



El Anatsui: Beyond Death and Nothingness

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EL ANATSUI

El Anatsui

Beyond Death and Nothingness

OLU OGUIBE

To many the artist El Anatsui is almost inextricably associated with sculpture in wood, a medium which he has not only made very much his own but also relocated into the site of modernist sculpture without compromise in craft or indeed in its original conceptual properties. Yet the greater part of Anatsui's oeuvre over the past two decades is not in wood but in clay.

Anatsui began his career in Ghana in the late 1960s, working in concrete and much in the style of popular West African cement sculpture, albeit with a finesse and attention to verisimilitude more closely associated with the art academies. As soon as he graduated from college, he had the incidental yet enormously symbolic fate of assuming a teaching position at Winneba Specialist Training College formerly occupied by the legendary sculptor Vincent Kofi, but he lost no time in defining a different aesthetic and attitude to form and material. Departing from sculpture in con-

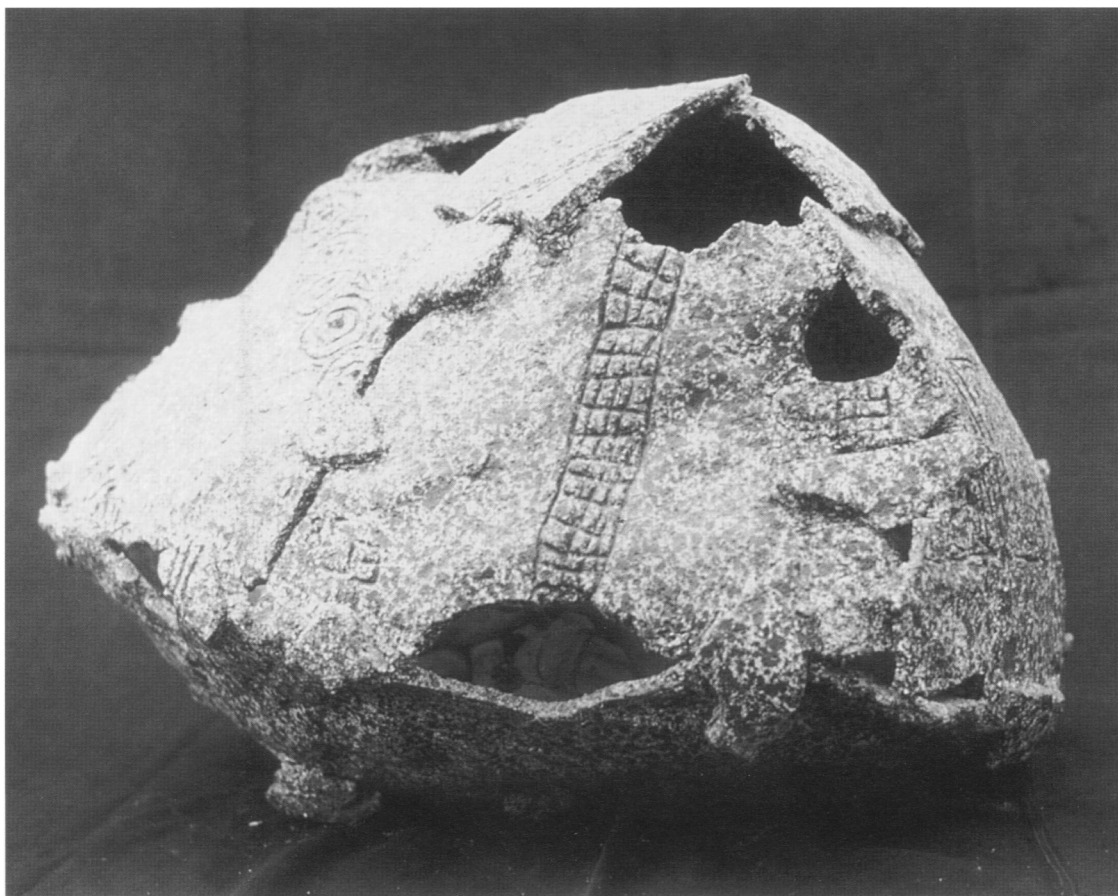
crete, a medium he would not return to for almost twenty years, and from verisimilitude and the replication of the human figure, Anatsui gave vent to his predilection for the found object and for the restoration of conceptual depth to sculpture.

In the early phase of this process that might be described as one of self-definition, the found object for Anatsui was not complete in and of itself, but required the transfiguring intervention of human agency in order to be translated into sculptural form. In the twentieth century many artists, particularly in the West, had come to the found object as art through the essentially conceptualist framework that characterized Duchamp's ready-mades, which were relocated, in full form, from their originary and utilitarian context into an exhibitionary space. Thus Duchamp's *Urinal* (1919) did not need to be retouched or redone to become art; it merely needed to be called art. Carl Andre's bricks at London's Tate Gallery in the 1970s, though arranged in a certain manner in the gallery space, did not in themselves involve any significant manual intervention by the artist; they became art through the agency of the creative intellect and the power of the word: the

transfiguration of concept made manifest through relocation and naming. Because Andre said so, the bricks were no longer mere bricks, but art. Creation had ceased to be a preserve of the hand. Now it was a projection of the mind. Man, finally, had become God. He said, "Let this be art," and it was art.

Evidently this modernist amputation of the artist's hand was not wholly acceptable to Anatsui. In the late 1960s and the early 1970s, when he taught sculpture at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, he employed as his principal material ready-made wooden trays which he engraved, sculpted, and painted in order to transform them into wall plaques. The mere appropriation of these trays was not sufficient: we had to see what the artist brought to bear on his material. The aim, of course, was not to discount the place of the creative mind in conferring artistic quality on form, but to state that without the trace of the hand, the act of naming alone is insufficient to turn form into art. Anatsui has held this position throughout his career.

Although he continued to work in wood for the rest of the 1970s as well as the 1980s, Anatsui's main medium of the period was clay. Clay posed formal and mate-



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Opposite page: 1. *Broken Pot I*, 1979. Ceramic (manganese body), height 59cm (23"). Collection of the artist.

Above: 2. *Broken Pot II*, 1979. Ceramic, height 30cm (12"). Collection of the artist.

rial challenges different from those presented by wood, and it offered possibilities that were particularly suited to his evolving concerns. Where beautification and the resolution of form and language had been the artist's major preoccupation, as evident in the wall plaques from the period, by 1977 he had begun to reach for a deeper intellectual and conceptual content in his engagement with form. Having resolved some of the challenges of space and sculptural idiom with the transposition of the object to the wall, and having redefined his understanding of location and visual interplay, Anatsui now sought to use form as an interpretive medium, as a rhetorical vehicle, and to do so in line with the specific properties and possibilities of his chosen material: in the case of clay, its malleability and its ambivalent denotation of both permanence and transience.

Anatsui found in clay the figurative resonances of both fragility and resilience, of

interminable, dialectical alterity. *Fragilis*, fragmentarity, the spectral space between softness and hardness, wetness and dryness, even liquidity and solidity. He found these properties very exciting and full of sculptural and conceptual possibilities, each speaking to significant aspects of nature and existence, and especially to the cyclicity of life.

The transfiguration of clay from the state of malleability to one of rigidity invokes natural processes of formation and maturation. Yet the susceptibility of the rigid form to reductive transformation—that is, the peculiar vulnerability of earthenware to destruction and recycling—also denotes the absence of finality and the presence of infinite possibility. As the poet and playwright Ossie Eneke observed, "Although a broken pot does not return to its original shape, it is not negated. It passes on to other levels of existence."¹ Clay, as matter and figure, therefore connotes perennality.

As earth, clay also embodies a strong element of spirituality in its constitution and source. Though inorganic, it nevertheless connects powerfully to the soil and the land with their regenerative connotations and symbolism. For the Igbo among whom Anatsui has lived since the

mid-1970s and whose cosmology has become a strong influence on his work and his aesthetic, the earth is not only the source of all life and creation (most genealogies trace the first humans to anthills); it is also the site and domain of Ala, the earth goddess—the divinity of creativity, communal balance, and moral rectitude. The unborn are believed to originate from within the earth and the dead to return to the earth. In Igbo cosmology the ancestral realm is in the depths of the earth rather than the sky, as in other cosmologies. The earth is central, therefore, to all human existence, as both source and repository, as the ultimate signifier of the cyclicity of life. As the abode of spirits and the souls of ancestors, it is sacred. That is why its deity is also the custodian of morality, for there is a line that runs through social and cosmological harmony, and the earth is the pivot on which the resulting superstructure revolves. This inherent sacredness is also embodied in clay, its transformative and generative properties replicated. For these reasons clay was particularly appropriate for the new direction in Anatsui's work from 1977.

Beyond medium, Anatsui was equally interested in pottery as a craft, and in

the pot or earthenware as both object and symbol. Pottery making involves manual engagement, the use of the hand and fingers, a closeness with material that is peculiar in that it homologizes the body, and human agency, with matter as well as the cosmic manifests of clay as earth. It reveals the subtleties of making in a manner that is not possible with other media. Because clay is not *formed* in the same manner as stone or wood, because of its amorphousness, the artist is able to follow the process of its coming into form, its conversion from mere matter into object, its passage from the amorphous and unmanifested into the formed. This in itself replicates the primeval moment of creation and that primal process at the core of all myths of creation by which the earliest humans or spirit beings, under the direction of the deities, formed earth and transposed it upon the virginal wetness of the universe. Handling clay inescapably recalls that morning on creation day when, in Igbo folklore, the chameleon learned its tentative gait because the earth below his feet was so soft and formless that to step otherwise would have been disastrous. Even closer, it recalls in all its fascinating ordinariness and ominousness the Yoruba week of creation during which Obatala, the divine potter, meticulously crafted humans in clay until, succumbing to fatigue and stress (or as some have it, the mischievous spell of Eshu, the divinity of ambivalence), he resorted to alcohol with the disastrous consequence that he faltered momentarily in his work and in this instant of indulgence created the disabled. To be confronted with clay, therefore, is to be repositioned at this primal moment of chthonic uncertainty and ominous intensity, to be transported to that originary location complete with its enormous and terrifying anxieties and responsibilities. And yet, because of its fluidity, the interminable alterity already mentioned, the artist working in clay is also able to enjoy this process of its transformation with freedom, to seek out possibilities with unmediated flexibility, to tend the material as the creator deities tended it at the moment of our creation, and to coerce it into being.

Though working in wood or stone involves movement and rhythm—a connective dynamic between mind, body, and material through tool—with the potter's craft this rhythm is more fluent and natural since the principal tool of the trade is the hand, the finger. When the potter's wheel is involved, this engagement requires the movement of hand and foot in negotiated tandem, in an organic fluidity that possesses its own unique



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poetry. Making becomes a performative act that unites bodily motion with matter and connects the living and the dead.

Among many West African cultures earthenware remains a principal utensil and part of everyday life. Despite the ready availability of cheap, industrial enamelware, the clay pot is preferred for an array of purposes. It is used in the household as well as for rituals and ceremonial activities, especially those related to fertility and ancestral propitiation, and the potter is able to produce to specifications required for these functions. This close association with daily life and the physical and spiritual survival of the family and the group imbues earthenware with a sacredness and ritual potency acknowledged in the care with which even broken and disused pottery is handled.

Anatsui was aware of this ritual significance, and of the recurrence of the clay pot in lores and rituals not only as object but also as metaphor for the fragility of existence and the delicate nature of life. He was also aware of its other figurative associations; as a symbol for the vulnerability of memory, for the ambiguities of social relationships, for the persistence of the supernatural, and perhaps most important, for fertility, death, and regeneration. Summarizing his interest in pottery, Anatsui wrote in

1985: "The pot as a shape fascinates me very much. As an expressive vehicle it is open to an inexhaustible array of symbolic, metaphoric, reflective meanings, interpretations, manipulations."²

An Ewe, Anatsui has a relevant, historical association with clay and pottery. He has mentioned that his use of clay owes somewhat to a certain Ewe facility with the material, and the historical consequences of this gift:

More significantly, too, the urge to manipulate clay could be regarded as an offshoot of the experience of my people the Anlo-Ewe in their history of migration to their present abode. They sought protection from a powerful king at Notsie (in present-day Togo) who later refused to let them go. Notsie was fortified with strong, extremely thick clay walls which the Ewe had to break down in order to escape, by devising a plan whereby everybody had to pour all used household water at a designated portion of the wall for years till it was weakened. (I had seen the vestiges of these walls as a school boy.)³

Anatsui thus explains his interest in clay as the result of "collective unconscious, and conscious forces at work, you might



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say."⁴ The narratives of Ewe persecution under the tyranny of the King of Notsie go further than the above example. In their years of captivity the Ewe developed their skills in clay manipulation, a process to which we find easy corollaries in both antiquity and recent history. This skill in itself became cause for further persecution, in one instance leading the King to request that the people make him ropes from clay.⁵ This Anatsui alludes to in the 1985 sculpture *It is upon a model of the old rope that a new one is woven*. With time, not only did clay become a medium for the Ewe, but its use and manipulation became an important commemorative ritual. To handle clay was to reenact history, to reiterate memory through performance. To engage it was to engage walls, vassalage, and tyranny, to replicate strategies of survival, and to commemorate triumph. To confront it was to recollect, to underline the persistence of memory.

In his early work with clay Anatsui used a manganese body for its peculiar speckled and brittle effect when fired, and for its specific association with Ghana.⁶ He also focused on the concepts of death, decay, and renewal, and their place in the beliefs and philosophies of various African cultures. For these concepts, namely *fragilis* and disintegration, and ultimately reformulation and regeneration, he chose the broken pot as a metaphor in his sculpture. In this he was particularly inspired by Ossie Enekwe's depositions on its symbolism:

Broken Pots [a collection of poems by Enekwe] affirms the inevitability of destruction and continuity, death and immortality, hate and love....The old and obsolete must yield to the young and vibrant, but in this process, the old are not annihilated: they pass on to a stage befitting their age and experience. In African metaphysics, therefore, the dead remain with the living... Africans are not terrified by death/nothingness since they believe in the spirit, the breath of eternity....⁷

To represent this interconnectedness of death and life, dissolution and wholeness, Anatsui chose to simulate fracture and disintegration in his clay sculpture, to interpret fragility through the figure of the fragment. And to effect this interpretation sculpturally and in the medium of clay, he departed from conventional ceramic sculpture and chose the pot as his idiom. This, of course, poses a number of formal challenges, primary of which is

4. Gbeze. 1978. Ceramic (manganese body), glass; height 43cm (17"). Collection of the artist.

5. Gbeze II. 1979. Ceramic, height 28cm (11"). Collection of the artist.



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6. *We de Patcham*. 1979. Ceramic, height 43cm (17"). Collection of the artist.

the resolution of utility and sculpturality in the pot. Anatsui solved that problem rather summarily by dispensing with conventional utility, since his pots were not literal but rhetorical. To enhance sculpturality he emphasized the textural through a speckled effect achieved by using manganese in the clay body, and even more pronouncedly through direct textural embellishment of the surfaces. This gave him the opportunity to introduce into the pottery the language of motifs which he had explored in his wooden plaques, and in doing so he treated the ceramic surface as a sculptural space deserving of strong, deep, and conspicuous features. Bold lines and incisions, pronounced ribs, and rough edges displaced smoothness and subtlety. And instead of the fluidity which color glazing yields, Anatsui chose sharp contrasts achieved not through glazing but through the combination of sections made from different earth bodies and elements.

Broken Pot I (Fig. 1) simulates an old, broken pot, one that might be used occasionally for propitiation rites or as a receptacle for a pet's drinking water. In the piece we find evidence of the artist's recognition that from the moment of its fracture, a pot transforms from utilitarian ware to sculpture. Its sculpturality is registered not merely in the supersession of original function, since its functionality is retained, but more conspicuously in

the visual mutation which this fracture, this fissure, introduces to it. Anatsui works the surface vigorously with no inclination toward finesse or self-effacement. He lays down prominent ridges, introduces appendages and protrusions, and imbues the surface with emphatic textuality. His use of colored slip further emphasizes the quality of fracture. Through these formal strategies Anatsui makes the hand visible. In *Broken Pot II* (Fig. 2) he constructs the pot from fragments in a manner that references the structure of the anthill, building up the inside and displacing the conventional hollowness by occupying the internal space with chambers or catacombs. The condition of fracture is then represented through the use of embellished sections and shards. There is a general feel of mediated wholeness, of dilapidation, deterioration, and collapse.

In capturing this disintegration, Anatsui heightens the paradox of his statement by formally underlining the futility of reconstitution while speaking to perennality at the same time. In Igbo symbolism the shard or broken pot carries with it an almost determinist notion of fate and futility. To imply inescapability from responsibility or fate the Igbo say, *Try as hard he may to avoid it, the water in the shard waits for the pet*. In more general situations the Igbo equally observe, *The broken pot knows no repair*. That which is broken can

never be whole again. Writing on *Gbeze*, the Ewe ritual pot of which his *Omen* (Fig. 3) and *Gbeze* of 1978 (Fig. 4, also Fig. 5) are interpretations, Anatsui notes that "it is a potent symbol of life's fortunes, and the breaking of it portends a very grave and inescapable omen, which, though not terminal, leaves an indelible lesson and experience in its trail."⁸

For the Igbo this ominous notion of finality and futility is somewhat mediated in modern parlance in the pidgin phrase *We dey patch am* (We are trying to put it together). Usually offered in response to the question *How is life?*, it uses the metaphor of a broken pot which the respondent is attempting to fix. It is from this that Anatsui takes the title of his *We de Patcham* of 1979. The seemingly revisionist version of the Igbo aphorism about the irreparable pot also takes its cue from the fact that in modern times a more enduring material like cement may occasionally be used to mend cracked earthenware, a practice known in pidgin as *patching* or *patch-patch*. Yet the phrase is only a short form of a longer statement: *We dey patch am e dey leak*—it leaks even as we struggle to mend it. In an apparent bid to mediate this insinuation of absolute futility, Anatsui paradoxically underscores it further by electing a version of the aphorism that relocates the emphasis from perpetual misfortune to the will to overcome. The reference for his title is the syntactic reverse of the above statement: *Dey leak we dey patcham*—leak as it may, we nevertheless continue to mend it. We are reminded of Beckett's corrosive absurdism: *Try. Fail. Never mind. Try harder. Fail better*.

Anatsui perhaps best interprets this unbroachable fragmentarity and irreversible disintegration in *We de Patcham* (Fig. 6), through the juxtaposition of fragments and shards of differing constitution, color, and texture. He introduces the element of paradox referred to earlier by holding the fragments together, by signing a fragile and delicate wholeness, an ominous unity that creates a new object and speaks to both fated fracturality and reconstitution, to both dilapidation and regeneration, to both death and rebirth. In the wholeness of a clay vessel there is an inherent fragmentarity, and in every shard is borne a history of wholeness. The paradox itself is inherent in Igbo philosophy and the election of dualism over absolutism, in the belief that wherever one thing stands, another stands by it, and not even fate is beyond mediation. There is no absolute reality and there are no fixities, and all truth is virtual. In popular West African parlance we find a neat formulation of this philos-

ophy: *No condition is permanent.* In *We de Patcham* Anatsui brings these elements together and amplifies them through a whole vessel built of fragments.

A broken pot may never regain its wholeness in terms of its original form, but at the point of its fracture appears a new objectivity, a new entity. And since no form is absolute nor any condition final, no state is primary. Fate loses essentialist negativity and begins to denote the absence of the absolute. Only in the notion of unmediated perpetuity is futility shown to reside.

If rupture, as symbolized by the breakage of earthenware, signifies a point of termination, the end of a period of wholeness, what emerges is not transition through death to nothingness, as Enekwe notes, but the split between death and nascence. We are reminded that death shall have no dominion, but not in the metaphysical manner of Christian eschatology. Here the preservation of the object, its corporeal survival, is essential to the efficacious registration of the futility of death. The supersession of rupture is transfigurative rather than transcendental, and nascence is figured in form, in the tangible, in matter. Without corporeality existence is impossible, for that which is loose and incorporeal is also dangerous. It is worth noting that although Anatsui has mentioned that a broken pot could be recycled by being pulverized into grog and reused in strengthening other ware,⁹ his interpretations of the concept of death and nascence nevertheless operate outside this premise of oblitative transformation. What we find in his work instead is the idea of the indelible trace, the preserved fragment which "survive[s] all destruction to provide a foundation and a tenor for rebirth and growth."¹⁰

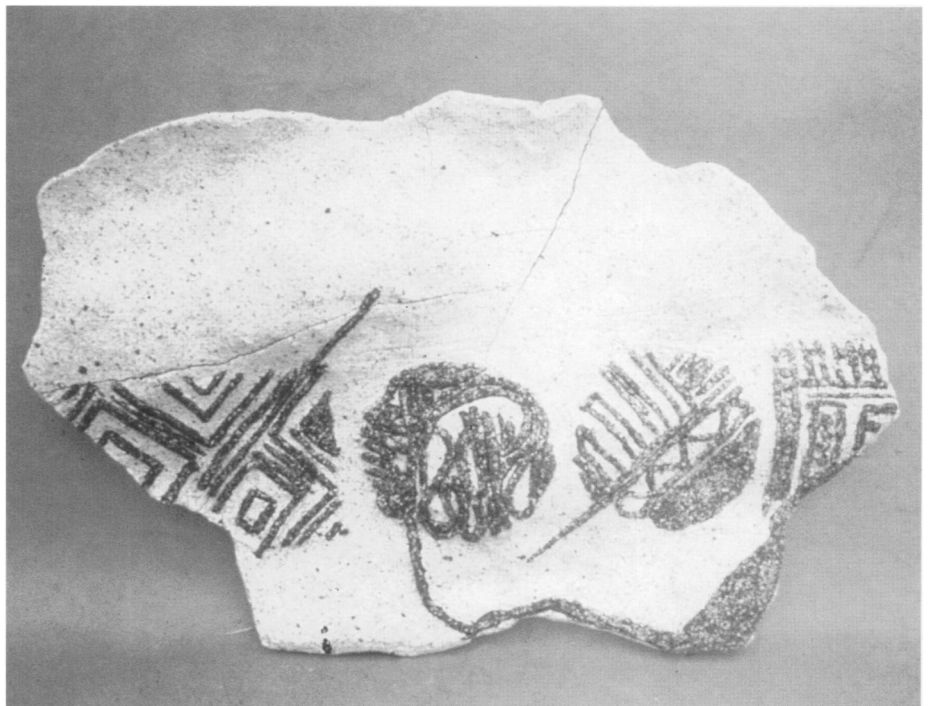
The principle of mediated wholeness leading to the predication of being on becoming, or of essence on existence, finds a relevant frame of reference in the governing principles of Dogon cosmogony. For instance, because of a disorderly act by one of the progenitors of the race, the process of creation was severely disrupted, and chaos was introduced into the order of things. In his version of the related myth which relies on the narratives of Dogon philosopher Ogotommeli, Benjamin Ray notes that from the moment of the "fracturing [of] the creative process...[reality] is a question of repair and restoration, of creating order out of disorder, being out of becoming." Henceforth existence is narrated "in terms no

7. *Aspirants*. 1979. Ceramic (manganese body), glass; height 42cm (16.5"). Collection of the artist.

8. *Writing on the Wall II*. 1979. Ceramic. Collection of the artist.



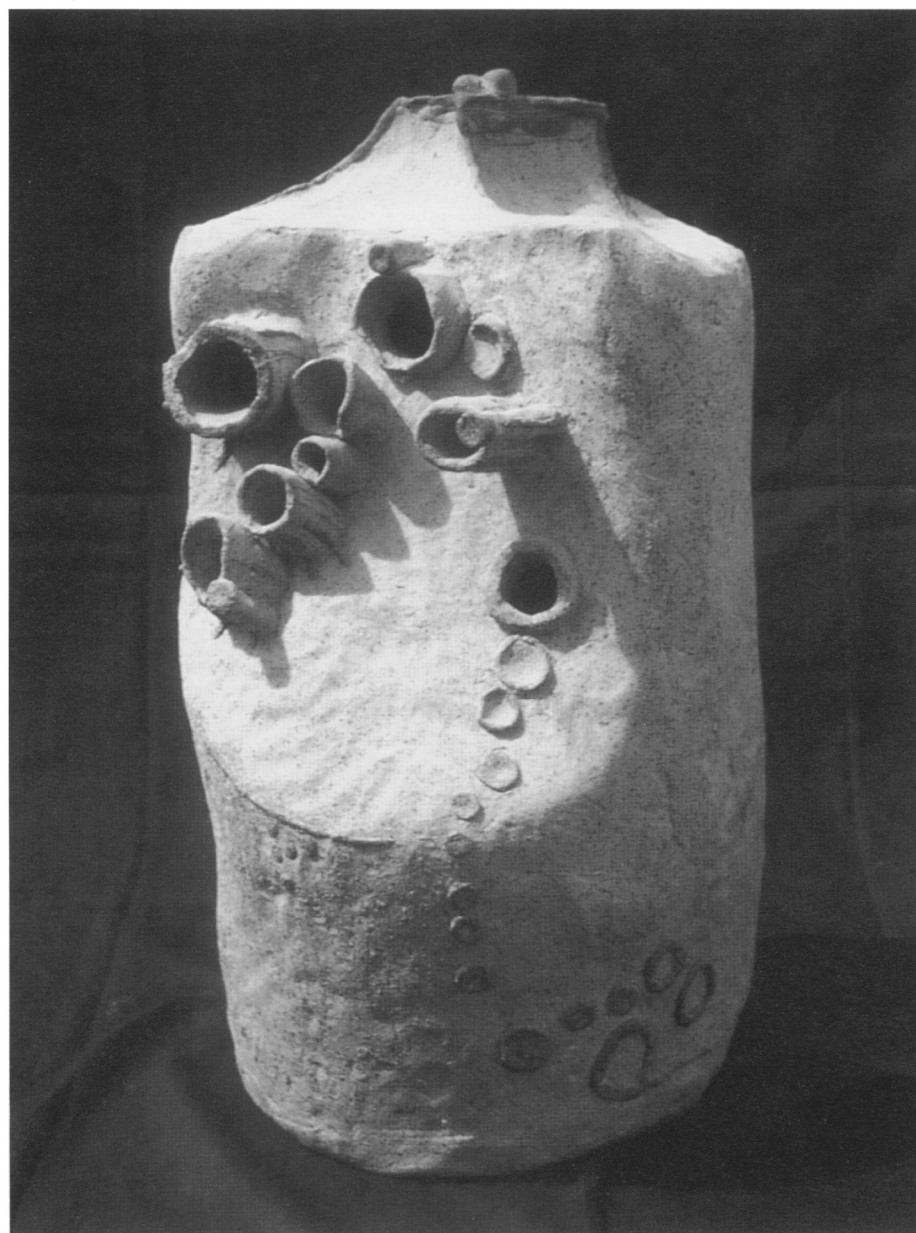
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9. *Imbroglia*. 1979. Ceramic, length 50cm (20"). Collection of the artist.

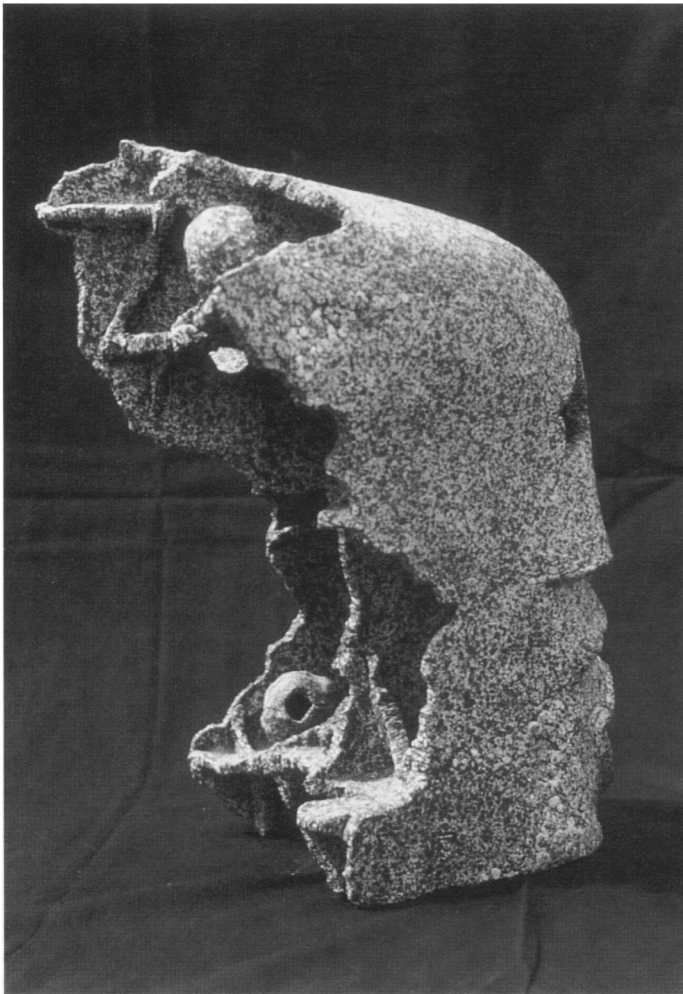
10. *Goatskin Bag*. 1979. Ceramic, height 47cm (19"). Collection of the artist.

longer of creation and realization, but of ritual transformation and renewal."¹¹

In a number of works from 1979 Anatsui pursues the notion of the validity of the fragment. In *Aspirants* (Fig. 7), *No child is born with all the teeth*, and *Writing on the Wall I and II* (Fig. 8), he departs from the strategy of the reconstituted whole and instead registers the fragment as a whole in itself, as a state of completeness. This state is further emphasized through artistic mediation, through the introduction of motival interventions as well as contextual relocation. Removed from direct association with the utilitarian specificities of its original form, the fragment in these pieces assumes a different function. It becomes a new work, a new object. Yet the shard or fragment retains a metonymic reference to the original entity, becoming a reliquary of memory, the encryption of a history. Imbued with this multivalence, the new form signifies growth and supersession, an advance from an original moment. It registers progress.

At the juncture between death and birth, a cycle is completed. Rupture becomes inception. The old gives way to the new. In the "Broken Pot" series, as his works in clay made between 1977 and 1979 have come to be known, Anatsui gave sculptural form to concepts of transition central to African metaphysics and social configuration. Further, he explored and revealed correlations between these concepts and contemporary issues while simultaneously dealing with aesthetic questions. His rehabilitation of the fragment, for instance, invalidates originary notions of identity, questioning the fetish of the whole and the fiction of integrity upon which supremacist ideology is hinged. At the same time he deals with the purely sculptural question of completeness. When, for instance, is an object a complete form, and when does the part become the whole? In all its radicalism, 1970s contemporary sculpture never fully acknowledged the fragment as a complete entity. And even in its obsession with fragmentarity, postmodernist installation practice only recognizes the fragment as part of a reconstituted if incoherent whole, as a relocated fraction. Building on West African sculptural and systemic traditions, however, Anatsui acknowledged the fragment as object, as whole, as complete sculpture.

Also, just as he chose domestic scale over heraldic form in the wooden plaques of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Anatsui



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11. *Chambers of Memory*. 1977. Ceramic, height 40cm (16"). Collection of the artist.

12. *Monument*. 1979. Ceramic, height 39cm (15"). Collection of the artist.

chose ceramic work when site-specific environmental pieces were still very much the flavor of the moment in sculpture. While many major artists continued to valorize the monumental, thereby trying to restore relevance and validity to an ailing modernism even while claiming to negate it, Anatsui continued to work on the modest, intimate scale characteristic of ritual sculpture. Ironically, too, while international sculpture figured itself as conceptual and yet excelled in the magnificence of form rather than the supremacy of the idea, Anatsui's work with clay triumphed in the magnificence of concept contained in the poetry of the concise form.

One observes, though, the correlations between Anatsui's earthenware and manganese works and the earth and nature pieces that artists like Andy Goldsworthy, Richard Long, and Robert Smithson were producing during the same period. Of these artists Smithson

might have had a less easily established sensitivity to the earth which was central in his work, and might have approached it more as a virgin territory for his modernist ego rather than in reverence. And Richard Long, despite claims to the contrary, might have had difficulty excising a colonialist inclination from his relationship to geography. Yet all these artists employed what we might consider natural media: vegetation, rubble, material previously largely ignored, especially under high modernism, in preference for such cold, impliable, almost fascist media as steel and iron. All the same, following his own course and his determination to locate his work within his own traditions, Anatsui merely worked on a different scale than these artists, in a different space, with a different, deeper, and more historically anchored intent. And the result were works of incomparable ritual and conceptual multivalence and vigor.

Anatsui continued to work in clay until the mid-1980s. In the late summer of 1985 he spent a period in England as a visiting international artist at the Cornwall College of Further and Higher Education, producing 120 pieces of ceramic sculpture in less than three months. Anatsui had

chosen Cornwall not only for its reputation and facilities but also for its historical association with the British School of St. Ives, and especially with the sculptor Barbara Hepworth, after whom one of his Cornwall pieces is named. Under the strong but largely unacknowledged influence of Henry Moore, the less original Hepworth had adopted an attitude to form and space that derived essentially from African sculpture. For this reason her work had considerable appeal for Anatsui. In the Cornwall pieces, however, Anatsui was not particularly concerned with the outdoor presence and obsession with permanence that we find in Hepworth's work, nor with the themes of death and regeneration that characterized the period we have discussed here. Instead, he was preoccupied with the use of the pot in the interpretation of myth and ritual. Exhibited in Cornwall in February 1986, the "Venovize" series, as the Cornwall works were named, built on aspects of formal signification that Anatsui had broached and mastered with the "Broken Pot" series, and extended the artist's explorations of the sculptural and conceptual possibilities of clay as a sculptural medium. □

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[This article was accepted for publication in September 1996.]

1. In his unpublished introduction to "Broken Pots," a collection of his poems, 1977.
2. From *Venovise*, the catalogue of El Anatsui's exhibition at Cornwall College of Further and Higher Education, 1995.
3. Private correspondence with the author, 1990.
4. Private correspondence with the author, 1990.
5. Anatsui in *Venovise*, 1985.
6. In *Venovise*, David Metcalf, a tutor at Cornwall College, observes that a manganese body is "peculiar to Ghana."
7. Eneke, introduction to "Broken Pots."
8. In *Sculptures, Photographs, Drawings*, the catalogue of his exhibition at the Goethe Institut, Lagos, 1982, p. 5.
9. In El Anatsui and Olu Oguibe, "Sankofa: Go Back an' Pick:

Three Studio Notes and a Conversation," *Third Text*, no. 23 (Summer 1993), p. 45.

10. El Anatsui and Olu Oguibe, "Sankofa," p. 5.

11. Benjamin C. Ray, *African Religions: Symbol, Ritual, and Community* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall), 1976, p. 29.

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1. Mude's 1982 paper was unpublished. It was slightly rewritten for *Nigeria Magazine* (Mude 1986), but that article did not contain this phrase.

2. Traditionally a *shagba* or is a man who has gained prestige through having a good farm and house, and perhaps more than one wife as well as other material evidence of success. Similarly a *shagba kwase* is a woman whose family is grown up and who is respected for her education and housekeeping or farming ability. Nowadays, *shagba* can also be acquired through a prestigious job, travel abroad, and the acquisition of material goods.

3. An example of these other cultural practices is Mammy Wata (Ahura 1987).

4. See, for example, Drewal & Drewal 1983; Horton 1960:28, 52.

5. Kende Ayua, personal communication, 1994.

6. C. Kyoive, personal communication, 1985.

7. Martin Dent, then the District Officer for Tiv, describes an incident of house-burning in which one of the *adzov* was brought before him. He asked, "U ngu *adzov*?" (Are you [one of the] *adzov*?), to which the young man would reply, "Eh m

ngu *adzov*" (Yes, I'm [one of the] *adzov*).

8. Interview by the author, 1985.

9. Interview by the author, 1985.

10. Richard Tsevendé, personal communication, Gungur, Jan. 11-12, 1994.

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