presently used in *Sanga*. Initially, all instruments were of Dagomba descent but as they were gifted to *Asantes*, most instruments used are of *Asante* descent except the *brekete* and *donno* which are still of *Dagomba* descent. *Brekete* is still maintained due to its peculiar sound it makes and it also distinguishes *Sanga* from other *Asante* traditional dances (K. Asuo, personal communication, October 31, 2017) and (M. Issah, personal communication, February 1, 2018). Information below was gained from interviews and observations made at CNC, Kumasi.

Dawuro, the single bell bears the following characteristics and is shown in Figure 11 below.

1. Metallic in nature.
2. It makes pleasing and louder sound when struck with metallic rod.
3. It leads the entire dance performance.
4. Its player determines the tempo of the entire dance performance.
5. It is from *Asante* descent.



Figure 11. Dawuro (single bell).

Tontonsansan, the double bell bears the following characteristics and is shown in Figure 12 below.

1. Metallic in nature.
2. It makes pleasing and louder sound when struck with metallic rod.
3. Both sides played give diverse sounds.
4. It accompanies other instruments used.
5. It is from *Asante* descent.



Figure 12. Tontonsansan (double bell).

The *Donno* (hour glass drum) bears the following characteristics and is shown in Figure 13 below.

1. Wooden in nature with animal skin at drumheads.
2. Drumheads, attached with laces are beaten with wooden sticks to generate sounds.
3. Both sides of drumheads can be played but they have different sounds.
4. Supported with the shoulder in the armpit, drummers hang the drums beside them when being played.
5. It accompanies other instruments used.
6. It is from *Dagomba* descent.



Figure 13. Donno (hour glass drum).

Figure 14 is the *Brekete*. It bears the following characteristics and is shown in Figure 14 below.

1. Wooden in nature with animal skin at drumheads.
2. The entire body apart from drumheads are wrapped in cloth and ropes.
3. Generate sounds when beaten with wooden sticks.
4. Both sides of drumheads can be played.
5. Supported with the shoulder, drummers hung the drums beside them when being played.
6. It is the master drum and accompanies other instruments used.
7. It is from *Dagomba* descent and distinguishes *Sanga* from other dances.



Figure 14. *Brekete*.

Lastly, Clappers and *ntorowa* are instruments used in *Sanga* dance performance. Below is Figure 15 depicting their characteristics and an image of them.

1. Wooden in nature.
2. Clappers are made from bamboo.
3. Clappers are hit together whereas *ntorowa* is shook to make sounds.
4. They are used by female singers while singing accompanying songs.
5. They accompany other instruments used.
6. It is from *Asante* descent.



Figure 15. *Clappers and Ntorowa*.

3.3.5. *Accompanying Songs*

Accompanying songs are always present in *Sanga*. They serve as motivators to dancers as they may dance to the extreme based on the songs' relation to their experiences. Relating *Sanga* to *Dagomba* culture, it limits accompanying songs to only accompanying song singers as it is stated that it is a feature of northern Ghanaian dances. With respect to the *Sanga* dance performance observed at CNC, Kumasi, there were neither chanting nor initial call and response. An accompanying song which was sung throughout the entire performance was as follows:

Okwan tenten awaree ee menko oo!

Okwan tenten awaree ee menko oo!

Se me nya me ko na asem bi si m'akyi a m'eye deen?

Se me nya me ko na asem bi si m'akyi a m'eye deen?

Okwan tenten awaree ee menko oo!

Na asem bi si m'akyi a m'eye deen?

Translated as:

I will never go for a long distance marriage

I will never go for a long distance marriage

What will I do, if something happens in my absence?

What shall I do, if something happens in my absence?

I will never go for a long distance marriage

What shall I do, if something happens in my absence?

Sanga was originally a communicative dance amongst the youth who performed it. It had always been gender balanced, as marriage partners were selected while dancing and gestures enacted could tell there was a marriage proposal on going while dancing (K. Asuo, personal communication, October 31, 2017). As a cluster of words of caution, such accompanying songs were sung to inform and advise the youth on their daily lives, especially as to whom and where to marry or not. This accompanying song directly addresses problems in long distance relationships, marriage and family issues. Respective themes in *Sanga* are mostly embedded in the accompanying songs. As stated earlier, the problems listed as being addressed through the accompanying songs are the themes the *Ammamereso Agofomma* portrayed when performing *Sanga* at CNC, Kumasi. *Sanga* was a youthful dance and was mainly performed at joyous celebrations including marriage rites, naming ceremonies, feasts, harvests and festivals and especially at moonlight evenings.

There are no specific songs for *Sanga* although a particular one was sung during the dance performance at CNC, Kumasi. Most accompanying songs are from *Asante* traditional *nwonkorɔ* which are sung during all *Asante* traditional dance performances, and are all in the *Asante* dialect, Twi. With respect to *nwonkorɔ*, it was gained from a corrupted *Fante* word *goro* meaning play or game and *Asante* word *nwom* meaning song; making *nwom - agoro* and later *Nwonkorɔ* [12]. The accompanying songs of *Sanga* dance are oral, instrumental and corporeal. An accompanying song is termed oral when it is only voiced, instrumental with instruments and corporeal with any part of the body respectively. In *Sanga* the accompanying songs were sung out whilst playing *ntorowa* and or clappers (instruments) whereas others sung and clapped only.

3.4. Documentation of Sanga

Asante traditional dances are related to *Asantes* and have been passed on to generations either orally and or practically taught. The related histories and meanings of some passed on dances are ignored when being passed on. *Sanga*, as a passed on dance deems fit to be called uncommon and less performed as many indigenes of *Asante* land do not know about it, the dance is no more performed as it was and is no more in existence at some places in *Asante*. These are so because of change of time, environment, location and interest in one's culture (M. Issah, personal communication, February 8, 2018).

3.4.1. Preservation of Perception

This terminology was propounded by [13] in explaining how best to document dance across times. It is to document in the spectacle of an onlooker by using documentation tools to address dance related elements like sound, gestures, form, costumes, instruments, etc. so as to feed an onlooker who watches the documented dance experience just as the performance was being enacted in time. Not precisely selecting photography over video or vice versa, the researchers opted for both to accentuate that the documentary photos of *Sanga* would better support the video records of the dance to better preserve the dance across times. The researchers hence adopted the preservation of perception to document with the spectacle of an audience by using 2 Canon 60 D cameras and an iPhone 6 as documentation tools to address the cultural elements of *Sanga* and their related symbolic functions, so as to feed an audience who watches the documented dance experience same as the performance was being enacted in time [13]. As ephemeral, ethereal and polycentric as *Sanga* is, appropriate documentation tools earlier mentioned were used to document live video recordings in both distance and close up shots and were backed with still images (photographs). In improving record keeping of *Sanga*, these were purposefully done to preserve the entirety of *Sanga* as compared to the accustomed oral traditions earlier practised. Both video recordings and photography formats of the documentation processes were for vivid description of *Sanga* and not just its beauty [14].

3.4.2. Techniques for Documenting Sanga

Under the supervision of the researchers, a camera was staged on a tripod within the frame of the space the dance was to be performed and was put on record (rec) for the distance shot of the live video recording. The tripod was also used to maintain the focal point of the camera. Also, the camera was perfectly staged at an angle where the performers, especially the dancers' faces and other detailed bodily parts would be much visible before the entire performance started. The lens was 50mm with an aperture of f/1.8 and had a fast shutter speed of 1/1000 since it was shot in the day time at an open space. Elolo Bosokah, a Masters student of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, artist and a professional photographer worked on the live video recording of *Sanga* in distance shot at CNC, Kumasi on the

30th of October, 2017.

The close-up shot of the live video recording has similar techniques as that of the distance shot apart from its camera not being fixed on a tripod. It was held in the hand and was shot approximately a few walks from the space where the performance was ongoing. While taking live videos, the camera was sequentially switched to the one shot mode to take images of the dancers. This was done under the supervision of the researchers. There was the use of continuous Autofocus (AI Servo AF) to easily adjust as the dancers changed movements sequentially. Justice Amoh, a junior staff of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, artist and a professional photographer worked on the live video recording and photography of *Sanga* in close-up shot at CNC, Kumasi on the 30th of October, 2017. Elolo Bosokah also joined in taking images of the individual cultural elements of *Sanga*.

The iPhone 6 phone was added to the gadgets used when the researchers observed and realised the instruments mostly overshadowed the accompanying songs. The phone therefore served as an audio recorder for the rhythm and accompanying songs. While the dance performance was being audio recorded, the rhythmic sounds of the musical instruments were so loud that they overshadowed the voices of the accompanying song singers. The accompanying song was therefore solely recorded with the phone as Sister Abena, a member of the *Amammereso Agofomma* openly offered to sing out the song without any instrument.

4. Conclusion

Sanga forms part of *Asante* culture and is mostly embedded in its related cultural elements. *Sanga* as an *Asante* traditional dance has been neglected by indigenes, especially the youth, they prefer contemporary Ghanaian dances to the Ghanaian traditional dances. Contemporary Ghanaian dances albeit still hold as products from a blend of Ghanaian traditional movements and other foreign movements. The cultural elements which define the basic components of *Sanga* have embedded symbolic functions (meanings) but are less known to their performers. The contexts of *Sanga* at where they are presently performed have been shaped into choreographed and creative dances. Appropriate means to accurately document and preserve *Sanga* and other African traditional dances are photographs and videos.

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