

ch. 49: african art and global trade

- foreign trade began to change the societies of africa
 - connecting african cultures to europe and asia
- the beginnings of slavery

foreign exports and local art: the sapi

- the sapi were the first west africans to encounter european sailing vessels
 - began with mostly sculpted elephant ivory
 - portugese people were commissioning sapi artists to sculp luxury items out of ivory
 - lidded bowls were one of the most popular things
 - known as salt cellars
 - salt was an expensive commodity
 - salt cellars were displayed on the tables of the rich
 - the sapi had little to no use for these items, they were made completely for export
 - they were generally very intricate, not just simple bowls or dishes
 - one fairly complete example:
 - is about 6 inches across
 - weighs about 3 pounds empty
 - has most of the container in a sphere on top
 - surrounded by seated figures underneath it
 - four of them are sapi women, and four of them are portugese men
 - scarification is across the chests and torsos of the female figures
 - contains references to the portugese violence on the sapi
 - by the time this work was made, portugese men had already abducted sapi women
- the sapi stopped exporting their artworks to europe by the middle of the sixteenth century
 - because of all the violence that they experienced from them
- stone carvings and sculptures were made by populations farther inland than the sapi
 - populations such as the temne and kissi
 - one of these stone carvings, in the british museum, shows a figure in a reclined position
 - there are markings across their torso, lines
 - these lines could be twisted ropes or scarification patterns
 - this piece is thought to be made by a sapi before 1550
 - stone carvings like these are displayed at funerals of distiguished leaders in temne and kissi communities still today
 - this particular carving might be a subject lying at his own funeral

art of kongo and allada

- portugese explorers sailed farther south arriving at the mouth of the kongo river
- the supreme ruler of the kongo polity is the manikongo
 - portugese regarded him as a monarch like their own
 - the manikongo sent gifts to leaders in europe

- ivory horns
 - instruments made out of elephant tusks
 - elaborate woven baskets
 - textiles
 - mats, cushions, table coverings
- gifts from allada
 - the king of allada gave a collection of items to a young german merchant
 - several ivory castings from the kingdom of owo
 - two pieces of clothing that were worn by the king of allada
 - with very long sleeves
 - dyed in indigo
 - these robes are the only garmets from africa from this time period that we know about
- divination tray from allada
 - also given by the king of allada
 - tied to the religious practices of the yoruba
 - this type of tray is still used in africa
 - this specific tray was used by the king of allada
 - in the top center, has a bearded face with three gourds above it
 - this being represents disorder and confusion
 - the tray was used by a diviner, who the king would consult about problems he faces
 - the diviner would toss a palm fruit into the center, and take note of where it rolls
 - the diviner would then read the markings and refer the king to a proverb based on it
 - the proverb would help the king make his decision
 - there are animals and other figures around the edge of the tray
 - these brought the whole world's experiences into the consultation
 - this tray was described by the european buyer as "an implement used in satanic rituals"

clothing and formal analysis

- what can we see in this robe in a museum?
 - geometric shapes
 - lots of lines
 - dyed in indigo
 - rows of arranged triangles
- what could we see if it were on a mannequin?
 - how it fits the human body
 - probably other similarly worn clothing as part of an outfit
- this section basically says that we cant actually see how this robe originally was long long ago
 - it is stuck out of the sun in a museum
 - either framed on a wall or worn by a mannequin
 - either way, we can't see how it moves
 - we don't know exactly how it would have been worn
 - what other clothes would be worn with it
 - accesories
 - a visual ensemble, as the book states

art and history in benin

- benin was the capital of a kingdom
 - retained its dominance for almost 5 centuries
- the king of benin from 1440-1473 was ewure the great
- figure of a portugese soldier
 - lost wax casting
 - a copper alloy poured into a mold still containig a wax positive of the sculpture
 - the wax evaporates when the molten alloy is poured in
 - an immense amount of detail and texture in his clothing
 - he is aiming a gun
- head for an ancestral altar
 - copper-alloy
 - a generic portrait of a king
 - there is a hole in the top meant to have a carved tusk sitting in it
 - the base of the head is flanged, to better support the tusk
 - the flange has objects carved into it that represent more king-like things

art of central africa: the kuba and karagwe

- kuba royal statue
 - made of wood
 - blessing and protection were provided by these types of statues
 - honors the king named mishe mishyaang mambul
 - extremely idealized
 - wears a sash, arm bands, and a flat crown
 - in 1909 the statue was given to an official of the belgian government
- cast-iron sculptures of karagwe
 - the king of karagwe was Rumanika I
 - he had hundereds of cast iron sculptures in display in the palace
 - most were abstract images of cattle, like the one pictured
 - it has very long legs
 - very long horns
 - an exaggerated back hump

art and conflict: asante and the bidjogo

- asante came after kongo, benin, and kuba
- asante gold jewelry of kofi katakari
 - commissioned by asantehene kofi katakari
 - has a unique pattern of different rings of high and low relief
- statue from a bidjogo shrine
 - an equivalent to one of the brass heads from benin

terms

- scarification - basically scar tattoos
- ndop - wooden statue

