

## Analyzing and documenting Some of the Types of Inscriptions Found on Artisanal Marine Canoes

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### Abstract

*This study is to analyse and document some of the types of inscriptions found on artisanal marine canoes. It assessed the reasons that inform the choice of inscriptions by the fishers. The study adopted the qualitative research approach and the case study design was used for data collection and analysis. 200 inscriptions (147 texts and 53 pictograms) were purposively gathered from a sample size of one hundred and fifty canoes from the fishers of Apam, Ankaful and Anomabo. Interviews were used to collect data; and data gathered was thematically analysed in line with the research questions. Burke's theory of identification formed the theoretical framework of the study. The findings of the study showed that fishers use both inscriptions of pictogram and text to decorate their canoes. In situations where fishers do not have conventionalised symbols to suit a particular situation, they tend to create their own pictograms to fit that situation. It was also found that the inscriptions of text out-numbered pictograms. The study also discovered that canoes were not only decorated for embellishment purposes but were symbolic expressions of a wide range of meanings. These findings demonstrate that the decoration of artisanal canoes is all about establishing relationships. It is also true that decorated canoes are messengers of fishers and they "speak" for them.*

*Keywords: Canoes Inscriptions, Fishermen Activities in Ghana, Artisanal Marine Canoes*

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

According to Geest (2009), one does not need to be a probing anthropologist to discover that a society has interest for sign writings. In Ghana, sign-painting is applied not only to canoes but also to eateries and drinking spots otherwise referred to as beer and chop bars. Beauty salons, barbering shops, kiosks and other places of business are not left out. Even, drivers and car owners in Ghana openly declare happiness and worries about their vehicles through their sign-paintings. Anyone casual traveler in Ghana and other parts of West Africa would testify that painted texts on people's businesses is a common sight. Sign painting has become a specialised art. It is impossible to imagine a Ghanaian street-scene without it (Gray, 2006). This visualisation of wisdom and proverbs appear to be a continuation of an old tradition of decorating gold weights, linguist staffs, umbrella tops, Asafo flags, adinkraandkente cloths, among others. More recently, waxprints and T-shirts have become bearers of similar messages (Geest, 2009).

Hanson (2004) states that texts on canoes are directly visible but enigmatic. They "speak" out and remain "silent" at the same time. People read them but do not understand them, not even when they are painted in the local dialect. The texts are seldom original; they are derived from and refer to a world well known to Ghanaians (Hanson, 2004). The text may be taken from an old proverb, a modern saying, religious text, a newspaper report, sport or a political event. The first-time observer is sometimes struck by the picturesque decoration, but he is not able to interpret it. Ghanaians may well fail to understand the specific point of a given text, not knowing exactly to what or to whom the words apply. The inscriptions tell a personal history which is only known to the canoe owner himself/herself or to the canoe users or a few insiders. The text may be conventional but its full meaning is unique and private.

Decoration is an integral part of Ghanaian culture (Walden, 2012). This decoration extends from facial scarification to elaborate hairstyles to exquisite clothing. It includes the names and designs which adorn "tro-tros", taxis, and even storefronts. Decoration often involves symbolism; using a word, design, or image to represent an idea. Ghanaian decoration is rich in this symbolism, from the adinkra symbols, to the stools, to the linguist staffs, which all employ symbols that represent proverbs (Anquandah, 2000). According to Verrips (2002), when one travels along Ghana's coastline and visits the sandy beaches of the numerous fishing communities, one is very often struck by a huge number of colourfully decorated artisanal canoes of different sorts and sizes moored along the beaches. One does not only wonder where the big trees grow, but also what the meanings are, if any, of the abundant decorations and mottoes

painted on or carved into the sides of these artefacts (canoes). Most intriguing and calling to be decoded or understood is the series of more or less abstract pictograms and inscriptions which seem to occur in endless variations and which look like a rebus containing a hidden message. The form and appearance of canoes are such that one gets the impression that they have not changed much over time; that the fishermen used age old and very traditional symbols and proverbs handed them by their forbears who got them from their ancestors (Verrips, 2002). In other words, there has been only continuity. The question that comes to mind is whether these inscriptions (symbols, written texts, paintings carved on artisanal canoes) are meant for mere decoration. The researcher is of the view that these inscriptions go beyond decoration and are meant to communicate. They are channels for communicating the way of life of the people of the fishing communities and their cultural heritage.

Hanson (2004) argues that canoe inscriptions are very succinct symbolic expressions of a wide range of relations, identifications and sympathies of their owners/users. The decorations are chosen from a big reservoir of possibilities and carefully composed into what one could call a distinctive, decorative gestalt, so that each canoe gets, just like its owner/user, a recognisable identity or 'individuality.' A beach with moored canoes can be considered as a revealing materialisation of the social community of the fishermen. The canoes are their messengers and convey their messages for them, they show the diversification of their mindscape and tell a lot about how they relate to each other and the world they live in (Odotei, 1996; Verripps, 2002). Gray (2006) posits that inscriptions on canoes also reveal their owner's religion, economic, social and political status.

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Coronel (2005), the migration of Fante fishers to other coastal communities to do fishing accounts for the similarities of pictograms among fishing communities. Coronel's argument is based on Dadzie's (2004) assertion that Fantes are believed to be the ones who introduced fishing in Ga Mashie, some part of the Volta Region and some coastal towns in Ghana and even beyond, by way of what is popularly termed *apoye* by the Fantes (Dadzie, 2004). Based on this assertion, Coronel (2005) is of the view that it was the Fantes who introduced some of these pictograms to other fishing communities, especially among the Ga Mashie fishing communities, hence the sameness of some motifs among some fishing communities along the coast.

Coronel (2005) therefore concludes that Fantes are better decorators of canoes; and those decorations of the other fishers, though attractive, lacked traditional bite. Verrips (2006) on the other hand, thinks that Coronel was somehow biased with regard to the ability of the Fante fishers to better decorate canoes than other fishers (such as the Gas, Nzemas, Ewes among others). Verrips (2006) further argues "the canoe decorations I saw at the beach of La in the 90s were, at least in my view, of the same quality as the ones I observed, for instance, in Winneba" (Verrips, 2006:51). Coronel's assertion might not be entirely accurate. For, in Ghana, it is somehow difficult to state with certainty who originated which custom because of the apparent migratory tradition of especially the Akan and other groups of southern Ghana.

### 2.1 The Nature of Canoe Inscriptions

According to Lawson and Kwei (1994), canoes bear decorations of a very specific nature because it is a combination of images, letters and numbers; in short, a peculiar text. However, in case one wants to decipher, decode or read the text, one is immediately confronted with all kinds of serious difficulties, especially with regard to the interpretation of the pictograms. He states that if an owner of a canoe chooses a specific pictogram, for instance, to express a particular message, it does not mean that it would be understood by others in the way he intended. This implies that individual differences come to bear even in situations of similarity. Thus, it is what one goes through in life that determines what inscription(s) he or she would carve or write on his canoe. For this reason, texts or inscriptions on canoes are better interpreted by their owners.

In addition, Hanson (2004) also says that canoe decorations are poly-interpretable, for they convey all sorts of messages (those considered as serious business and those considered as conveying less serious business). However, Hanson (2004) thinks it is extremely difficult to interpret inscriptions of a second-hand canoe which is no longer with the original owner. He notes that it is by no means easy to trace the meaning of the pictograms of second-hand canoes. Again, Smith (2002) is of the view that if a

second-hand canoe is re-decorated it is assigned a new personal significance which sometimes might differ considerably from the original. Walden (2012) also adds that new owners of second-hand canoes may ask canoe designers to carve new pictograms over old ones in order to really make them their own property. This is to say that until a canoe owner assigns his or her own preferred inscriptions on a canoe, he does not own it. Tetteh (2002) expresses disappointment in how such repetitions (of inscriptions) ends up conveying unclear messages.

## 2.2 The Connection between Fishing and Inscriptions on Canoe

It is obvious for admirers of canoe designs to think that these inscriptions have some connection or relationship with fishing, the main occupation of the people, but that has not been the case always. Gray (2006), studying the iconography behind canoe arts, states that there is little connection between the pictograms and fishing. The symbols rather seem to paint a vivid picture of the life of the people; past and present (Gray, 2006). The above statement by Gray (2006) seems to be in line with Bedu-Addo (2008) that symbols represent history and culture of people, others too represent items that have been associated with their culture for a long time. Furthermore, Henderson-Quartey (2004) also says that some symbols on canoes represent the life of the fishers (symbols such as the canoe and the paddle). Just as the stool is an object common to chieftaincy or royalty, the paddle is also common to the fishermen and consequently to the life of the people in the fishing communities. For instance, the power invested in the paddle can be said to be equivalent in authority to the *Akyeamepoma* which the *Apofohen* uses.

## 2.3 Reasons Informing Selection of Texts on Canoes

Bridgewater (2004) avers that great emphasis is put on words in Ghana. The premium put on words is best illustrated by the extensive use of proverbs in conversations and in artworks. In Ghana, one's ability to use words well represents his or her intelligence and wit. Proverbs are represented in numerous Ghanaian art forms and a variety of *Adinkra* symbols (Bedu-Addo, 2008; Vansina, 2008). Anquandah (1996) states that the ancient Akan used their art and crafts as medium for expressing their deepest philosophical and religious thinking. Proverbial sayings were used to express the most profound thoughts of the Akans. By 17th Century, pottery, proverbial pictographs were already developed and it is probable that their earliest antecedents may go back to the Middle Iron Age (AD 500) (Anquandah, 2006). Similarly, Robbins and Nooter (2009) and Fagg (2006) note that Africans preserved their beliefs and values and conveyed them from generation to generation through their arts. The importance of proverbs and consequently words in Ghanaian culture and the use of artwork as cultural and historical language are both employed in the decoration of artisanal fishing canoes.

Hanson (2004) on why fishers name their canoes also posits that most canoe owners name their canoes for the purpose of identification. The names give the canoe owners the chance to make a personal statement to the community and the world at large, thereby establishing an expression of various types of relationships. Again, some of the names of canoes speak of how the canoe owner was able to acquire the canoe (Henderson-Quartey, 2004). Canoes cost fortune, and owners therefore must work hard and save for years before being able to afford one. The names of many canoes therefore, express the hard work, the patience and the pride associated with owning a canoe (Thompson, 2004). The names of some canoes sometimes also represent the strong relationships that exist among families in the fishing community (Hanson, 2004). Some canoe names send strong messages to the community that the owner is self-disciplined and hardworking and that he/she may have gone through some hard times to get a canoe. This establishes the owner in relation to the rest of the community as one of the diligent members set apart and grouped together with those who work hard (Nunoo, 1975).

## 2.4 The Symbiosis of Canoe Naming and Religion

Gray (2006) on his part indicates that some canoe names reveal their owners' relationship with a higher power or the Supreme Being. She says majority of canoes are decorated with texts that seek to praise God and express His power. These statements, in one way or other, reveal the owner's religious belief (Marshall, 2002; Field, 2004). This places the owner in relationship with the rest of the community. These names also say something about the owner's character, as they may connote certain moral standards and practices. One can therefore say that the owner plays honest and ethical role in the

community. Coronel (2005) is of the view that within such names, the owner and the viewer may immediately be placed in relationship with one another in the community. Agbenu (2011) on his part reiterates fishers' belief in giving religious names to their canoes. He notes that it is the fishers' way of praising God, which to them is a guarantee for getting whatever they want. Some of them believe that if God is praised and feared at the same time, one will be fortunate to have God's favour on his side. Apart from canoes depicting religious connotations, others too depict fishers' philosophy of life.

In contrast to these religious connotations, other names are more personal. Some of the names make a statement about the owner as an individual (Asmah, 2003). These names give the community insight into the canoe owner's life as a real person, rather than simply a canoe owner or fisherman, making the owner someone open to interaction or establishing some sort of relationship (Walden, 2012). Some names on canoes come about as a response from the owner to what people say about him or her. Such names therefore touch on human relationships, in that they illustrate how the owner is related to another person, whether it is through jealousy, hearsay or shame (Gulbrandsen, 2000).

Walden (2012) also states that some canoes are named with statements that depict life in general or with statements directed at the community as a whole. These names seem to embody the owner's philosophy about life, expressing what he or she finds to be most important. This small amount of self-expression describes the owner as a human being capable of some sort of relationship with others (Walden, 2012). Some names of canoes in a way illustrate a kind of parent/child relationship between the owner and the community, whereby such owners appear to be telling the people what to do. In such instances, the owner gets the opportunity to be an expert prescriber of some knowledge (Ratray, 2000). According to Gulbrandsen (2000) and Field (2013), some canoes are named after the group that owns the canoe. These names speak of relationships, specifically which exist between the owner and the particular group. It places the owner as part of the group and connects him also with qualities, stereotypes, or beliefs associated with the group. Such names also speak of relationship between the group and the rest of the community.

### 3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This presents the research methods employed to conduct the study. It explains the procedures adopted at different stages of the research. The chapter specifically presents information on the research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling technique. A description of the data collection methods and data analysis is captured in this chapter too.

#### 3.1 Research Approach

To better analyse the findings of this research, the researcher employed the qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2013). The qualitative approach to research seeks to identify and explore phenomena such as reasons and attitudes of certain situations. Also, it preserves and analyses the situated form, content and experience of social action, rather than subject it to mathematical or other formal transformations (Lindlorf & Taylor, 2002). The process of qualitative research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participants' environment, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2013).

Creswell (2013) explains that qualitative methods are particularly useful for revealing the rich symbolic world that underlies needs, desires, meanings and choice. Qualitative research is therefore not limited to rigidly pre-defined variables (ibid). Thus, qualitative research contributes to inquiry by enabling exploration of new areas of research and building new theories (Creswell, 2008). That is to say, qualitative research helps us to discover new ideas in order to understand the world in which we live and how things are the way they are.

#### 3.2 Research Design

Research design is among the most vital considerations for every research work. It is the philosophy or the general principle that guides the study and is a holistic approach to investigating the

topic understudy (Dawson, 2002). This study employs the Case Study method. Gall, Gall and Borg (2007) define case study as the in-depth study of one or more instances of a phenomenon in its real-life context that reflects the perspective of the participants involved in the phenomenon. According to Punch (2005) a case study aims to understand the case in-depth, and in its natural setting, recognising its complexity and its context. It also has a holistic focus, aiming to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case.

The selection of a research design is mostly dependent on the nature of the research problem or the issue being addressed, the researcher's personal experiences, and the audience for the Study (Yin, 2012). Research design can then be described as a strategy, plan, and a structure of conducting a research project (Yin, 2012). In other words, it is the logical structure of the inquiry. The function of a research design is to ensure that the evidence obtained enables us to answer the initial question as unambiguously as possible. That is to say, in research the issues of sampling, method of data collection (e.g. questionnaire, observation, and document analysis), and design of questions are all subsidiary to the matter of 'What evidence do I need to collect?' (Yin, 2012).

Typically, the case study researchers neither aim at discovering generalisable truth, nor look for cause-effect relations as quantitative researchers do, instead, they focus on describing, explaining and evaluating a phenomenon (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). To achieve these aims requires the researchers to spend adequate time in the context of the study to collect extensive data using multiple instruments to develop in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study. Since this study focuses on vital facts of people; their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, motivations, behaviours and provides information on which sound conclusions would be drawn, the researcher deemed this research design very appropriate for conducting the study because it helps in getting insights into issues in their natural setting. The case study design therefore helped in uncovering the communication implications of canoe inscriptions among the selected fishing communities in the Central Region of Ghana.

### 3.3 Population

Creswell (2013) refers to a study population as an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications. A population is the total of all the individuals who have certain characteristics and are of interest to a researcher. A population comprises all the possible cases (persons, objects, events) that constitute a known whole (Punch, 2005). Dartey (2012) distinguishes between a population and a target population. A population refers to the entire group of homogeneous entities from which the target population is drawn. The elements in a target population therefore belong to the population and may be drawn for study because they possess same or similar characteristics of the population. The population of a study is the entire aggregation of respondents. Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2010) observe that the target population is the first most important consideration after a researcher decides to use sampling.

According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin, (2010) the population of a study must be carefully defined so that the appropriate sources from which data shall be gathered can be identified. The population for the study comprised all artisanal fishing canoes in the Central Region of Ghana. Since studying canoes in Ghana as a whole could be a herculean task and the researcher was working within a time frame, he deemed it necessary to study one region out of the four coastal regions in Ghana. Again, the language (Fante) spoken by most of the coastal communities in the region informed his choice of the region. The researcher saw it very necessary to enhance effective communication between him and the respondents since he is also a native speaker of the language.

### 3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

This study is concerned with analysing inscriptions on artisanal canoes in a natural setting. Yin (2012) notes that the objectives of a research determine the type of sampling method that should be employed. Based on this, a Purposive sampling method was adopted for this study. This is a form of non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based on a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

Furthermore, a purposive sample includes respondents or subjects that are selected for possessing specific characteristics, thereby eliminating those that fail to meet the criteria (Yin, 2012). For the purpose of this study, the researcher sampled three fishing communities in the Central Region, namely, Ankaful near Saltpond and Anomabo; all in the Mfantseman Municipality and Apam in the Gomoa West District. According to Odotei (2002), these communities are among the well-known fishing communities in the Central Region of Ghana. The researcher chose these communities because the respondents'/participants' medium of communication is Fante just as much as his, and thus would facilitate effective analyses. According to Littlejohn and Foss (2011), people experience consubstantiality when they share meaning by virtue of using a common language. Out of these three communities, the researcher purposively gathered and analysed inscriptions (texts and pictograms) on 150 canoes, 50 in each community. Again, the researcher cumulatively interviewed 30 fishers (including canoe owners). In addition to that I interviewed three Chief Fishermen, one from each of the communities I studied.

### 3.5 Data Collection Methods

This study employed interview as the instrument for data collection. It adopted this data collection method to make the data more credible and reliable. In-depth interview was used to gather data for this study. According to Yin (2012), interview is appropriate for data collection in which information is gathered through oral or written questioning. This instrument helped the researcher seek explanations, meanings and justification from owners of canoes to some of the inscriptions. The researcher first created and maintained a rapport with the interviewees throughout his period of research in the communities (Lindlorf & Taylor, 2002). In all the interviews, permission was properly sought from the interviewees. In order to record the discussion, the audio recording became necessary for the purposes of capturing the minute details of the discussions. The researcher assured the interviewees that the information was purely for academic purposes.

Interview can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured. A structured interview is one of the techniques that can be used to gather data for a qualitative study. The questions in the schedule are pre-determined, leaving the interviewer little or no chance to divert from them. Creswell (2013) describes a structured interview in this way: the one in which the content and procedures are organised in advance. This means that the sequence and wording of the questions are determined by means of a schedule and the interviewer is left little freedom to make modifications (Creswell, 2013). Semi-structured interview is also one of the most common tools or instruments or techniques employed to gather data in qualitative studies (Kusi, 2012). These instruments are flexible and to a greater extent, offer interviewees the opportunity to express their views, feelings and experiences freely, and the interviewers the freedom to divert from the items/questions in the schedule to seek clarifications (using probes) during the interview process. Yin (2012) argues that semi-structured interviews are neither fully fixed nor fully free and are perhaps best seen as flexible. Interviews generally start with some defined questioning plan, but pursue a more conversational style of interview that may see questions answered in an order natural to the flow of the conversation (Yin, 2012).

An unstructured interview is another technique often used to gather data in qualitative studies. As the name signifies, this instrument has no definite structure. According to Creswell (2008), unstructured interview involves free-style discussions with interviewees. Researchers who use the unstructured interview technique always have the purpose of their study in mind, but the questions asked and how they are presented (their sequence) to achieve this purpose is left with the interviewer. Unstructured interviews were used to seek reasons and explanations to the data collected on the canoes. This was because the researcher needed the interpretations of the inscriptions from the fishers' perspective. Creswell (2013) says unstructured interviews allow respondents to express themselves at length and also allow the researcher to seek clarification through probing and expand the responses of interviewees to ascertain their feelings and experiences.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

According to Creswell (2013), good qualitative studies are made when interviews and observations are made with regard to theories. The analyses were therefore categorised under thematic headings as to be in line with the research questions.

#### 4.0 DATA ANALYSIS

The inscriptions found on the various artisanal canoes in the three locations of the research were made up of two main categories; pictograms and texts. Verrips (2002) categorised inscriptions on canoes into two groups, namely texts and pictograms (art forms/symbols). It was based on this categorisation that the researcher grouped the data he collected. The discussions of the findings therefore, were done on the basis of these two categorisations. In all, 200 pictograms and texts on 150 canoes were purposively collected and analysed. This was made up of 147 texts and 53 pictograms respectively. In the data collection process, some of the inscriptions appeared repetitive so the researcher used his discretion to select those that suited the objectives of the study.

##### 4.1 Inscription of Pictograms

The pictograms ranged from traditional symbols to other art forms. The traditional symbols gathered included the stool and *akofona*. Others too were images of plants, human beings or parts of a human being which were either illustrating some traditional concepts or wise sayings. This revelation reflects the assertion by Cole and Ross (2009) that Ghanaian decorations are rich in symbolism. The other art forms included images of flags of other countries and international football clubs. This appears to reinforce Burke's (1973) theory of identification which indicates that human beings are symbol-creating, symbol-using and symbol-misusing animals. Human beings create symbols to name things and situations. They use symbols and often abuse symbols by misusing them to their (the symbol user) advantage (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011).

##### 4.2 Inscription of Texts

The texts collected on the canoes appear to communicate on all aspects of human life including religion, politics, social and economic issues (Verrips, 2002). The texts collected basically comprised names (of persons, places, companies, clubs, organisations, and things), numbers, abbreviations and slogans. Others were mottoes, personal statements, proverbs and scriptures. From all the three locations of the study, the texts out-numbered the pictograms, thus rightly affirming the view by Nunoo (1975) that texts would outnumber pictograms in the future. While Nunoo (1975) did not assign any reason for this assertion, some respondents in this study however attributed the seeming increase in the use of texts over pictograms to the increase in formal education among fishers and the positive impact it has had on the fishers. A respondent states: In the past, not many fishers had formal education and for that reason, many had to express themselves through the use of art and symbols. Today, the story is different; most fishers have had the privilege to educate themselves formally, at least, to the basic level. They therefore deem it a pride to express themselves with words than in art forms. Some were also of the view that using words provide direct understanding of some expressions and therefore one does not require much effort to decipher them.

#### 5.0 CONCLUSION

It was found that fishers use both inscriptions of pictogram and text to decorate their canoes. Interestingly, in situations where fishers do not have conventionalised symbols to suit a particular situation, they in turn create their own pictograms to fit that situation. This reflects Burke's (1973) theory of identification (as cited in Littlejohn & Foss, 2011) which argues that human beings are symbol-creating, symbol-using and symbol-misusing animals. They create symbols to name things and situations (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011). The study also showed that the inscriptions of text out-numbered pictograms by 75%. The reason for this gradual change is perhaps attributed to the increase in formal education among fishers. The revelation vindicates Nunoo (1975) on his prediction that inscriptions of text would out-number pictograms in the future.

There were some limitations to the conduct of this study. First and foremost, the qualitative research design adopted for this study though afforded the researcher the opportunity to have an in-depth interview with respondents; it nonetheless also presented some limitations. This is because per the design, only the views of a cross-section of fishers were solicited; and these comprised chief fishermen, canoe owners and canoe users.

Again, accessing respondents was difficult because they were available only on Tuesdays. This day which is supposed to be a resting day for the fishers was not the case since they spend the entire day mending their nets at the beach. As a result, some of the interactions with respondents were conducted in the glare view of their colleagues. It is thought that perhaps this "open" nature of the interview environment affected the responses of respondents.

The outcomes of this study have implications for the activities of the Ghana National Fishermen Council and Ghana Tourist Board in general. The study realises that fishers have intense passion for canoe decoration; it therefore recommends that the Ghana National Fishermen Council could establish a National Fishers' Museum to help keep proper record on canoe decorations in Ghana. This will help fishers to keep up with their heritage and tradition.

Also, Ghana Tourist Board, as part of measures to enhance tourism in the country should promote canoe decoration through the organisation of annual canoe regatta among fishers during the various traditional festival celebrations of the coastal towns for the purposes of awarding prizes to fishers whose decoration highlight and promote the cultural values of the country. It is considered that such promotions will enable the public understand and appreciate the values enshrined in canoe decoration.

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