

ORIGINS of the GUAN ANCESTRAL SPIRITS: AKONNEDI, ASUO GYEBI and ADADE KOFI



NOKWARE

Nokware nsuma – Truth does not hide

In our article: *ASUO GYEBI, AKONNEDI, ADADE KOFI and TEGARE are NOT ABOSOM*, we demonstrated that these spirits are deified Ancestral Spirits of Guan people and are therefore not **Abosom** (Deities). We illuminated the Guan (non-Akan) ethnic origins of these spirits by quoting from **akomfo** (priests and priestesses) of these spirits who have written and spoken about their Northern Ghanaian, Guan origins. In this article we cite interviews and published references further detailing the origins of the Guan *Ancestral* spirits: Akonnedi, Asuo Gyebi and Adade Kofi.

AKONNEDI

Dr. Doris Bright is an Afuraitkaitnit (African) woman in america who wrote a dissertation in 12977 (1977) entitled: *The Quest to Legitimize the Akan Religion in America (Phase One): A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Traditional Religion: The Akonedi Shrine, Larteh, Ghana and the Bosum Dzemawodzi, Long Island City, New York*. This dissertation can be found on her website at: www.dorisbright.com Dr. Bright studied in Ghana, spent time at the Akonnedi Shrine and interviewed Nana Oparebea. She also writes of her immersion into Akan culture at the Bosum Dzemawodzi Shrine in New York, her priestess training and her interviews and interactions with Nana Yao Dinizulu while in Ghana and in america. In chapter four of her dissertation, Dr. Bright addresses the origin of Akonnedi. This chapter can be found here: <http://dorisbright.com/images/DVB008Chapter4.pdf> A quote from the beginning of this chapter elucidates the origin of Akonnedi:

The Chief Priestess of the Shrine spells the Shrine's name, Akonedi. Brokensha uses the spelling Akonedi. Though variant spellings include Akonnedi, Akonnodi and Acconedi, Akonedi is the most frequently used spelling. I believe Akonedi is the most frequently used spelling because within the spelling of the word one can see the name of Nedi, the girl to whom most versions of the origin of the Akonedi Shrine refer. Nedi was the daughter of Ako, a Kubease man.

Nedi is said to have become pregnant and to have died (perhaps in childbirth) in the bush on the outskirts of Kubease. A search for her body revealed only an ant-hill. According to one version, Nedi's father had tried to force her to marry "a certain man" (Nana Atakora said he was a presbyter named Mr. Anim), and Nedi is said to have announced just before her death that if anyone was forced to do anything against his will, and asked for her help, she would see that the person who did the forcing would himself suffer the same fate.

Shortly after Nedi's death her spirit possessed a Kubease woman, Adwo, who for many years was the Chief Priestess of the new shrine. On the death of Adwo the spirit passed to Anima, whose husband was a presbyter and who had herself been a presbytriss. She was succeeded by Ama Ansa, a granddaughter of Adwo, the first priestess who was active from 1927 until her death in 1957, when the present priestess, Akua Oparebea, a daughter of Anima's sister, succeeded. The Akonedi priestesses came from different brongs though all of them were from Kubease.²

We can see that Nedi, the daughter of Ako, came to be called Ako-Nedi after her death by those who sought her assistance as an Ancestral Spirit. The lineage as recorded is as follows:

- Nedi** She is a pregnant woman (not a Nana) and dies in or around childbirth.
- Adwo (Ejo)** Nedi's spirit begins to possess Adwo. Adwo is the first okomfoo of Nedi
- Anima** Upon Adwo's death, Nedi passes to Anima
- Ansa** Anima is succeeded by Ansa (12927 to 12957 – 1927 to 1957)
- Opareabea** Oparebea becomes the Okomfohemmaa (12957/1957)

The first Basel Mission station (christianity) is recorded to have been founded in Larteh in March of 12835 (1835). In 12918 (1918), a year after the Basel missionaries had been deported, the british government arranged for the scottish presbyterian mission to take over. This gives context to the chronology put forth regarding Nedi. It is related that one version of the story states that Nedi's father had attempted to force Nedi to marry a presbyter. It is also stated that Anima, the second okomfo for Nedi, was a presbytriss and her husband was a presbyter. These facts suggest that Nedi lived between 100-150 years ago after christianity had been established and had begun to infect Larteh. The biographies suggesting that the first or second okomfo for Nedi died in 1800 thus may have originally meant to say 1900. However, even if she lived in the late 12700s (1700s) as some have suggested, the most important fact is that Nedi was a woman of childbearing age who died and was subsequently appealed to by her descendants as an Ancestral Spirit. She is not only Guan, meaning non-Akan, but she is not and never was an Obosom (Deity).

Dr. Bright references the text **Social Change in Larteh, Ghana** which corroborates what she learned directly from her own interactions at the Akonnedi shrine in Larteh. An important incidental and corroborative reference to Nedi is found in this text on page 180:

“...Although centered in Kubease, Akonedi has a shrine and a priest (but no priestess) in Ahenease, where the original Nedi is said to have lived before moving to Kubease...”

Akonnedi is regarded as the head of the shrine in Larteh (*Kubease is Upper Larteh; Ahenease is Lower Larteh*). The shrine includes shrines for Adade Kofi and Asuo Gyebi amongst others. It is important to note that *Ancestral Spirits do not head up Deity Shrines*. This is a general principle across Afuraka/Afuraitkait (Africa).

ASUO GYEBI and ADADE KOFI

There are many misguided continental Afurakanu/Afuraitkaitnut (Africans) who have associations with the akyiwadefo (spirits of disorder/whites and their offspring). This includes submitting to interviews conducted by the akyiwadefo. One such Afurakani drummer, who is world-renowned in his field is Kwesi Asare. Kwesi Asare submitted to an interview with an akyiwadefo who recorded excerpts from the interview in his book: **West African Pop Roots**. The information quoted below in full is found on pages 294-295:

“...*Kwesi Asare – Ghana’s Drum Ambassador*

Kwesi Asare Asuo Gyebi has unostentatiously been spreading African rhythms abroad for years to jazz musicians in the late 1950s and 1960s, among West Indian and British youth since the late 1970s, and now in the United States, where in 1987 he was awarded the title of “cultural ambassador” by America’s oldest black newspaper, the Philadelphia Tribune, founded in 1881.

Kwesi was born in Larteh, a hill-top town in southern Ghana in 1931. On his Guan maternal side, he is the grandson (or more precisely the grand-nephew) of Nana Oporabea [sic], life President of the Psychic and Traditional Healers Association of Ghana and high priestess of the Larteh Akonedi Shrine (which has branches in New York and Washington, D.C.).

This most important Ghanaian traditional religious centre is in fact today a composite of four spirit cults, each with its own rituals, shrines and music. The oldest of them is the Akonedi spirit shrine, founded in the last century by an ancestor of Kwesi’s called Nana Adwo Komfo. Junior to this is the Asuo Gyebi spirit (from which Kwesi gets his name), which is embodied in a stone with a hole in it, Kwesi’s maternal uncle, Yaw Akyea, the master-drummer for the then Akonedi high priestess, Nana Okomfo Ansah, discovered the stone seventy years ago in a forest. The two other spirits of the Larteh shrine are Asi Ketewa and Adade Kofi, the latter being introduced by Kwesi’s grandfather, Kwerku Ahia. And as each of these four religious cults have their own special dances, songs, drums and rhythms, Kwesi was brought up in the right environment to be groomed as a master drummer...”

The book *West African Pop Roots* was published in 12992 (1992). The google books link to page 295 of this quote can be found here:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=ihWr03mTSJYC&pg=PA295&dq=adade+kofi&hl=en&sa=X&ei=W9hcT -RJ6X40gGrhqCwDg&ved=0CEoQ6AEwBA#v=onepage&q=adade%20kofi&f=false>

An earlier version of the article on Kwesi Asare quoted above was included in the September 12-18 12988 (1988) issue of **West African Magazine**. The link to that version can be found here:

Kwesi Asare – Ghana’s Drum Ambassador

<http://www.bapmaf.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/PDF/JC%20W%20AFRICA%20MAG%20UK%201988%20Guy%20warren,Kwesi%20Asare%20&%20King%20Bruce%20X3%20articles.pdf>

There are a number of important points to take away from the information that Kwesi Asare shared about his family’s Ancestry in the interview he gave. The import of these points are their substance but also that they *corroborate oral traditions* that other Ghanaians in Afuraka/Afuraitkait (Africa) within the past decade have shared in a very “matter-of-fact” fashion regarding the origins of Akonnedi, Asuo Gyebi and Adade Kofi.

1. “On Kwesi’s *Guan* maternal side”
2. “Akonedi spirit shrine ..founded in the last century”
3. “Junior to this [Akonedi] is Asuo Gyebi”
4. Kwesi’s maternal uncle “discovered the stone [Asuo Gyebi] seventy years ago in a forest”
5. Adade Kofi was “introduced by Kwesi’s grandfather”

The interview given by Kwesi Asare Asuo Gyebi corroborates the Guan origin of an Ancestral cult that is very recent (less than 200 years) in origination with Nedi as the senior/head of the other Ancestral Spirits. The discovery of Asuo Gyebi according to the information given by Asare would have been around 12918 (1918). Asare’s grandfather having introduced Adade Kofi places the origin of this shrine being incorporated at Larteh no earlier than the late 12800s (1800s) or early 12900s (1900s). It was shown in our previous article that the Tegare suman was embraced by the Akan in the 12900s (1900s). The information given by Asare also suggests that the Akonedi shrine was founded in the 12800s (1800s). This is not *ancient Akan* religion, but *recent Guan* religion.

In the Ghana Journal of Science, Volumes 1-3 page 13, published by the Ghana Science Association 12961 (1961) is it stated regarding the spirits at the Akonnedi shrine:

“...Asuo refuses to speak any other language beside Twi, with a heavy Northern accent interspersing his speech with the exclamation “Eh hmrr!” Nana Akonedi speaks only high brow Larteh with the exclamation “Ye yei!” Nana Essi speaks Fanti but can also resort to everyday Larteh, her characteristic exclamation being “Essei esse!”...

...Only a handful of people understand the special Larteh that Nana Adade Kofi speaks; most characteristic of him is the exclamation, “Kyeek kukuku!”...”

An excerpt from page 13 can be found here:

http://books.google.com/books?ei=P-JcT53GEqLL0OH2x_zKDw&id=ROOgAOAAMAAJ&dq=kwaa+asuo+gyebi&q=adade+kofi#search_anchor

It can be seen that Akonnedi and Adade Kofi speak Larteh (Guan), while Asuo Gyebi speaks Twi with a *heavy Northern accent*. In Ghana, the use of the term *Northern* or *Northerner* typically means Guan and/or non-Akan. Just as Nana Esi is recognized to be an *Ancestress* who speaks Akan/Twi and Guan so is Asuo Gyebi recognized as an *Ancestor* who speaks Twi with his Guan accent – *just as he spoke Twi with a Guan accent when he lived in Ghana*. It should also be taken into consideration that while **adade** is a Twi term for *iron*, the term **adadi** is a Guan title held by certain societal office-heads in Guan culture. Adade Kofi is sometimes written *Adadi* Kofi.

The observations in the excerpt are corroborated by Dr. Bright in her dissertation. In a discussion with the secretary of the Akonedi shrine, Dr. Bright finds that during the Akonedi Yam Festival, which is a Guan festival taking place after the Akan-styled Odwira festival, Nana Oparebea speaks Guan, not Twi, when pouring libation:

Bba is a Guan ceremony which reinforces the Akan Odwira. But, the Akan Odwira is the most important festival and includes the most important rituals.

Odwira, the Yam Festival, is the most important Akonedi Shrine Festival.

The relevance and importance of the deity, Akonedi, can be seen in the Akonedi Yam Festival, which begins when the Larteh Odwira has ended. Mr. Essbral, secretary of the Akonedi Shrine, with permission of the Chief Priestess, Nana Oparebea, explained the Akonedi Yam Festival.

Mr. Essbral: According to the custom of the people of Akwapim we have Odwira festival in every year. Before Odwira Festival, the Adae Butu Festival starts. This Adae Butu Festival is made in connection with the chiefs of Akwapim area. During this time we are bound, restricted in beating drums. Sometimes it begins from the middle part of July and ends in September. It all depends on the time they will start. Any time at all they will put the bond, and the bond would end at 40 days. During that time, no drumming, no traditional drumming. After the 40 days, the Paramount Chief of Akwapim will stand account for it. The drums will

start beating to signal that they have opened the bond, that is the beginning of the Odwira Festival. This will last for about a week.

The people of Akropong, Akwapim and Larteh have this Odwira Festival. Larteh people's coincide with Akropong and so they celebrate together.

A week after their Larteh Festival, the Nana Akonedi starts her annual Yam Festival. This Yam Festival is special, lasting about a week, as you know. It starts on Thursday with the lighting of the Akonedi traditional flame. The lighting includes all the priestesses from all over the country. They should come and pay their homage to Nana Akonedi.

On Friday morning, Nana Akonedi will possess on Nana Oparebea and receive homage from all the priestesses. There will be dancing and drumming and they will make a big feast. On Saturday, special ceremonies will be held for Nana Esi Ketewa; on Sunday for Asuo Gyebi. On Monday, they will rest. On Tuesday, the Durbar. On Wednesday, they will start the rituals. Thursday, they will come to an end by carting all our refuse to our special place, which is best known to ourselves, in the night. That will be the end. On Friday morning, we just go to the town and give thanks to the towns people who paid homage or contributed to the festival.

Ms. Bright: Does Nana Oparebea pour libation in Twi or in Larteh language?

Mr. Essbral: Nana pours libation in Guan, that which is Larteh language.

The above quote further gives context to the fact that Akonnedi is an Ancestress of a Guan family. This is Guan Ancestral worship.

Those who are actually Akan and have no blood connection to Akonnedi should not be worshipping someone else's Guan Ancestresses and Ancestors any more than they should be worshipping the Ancestresses and Ancestors of a family of Zulu people with whom they have never had any blood connection. Moreover, no Afurakani/Afuraitkaitnit (African) individual should be engaged in the worship of an Ancestral spirit under the false pretense that the spirit is a Deity/Obosom.

With regard to Ancestral worship, we should only worship/word-ship (*word/worth-ship* - See our: *UBEN-HYENG: The Ancestral Summons*) our Nananom Nsamanfo and Asamanfo Pa who are connected to us by **mogya** (*blood*). Moreover, we should worship *actual* **Abosom** who are also connected to our **kra ne mogya** (*soul and blood*).

On page 258 of Dr. Bright's dissertation we find the following:

Nana Dinizulu has recorded his personal accounts of mystical experiences which initiated his search for ancestors and a linkage with Nana Oparebea and the Akonedi Shrine. Historical accounts of Nedi and the founding of the Akonedi Shrine were not recounted during my conversations, interviews and participant observations at the Shrine Home and Bosum Dzemawodzi.

The link can be found here: <http://dorisbright.com/images/DVB008Chapter7.pdf>

As was true in the late 12970s (1970s), so it is true until today. The average individual involved in the "Akan tradition" in america has never heard of Nedi and the founding of the Akonnedi shrine.

Afurakanu/Afuraitkaitnut (Africans) in america have been infected with the false notion of white supremacy which is chiefly reinforced through the pseudo-religions of christianity, islam, hebrewism, moorishism, new age pseudo-spirituality, etc. Many of us have accepted as a condition of the infection the false notion of Black inferiority which subsists as a deeply-seeded and deeply-seated self-hatred. The confluence of these factors influences us to seek "salvation" outside of ourselves under the banner of a misguided *messianic*-nationalism. Thus, even those who claim to be African-centered, Afrocentric, Afrikan, Pan-Afrikan Nationalists, etc. continue to manifest the infection. **In reality, they do not believe they are truly Afrikan, contrary to their claims.** Thus, when such individuals come into contact with continental Afurakanu/Afuraitkaitnut (Africans) they can often be heard to (or *think* to) make statements such as:

"I'm Akan, but Kofi here, he's FROM Ghana..He's actually an Akan from OVER there."

Such statements betray the self-loathing that many of the self-proclaimed nationalists and culturally-conscious members of our community continue to harbor.

It is easy for such individuals to succumb to misinformation being unscrupulously sold to them by continental Afurakanu/Afuraitkaitnut (Africans), for such individuals truly, internally, only believe in their "African-ness" in the abstract. They only feel validated when someone *outside of themselves* ("savior") *tells them* that they are African, "*adopts*" them into their clan, *gives them* a name, *initiates them* into a priest/esshood or chieftain/essship, *gives them* paramuncy or other "royal" titles, etc.

Such "conscious" individuals truly believe, internally, that their own Ancestresses and Ancestors have no true value and that they can be of no meaningful assistance. They truly believe, internally, that they are not really connected to the Abosom by nature of their actual Ancestry.

In reality, they continue to malfunction under the spell of the akyiwadefo (spirits of disorder/whites and their offspring). They are spellbound by a false doctrine which is deeply held: *"I'm a nigga in america. Niggas in america aint shit. Real Africans can communicate with the Abosom. Niggas need help. Real*

Africans can do divination. Niggas can't do anything by themselves. How can we possibly practice our Ancestral religion when we're just niggas trying to imitate somebody? Have you ever been to Africa? Then you can't say anything.. Why? Because until you have gone to Africa and connected with someone (else), you're just a nigga – no different than any other nigga around here...”

Such individuals truly believe that they are isolated and impotent without someone outside of themselves validating them. This is the manifestation of insanity – a product of accepting the akyiwadefo, their culture and their false-religions.

In **nokware**, in *truth*, you can actually communicate with your **Nananom Nsamanfo** and in doing so you will find out who your actual family is. You can determine your *actual* Ancestry. When you align yourself with your **okra/okraa**, you will find out which *actual* **Abosom** were born with you and are connected to your **Abusua** and **Ntoro**. You will confirm your **nkrabea** – your Divinely allotted function (so-called “*destiny*”) to execute in the world. You will recognize that your *nkrabea* – your *life-focus*, your *purpose* – was/is given to you by **Nyamewaa-Nyame** – *pre-incarnation*.

No individual outside of you, including those on the continent of Afuraka/Afuraitkait (Africa), can give you your life's purpose – only Nyamewaa-Nyame can do this.

You therefore have no intrinsic need for, nor desire to seek, any pseudo-validation from outside of your actual Ancestral blood circle, for you are grounded in reality, in *nokware*, in *truth*. Your interaction then with continental Afurakanu/Afuraitkaitnut (Africans) will no longer be reflective of that of a *parent-and-child* but that of *equals*.

Those who internally seek validation/identity from outside of themselves, yet externally are in the business of “teaching” Black people about being “African”, are perpetrators of fraud. Willing slaves are not capable of teaching freedom from slavery.

The slave-mentality harbored by Afurakanu/Afuraitkaitnut (Africans) in america and elsewhere must be finally and totally eradicated. This is easily affected by re-aligning your **sunsum** with your **okra/okraa**, your **Nananom Nsamanfo** and the actual **Abosom** Who govern you and your actual blood-circle. This is **Nyamewaa-Nyame Nhyehyee**, *Goddess-God's Arrangement*, Divine Order.



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See also: **ASUO GYEBI, AKONNEDI, ADADE KOFI and TEGARE are NOT ABOSOM**

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