

PROVERBIAL SYMBOLS IN CLOTH FOR GA ROYALS**ABRAHAM EKOW ASMAH¹, FREDRICK CLEMENT² & MILLICENT MATEKO MATE³**^{1, 2, 3} Department of Integrated Rural Art and Industry, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi, **GHANA****ABSTRACT**

Proverbial concepts are the basic units of thought that underlie human intelligence and communication. Proverbial culture is the inevitable result of the way society philosophies are acquired, created, maintained and translated into symbols. Empirical studies conducted suggest that such cloth is nonexistent. This paper therefore discusses the translation of Ga proverbs, into symbols, use these proverbial symbolisms to produce royal clothes. An expository research design was used to throw more light on the design formation and its interpretation. This was attained through constant social interaction characterized by casual conversation with the custodians of Ga royal culture and knowledgeable elders' to formulate, describe, evaluate and assesses the proverbial symbols. Out of over ninety of the richest Ga proverb repository identified and documented, only the few selected, were discussed and philosophically interpreted for easy visualization to enhance their usage in education. The realization was that the royal proverbial symbolic cloth was possible and acceptable to the custodians of the Ga culture. It is recommended that the rest of the proverbs unattended to would be worked on to further promote the rich cultural heritage of the Ga people in Ghana.

Keywords: Proverbial culture, proverbial symbols, Ga Royal culture, Royal cloth, philosophical interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

The context in which proverbial concepts are formed provides meaningful interpretations of the proverbial symbol. The relationship between proverbial language and visual symbolic development is an old long intriguing philosophical and psychological, artistic activity that has been in existence for decades. Recent years have witnessed a surge of interest in this area in Ghana (Clark, 2004).

Traditions usually start out as oral stories depicting immortals with super-natural powers over their mortal subjects. Traditions are in an essence a starting point in any societies' history and culture, giving them a sense of identity or a way to explain the unexplainable events, to understand the notions of the harvesting seasons, to behave within a code of social structure and to understand and to give an explanation to good and evil deeds as they occur. Traditions reflect the culture they sprang from and are particular to that society. The traditions themselves can be seen as a representation of religious, philosophical or psychological beliefs that are particular to a society, describing their perceptions of themselves and of the outsiders. Symbols are the tangible aspect of these traditions and they give visibility to an invisible idea or a set of beliefs. Symbols are unique to a particular society and their geographical surroundings (Boia, 1997; Danser, 2005).

The term 'culture' refers to the language, beliefs, values and norms, customs, dress, diet, roles, knowledge and skills, and all the other things that people learn that make up the 'way of life' of any society. Culture is passed on from one generation to the next through the process of socialization. The dominant culture of a society refers to the main culture in a society, which

is shared, or at least accepted without opposition, by the majority of people (Rogoff, 2003). What is valuable and worthwhile in a dominant culture is regarded as more important, and is given a higher status, than those of others. Personalities within the society constantly misinterpret or varies, some piece of culture, as well as make deliberate variations and effectively so, it is essential that some processes are put in place to limit diversity. Documentation of its symbolism becomes more imperative due to the emergence of subcultural activities. There are no cultures that are impervious or porous to the influences of other cultures as such cultural diversity inevitably develops in the course of cultural transmission.

When societies are very small, such as small villages in traditional societies, people share a common culture or way of life. However, as societies become larger and more complicated or metropolitan, a number of smaller groups emerge within the larger society, with some differences in their beliefs and way of life (Pagel and Mace, 2004). Culture is rooted in the experiences, customs and beliefs of the everyday life of ordinary people. It is 'authentic' rather than manufactured, as it is actively created by ordinary people themselves. Examples include proverbs, traditional folk songs, 'Ananse' storytelling and folk dances which are passed on from one generation to the next by socialization and often by direct experience in many rural events. Proverbial culture is treated with respect and reverence, engaged in philosophy of lasting value, a part of a heritage which is worth preserving. The concept of proverbial culture is an important identity through which societies encapsulate the wisdom of the ancient established over the years that distinguish them from one society to another or form social connections with each other. The degree to which such beliefs and practices were exercised, in both frequency and intensity, was dependent in part on the degree to which proverbial culture became preclude to cultural symbolism.

Traditional technology provides the avenue of translating proverbs into visual symbols which augment their abilities to communicate and create new opportunities in art and culture. Focusing on such dynamics increases our appreciation of the cultural flexibility of such proverbial symbolism and their innovativeness in creating new social awareness and shared symbolic expressions under contemporary circumstances (Gundaker, 2000).

Design philosophy in any culture pulls its uniqueness from its customs, culture and technology, "its genealogy is entrenched with its localized and indigenous traditions. The perception of a unique worldview is rooted within the confines of its localized habitat" (Shastri, 2007, cited in Shalini & Sibicham, 2011). Textile fabrics made in Ghana, in its visual and tangible exhibition disseminates part of the cultural and ethnic belief of most Ghanaians. Local fabrics produced in Ghana are for various purposes, starting from the royal domain to the family unit and beyond. Proverbs, popular expressions, theme and colour of textile fabric are vital to consumer choice and selections made. Picton (2004) conceded that, designers trained with this notion, provides clothing for West Africa markets with local proverbs illustrated for acceptance by the local consumer. Fletcher (2010) established that clothes are much more than the fibre and chemicals needed to produce them. These tacit semantic and symbols are communication of culture, newness and custom. Like Adinkra symbols, Williams (2011) reiterates that it is a system of cyphers and communication based on the spirituality and culture of its people.

Additionally, these stylistic proverbial symbolism not only served to communicate a component of the core philosophy of the *Ga*'s, but also resulted in a truncated form of symbolic artistic expression that was increasingly multifaceted. Individual creativity in the use of proverbial symbolism thus generated artistic expressions which were very likely meaningful to persons educated in *Ga* culture as well, as the artistry of their craftsmen. This stylistic

symbolism thus facilitated the formation of new social acceptable symbolism among its citizenry. *Ga* proverbs and symbols that exist have not been fully adopted in *Ga* traditional cloths, especially the royal cloths of the chiefs and queen mothers. In order to sustain the existence of this important aspect of the *Ga* tradition, it has become necessary to explore the possibility of preserving and popularizing them through the designing array of cloths for chief and queen mother of the *Ga* state. *Ga* proverbs are fascinating and reflect the imaginations, knowledge, wisdom, ethics and morals of the people yet its symbolic representations are virtually absent. Their explorative nature covers the field of religion, philosophy, sociology, medicine, economics, science history and geography.

Geographically, the Greater Accra Region, of which the *Ga*'s belong, is the smallest of the 10 administrative regions in terms of area, occupying a total land surface of 3,245 square kilometres or 1.4 percent of the total land area of Ghana. In terms of population, however, it is the second most populated region, after the Ashanti Region, with a population of 4,010,054 in 2010, accounting for 15.4 per cent of Ghana's total population. The major ethnic groups are the Akan (39.8%), *Ga-Dangme* (29.7%) and *Ewe* (18%). The *Ga*'s however form the largest single sub-ethnic grouping, accounting for 18.9 percent. The *Ga*'s mostly inhabit the Accra plains, found in the west of the coastal lands. According to the 2010 census, they constitute the second largest ethnic group within the Greater Accra Region, Ghana, numbering 1,190,986.04, (Kissi-Abrokwah, Andoh-Robertson, Tutu-Danquah, & Agbesi, 2015). Their homeland on the Accra Plains in southeast Ghana extends along the Atlantic coast for about forty miles between *Laloi* Lagoon and the *Densu* River and is bounded by the *Akwapim* scarp on the north. The *Ga* heartland for three centuries has been the homeland of *Ga*'s found in series of coastal towns, each with its dependent villages and hamlets. These towns; *Ga Mashie*, *Osu*, *Labadi*, *Teshie*, *Nugua* and *Tema*, are welded into a loose confederacy under the *Ga* king (*Ga mantse*). Furthermore, the *Ga* speaking people who migrated from *Akwamu*, Ançhç in Togo, *Akwapim*, and surrounding areas, constituting the *Ga- Mashie* which consists of towns like ↔*Leshie*, *Sempe*, *Akamanje* (*Abolaa*, *Asere*, *Gbese*, occupying the central part of Accra.

The *Ga* people celebrate the great transitions of human life and passages throughout the lunar year, with rituals. These several rites and rituals performed covers the right of passage from childbirth, puberty, marriage and death as well as thanksgiving. For the majority of people, these celebrations provide all that is satisfying, to their communities and families. Many of these festivals include thrilling durbars, thanksgiving ceremonies, funerals and 'enstooling' of chiefs. On these occasions tribal leaders and queen mothers are seen in colourful clothes, sitting in decorated palanquins, shaded by the traditional umbrellas and supported by drummers and warriors, firing ancient muskets. For the *Ga* people of West Africa, such pattern of revelation is exemplified in the celebration of the "*Hξμξωξ*" festival. The "*Hξμξωξ*" festival is graced with great shouting and rejoicing over the plenteousness of the harvest. In the past, yellow was the primary colour worn on the occasion, presently red is worn by the royals. The non- royals, who witness this occasion, pick a particular design of cloth to wear. In *Ga* the act of sharing the common red stripe cloth pieces is known as "*aako mama*", * this is practised amongst the youths of *Osu*, *La* and *Teshie*. In the past "*Kξφα* (*ξ*)" (wine or maroon colour) was worn on the body and some placed around the head to signify bereavement. During the wars the soldiers, known in *Ga* as the "*blafoi*" wore wine coloured cloths, scary hats and walked bare footed. Today, people use red, black and white in different prints to grace these occasions. However, these clothes displayed are void of visual symbols that reflect their philosophy as a person, but only seen in gestures and appellations showered to the *Ga Mantse*. Empirical studies indicate of their use of symbols in other forms of artistic expressions in wood or metal. To address this undesired situation, researchers deemed it fit to come out with a befitting royal cloth for the

Ga mantse and the Queen mother for their collaborative festivals. The symbols used were deduced from various angles of life. These include themes of *Ga* proverbs that eminent historical events, expressions of particular human attitudes, noted animal behaviours, plants and abstract shapes of inanimate and synthetic entities (Unique Speak, 2005). A typical example is the *Adinkra* cloth used by the *Asantehene* of the Asante, which is now being produced on a larger scale by various textile industries. The principal objective was to use *Ga* proverbs to design proverbial symbols to produce *Ga* royal clothing's via the hand screen method.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials and Tools

Materials used for the project were as follows; mercerized cotton fabric, tracing paper, designed screens, mild detergent, a cake of latex foam for washing, plastic cups, spoons and rubber gloves, thumb-tacks, small plastic palette bowl for measuring print paste, and aprons. Tools and equipment employed in the project included, a pair of scissors, pens and pencils, cello-tape, a ruler, a squeegee, masking tape, working table, metal bucket, pressing iron, working shed, and camera.

Methodology

The qualitative study, the expository, descriptive and the experimental research methods were employed to demonstrate and produce fashionable designed royal printed fabrics for the chief and the Queen mother of the *Ga* people for festive occasions using the proverbial symbols formulated out of the *Ga* proverbs. Using the descriptive analysis, the authors drew on a range of *Ga* proverbs in order to provide fresh theoretical insight into the possibility of using proverbial symbols as motifs for developing fashionable designed royal fabric prints wear. The experimental method, was used to manipulate and control the testing of the designs, handling and production of the royal printed fabrics. Structured observation was used to evaluate the selected items in terms of their colour, quality, material and design. As described by Best, & Khan (2002) and Cronin, Brady, & Hult (2000) this exercise provided the basis for assessing the value and result of the project. Various proverbial motifs and design arrangements were experimented with pieces of mercerized cotton to ascertain their effectiveness for both functional and aesthetic purposes.

Designing

Before commencing the project, the researchers did preliminary work as to how the designs of the cloths would look like in order to get the right and favourable tools, materials and techniques to use. The researchers made a lot of designs in relation to the symbols and the cloth designs. Based on the availability of tools and materials, the actual symbols and designs was selected and worked on. The researchers translated the *Ga* proverbs identified into symbols by using the following considered parameters during their formation. Elements of design as observed in nature like Circle, square, oval and half sphere or crescent shape were used and in some cases philosophical ideas were used in deriving the symbols. The circle symbolizes the power and the presence of God; it also symbolizes purity, kindness, justice, love, and holiness. The oval and half sphere or crescent shape denotes beauty, cleansing, tenderness, warmth and affection and these are normally associated with females. The square symbolizes perfection, stability, faithfulness, justice and courage. Others included their cultural visual forms, the socioeconomic, political, religious, cultural activities of the *Ga* people. In translating the

proverbs into English, care was taken not to lose its rich meaning, which is the lyrical rhythm associated in their pronunciation in nature.

Selected Symbols

Proverbial symbols designed were made up of geometric symbols and figurative symbols. These proverbial symbols are richly impregnated with myths, ethics, virtues, and reprimanding messages (Table 1). The geometric motifs used are the Deer Hat / Crown referred to as the “*Adowa fai*” (Fig 1), the outboard motor known as the “*Aheadiζ yζ nξ ↔ ↔ k♠ awiriξ*” (Fig 2), the candour referred to as “*Akro Madio Kpoo*” (Fig 3). The other geometric symbol considered was the “*Ma ↔ ko ta ma ↔ ko nξ*” as shown in fig 4. The figurative motifs are the “*Ja nyξ ↔ mξ φ*” (Fig 5) meaning “Except God” described as the traditional double umbrella for chiefs and Queens among the Akan culture and the star referred to as “*↔ ulamii*”, (Fig 6) the state sword referred to as “*Tsi*” (Fig 7), the honey bottle known as “*Woo tξ ↔ kpaaa ↔ ξζ mξ*” (Fig 8) and (fig 9) the nursing mother referred to as *Yoofξyoo le noni ebii baa ye*. The figurative motifs depict stylized human beings, cultural forms and animals, the geometric designs comprise crescents, rhombuses, triangles, and hatchings, vertical and horizontal lines.

Below are the selected *Ga* proverbs adapted and developed into symbols and used for the project with their symbolic interpretations.

1. *Adowa fai*

English (lit). Deer hat / Crown

Meaning; – The cunning, swiftness and agility and wisdom of the deer are exemplified in the ruler.

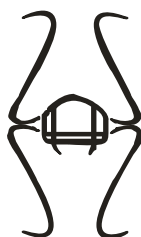


Fig 1: *Adowa fai*

2. *Aheadiζ yζ nξ ↔ ↔ k♠ awiriξ*

English (lit). A canoe is paddled although the outboard motor is present.

Meaning; One of status cannot operate in isolation he needs the co- operation of those under him.

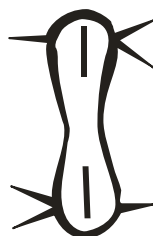
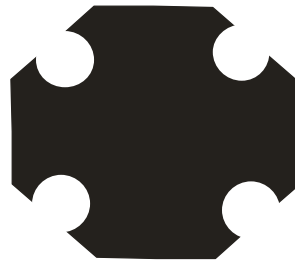


Fig 2: *Aheadiζ yζ nξ ↔ ↔ k♠ awiriξ*

3. *Akro madio kpoo*

English (lit). Say it plainly or candor

Meaning: One must be honest, frank not in fear or guile.

Fig 3: *Akro madio kpoo***4. Ma↔ ko ta ma↔ ko nξ**

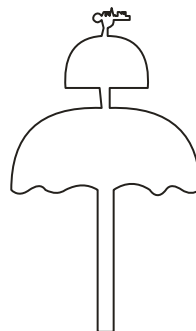
English (lit). One nation is advanced than another nation.

Meaning: There is always a better way of doing things or there is always someone who is more knowledgeable.

Fig 4: *Ma↔ ko ta ma↔ ko nξ***5. Ja nyξ↔mξ**

English (lit). Except God

Meaning: *Ja* means except, *nyξ↔mξ* means God. God is regarded as the creator and ruler of the world and humanity; therefore he must be revered and worshiped.

Fig 5: *Ja nyξ↔mξ***6. Kζ jetsζre lζ jeee heko ↔ulamii lζ etee shi mo↔ mζni fee amζ lζ eye amζ nξ**

English (lit). When day breaks the stars do not go anywhere but the one who made them has overcome them.

Meaning: No matter how one may feel, he/she is answerable to someone.

Fig 6: *Kζ jetsζre lζ jeee heko ↔ulamii lζ etee shi mo↔ mζni fee amζ lζ eye amζ nξ***7. Tsi**

English (lit). State sword

Meaning: Valour or strength of the *Ga ma↔tsζ*

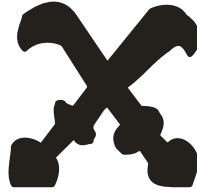


Fig 7: *Tsi*

8. *Woo tξ↔kpaaa ↔ξξmξ*

English (lit). The honey bottle is never tasteless (does not lose its sweetness)

Meaning: Good and success are always sought after and welcomed.



Fig 8: *Woo tξ↔kpaaa ↔ξξmξ*

9. *Yoofξyoo le noni ebii baa ye*

English (lit). It is the nursing mother who knows what her children will eat.

Meaning: Sacrificial love and empathy, the going at length to make sure her offspring survives is the trademark of a mother's tenacity.



Fig 9: *Yoofξyoo le noni ebii baa ye*

The remaining proverbs below were translated into symbols thou not shown were not selected due to purely aesthetic reasons but their interpretations or meanings are all stated.

Table 1: Collection of Ga proverbs

<p>1. Abui ni he edξ Iξ shaa kpa English (lit). A hot needle scotches threads. Meaning: Even when one is justifiably angry, there's wisdom in being patient and exercising self-control so as not to cause harm or act unwisely.</p>	<p>2. Amξξξ moko nine ashiii tsitsi English (lit): One does not beat his chest with another's fist Meaning: One should not claim for him/herself what he/she did not create or originate.</p>
<p>3. Fio fio ni adξdξ↔kζ ye gbee toi English (lit). - The fly consumed the dog's ear in bits. Meaning – Success is achieved by purpose, patience and perseverance.</p>	<p>4. Anξkwa sheee gbeyei English [lit]. There is no fear in truth. Meaning: No matter how long one tries to hide behind deception, truth will always triumph.</p>
<p>5. Aflimata kζζ je↔ feξ Iξ tan shi jee ni enuu</p>	<p>6. Aroo aroo ni ha kosζζ ba je ma↔</p>

<p>English: (lit). The sparrow says not that it has not heard, but that it is disgusted at the world.</p> <p>Meaning: A wise person does not give attention to verbal insinuations and invectives of his detractors.</p>	<p>English (lit). By means of the mummy truck a town thrives</p> <p>Meaning: A person of seemingly honour is indispensable in society.</p>
<p>7. Kç akoo na eye lç eko kpaaw owa↔ naa</p> <p>English (lit). When the parrot feeds the toucan is not left out</p> <p>Meaning: All people have equal rights in society that must be respected.</p>	<p>8. Ashinao tsee yç onukpai ahiç ni elaae</p> <p>English (lit). A string of beads does not get lost when it falls before the elders.</p> <p>Meaning: There is no misunderstanding or disagreement that is not subject to peaceful settlement.</p>

<p>9. Akroma kçç no fçç no ni Nyç↔mç fe lç hi naakpa</p> <p>English (lit). The hawk says all of God's handiworks are good.</p> <p>Meaning: With better understanding one appreciates the works of God.</p>	<p>10. Aspatre kçç elçç shi elççç fe gbç</p> <p>English (lit). The sandal says it's wide, but not wider than the road.</p> <p>Meaning: One must learn to be content with abilities and not contend with the impossible.</p>
<p>11. Alagba tç gbeç looflç</p> <p>English (lit). An unintended strike can kill a bird.</p> <p>Meaning; A seemingly unimportant venture can yield unexpected success or profit.</p>	<p>12. Asraafoi fç↔ bç shi ta tsç fç↔ yçç</p> <p>English (lit). Incompetent soldiers do not exist, but an incompetent captain does.</p> <p>Meaning: Incompetence of a group of workers reflects the bad administration of their leaders.</p>
<p>13. Alakaaa Nyç↔mç</p> <p>English (lit). God cannot be deceived</p> <p>Meaning: One will reap what he sows and cannot escape the long arms of the law.</p>	<p>14. Adamçççç asamankama mli ni afamç asamankama</p> <p>English (lit). One does not stand in a patch of thistles to pull out thistle</p> <p>Meaning: Discretion is better than valour.</p>
<p>15. Aleee Ahaaa mçni leee</p> <p>English (lit). One cannot do another's thinking for him/her</p> <p>Meaning: Ignorance is no excuse for negligence of duty and responsibility which is imperative.</p>	<p>16. Nyç↔mç jwç↔mç tamç atatu</p> <p>English (lit). God's wisdom is like clouds.</p> <p>Meaning: He is unfathomable those always looking for him are blessed as like clouds brings copious rain.</p>
<p>17. Aleee Nyç↔mç jwç↔mç</p> <p>English (lit). No one can tell God's mind</p> <p>Meaning: Gods ways are unfathomable; one should always look for him.</p>	<p>18. Ayigbe adida (efoç sçç kç hiç)</p> <p>English (lit). A double edged shears</p> <p>Meaning: A dangerous and untrustworthy person. Also problems are not settled by sheer power.</p>
<p>19. Atoo hu kç ebasaw</p> <p>English (lit). The little bird Atoo also has its range of flight</p> <p>Meaning: Abilities differ from one person to the other, therefore one should be judged on his own merits</p>	<p>20. Bai enyç hoo tçkplo kome shishi</p> <p>English (lit). Two crocodiles cannot fit in one cave.</p> <p>Meaning: Humility is indispensable to peaceful coexistence.</p>
<p>21. Atsiki oye "bua"</p>	<p>22. Batafo le kpokpolodo</p>

English (lit). Atsiki [a kind of net] is strong. Meaning: One has been always sure of success with the right tools and expertise	English (lit). The warthog does not regard the noise made by the scarecrow. Meaning: One has to be determined to face and endure the anxieties of life.
23. Atswā hi fξ mξ mli ni atsa English (lit). A scar is better than a sore Meaning: Dealing expediently and quickly with matters is better than procrastinating.	24. Blema efee enoko yaka English (lit) Historical events are not worthless Meaning: Life is a recurring series of precedence that provides wisdom and knowledge when considered.
25. Atsuu mξ ↔wζi asha eshishi a↔tswele English (lit). One is not sent for a ladder only to have it snatched from under him. Meaning: do not be a betrayer of other people's confidential matters and trust.	26. Akζ blema ↔me ehoo wonu English (lit). Old palm nuts are not suitable for preparing soup. Meaning: Modern problems need new solutions not old methods.
27. Ayiii mo atuaaa yaafo English (lit). One cannot be flogged and prevented from crying. Meaning: when one is hurt by another she should be allowed to talk about her pain or hurt done to her. Also the accused should be allowed defence.	28. Akζ blξfo kpa e↔mξξξ shwuξ ni agbala lξ English (lit). No one tries to tie and drag an elephant with a sewing thread. Meaning serious matters deserves equally strenuous thinking and discernment.
29. Awale tξ kξξ ma wξ ↔mei amli kξ ηα wξ sξξ shweshweeshwe hewξ↔ English (lit). The "Awale" marble says it resides in thorns for future security. Meaning: due to mishaps one goes to lengths to take precautions to safeguard his property to offset such crisis.	30. Ejurξ juξ abζku he ni abζku hu juξ ejurξ he English (lit). The right hand baths the left so also the left baths the right. Meaning: In life co – operation and mutual helpfulness are the basis of individual successes
31. Kξ okξ kwei nyξ yee lξ oyeee eyolo English (lit). If you at loggerheads with Kwei's mother, you do not eat her corn, wine and cake. Meaning: One has to be cautious around his enemies.	32. Etsuru ne, edin ne English (lit). This is red (fair) and that is black (dark). Meaning: One must be forthright and honest in his/her dealings no duplicity.
33. Enamξ ji efeemξ English (lit) Achievements come through work not luck. Meaning Capital is the backbone of all business ventures.	34. Ashwζζζ yξ haatso shishi fe nξkξ tso↔shi English (lit). One does not play under the candle wood tree, but rather the swamp ebony tree. Meaning: Every sound minded person loves peace and not a stressful situation
35. Fotei hξlξξ dani amegbeξ English (lit). Termites confer before dispersing. Meaning: One needs to seek advice before embarking on any venture.	36. Kξji otere moko jatsu le ohaa lξ tako English (lit).When you give load to a head porter, you supply him /her with a head pad. Meaning: A given contract must be matched by an equal remuneration
37. Kξ Gbalξ gba bo lξ bo hu gbaa ohe	38. Kξji afutsζ kξξ emu mle aahu lξ etamξ hala ni eba ka ↔shξ naa

<p>English (lit). If a prophet foretells an event one must advise himself to evaluate the prophecy. Meaning: When one is told something, it's a wise thing to reason on and evaluate the pros and cons before acting.</p>	<p>English (lit). If the humped back says he/she has ducked under water, he is like the turtle on the seashore. Meaning: One cannot escape the long arm of the law. Also one cannot hide his/her deeds of God.</p>
<p>39. Gbee kō gbee ejee la English (lit). There is no blood drawn in a dog fight. Meaning: Acquaintances and siblings are bound to stumble one another, so they must learn to freely forgive</p>	<p>40. Kakalika nuξ tswetwseetswei awiemξ English (lit). It is the cockroach who hears the moans of the rheumatic sufferers. Meaning: Only those who have their ears to the ground get to know what exactly goes on in secret.</p>
<p>41. Gbζ fζζ anaa ji tsu English (lit). All roads lead to the door. Meaning: One should do things lawfully and through approved channels.</p>	<p>42. Je↔ yζ kokloo English (lit). The world is round. Meaning: One cannot run away from his /her mistakes. Also one misfortune would not continue to remain such.</p>
<p>43. kζ gbu ni ma gbo English (lit). Stab and let me die. Meaning: love is unfailing and endures even pain and oppositions.</p>	<p>44. Kluklu kζζ Nyξ↔mξ yξξ ni wξ yξξ English (lit). The tiger ant says God lives I live Meaning: God is the keeper and giver of life; therefore there is hope in him.</p>
<p>45. Gbξbilξ gbζi pζtζ emζlζ loo he English (lit). The hunter is famous by his game. Meaning: One achievement is shown by his /her ability to perform reputable deeds and not by empty boast.</p>	<p>46. Kζ efi kootsζ lz ekpeξ tso English (lit). When the leopard is in dire straits, it chews the tree bark. Meaning: When things go wrong one would do things one would not do things he/she normally does.</p>
<p>47. Gbξtsui ashibantsζ ma shi dani kanya ba English (lit). The anthill existed before the beryl tree. Meaning: One must learn to respect the authority of the elderly.</p>	<p>48. Laasa kζζ ehiζ kpaaa heni afu ela↔mξ yζ kξkξξkξ English (lit). The fruit "laasa" says it will never forget where its navel was buried. Meaning: one must not forget his responsibility towards one's parents.</p>
<p>49. A↔mξξξ kpξ ashiii gξnti sζζ English (lit). A knot cannot be tied without the thumb. Meaning: A matter cannot be solved in the absence of the main players.</p>	<p>50. He fζlemξ hewξ↔ atoξ waonaa English (lit). It is because of the itching skin that nails are grown. Meaning: One has to save against future mishaps</p>
<p>51. Akζ kplotoo haaa kla↔ shitoo English (lit). The pig is not given to the wolf for safekeeping Meaning: One should not be left at the mercy of his enemies.</p>	<p>52. Kζ lilζi kζζ ekζ aahu efee je↔ English (lit). If the tongue says it is long it cannot rival the python Meaning: Experience brings along with it wisdom that surpasses mere knowledge.</p>
<p>53. Kζji okotsa ekξξξ ↔shξ lζ osliki duku kplekeee shi</p>	<p>54. Loo pii fiteee wonu English (lit). Much fish /meat does not spoil the soup.</p>

<p>English (lit). If your sponge does not go over the waves, you will hardly see your silk Scarf coming down. Meaning: If one is not generous, people will hardly be generous to you. Also, without sacrifices one can hardly be successful and happy in life.</p>	<p>Meaning: when there are more helping hands and minds, a job is done efficiently, quickly and solutions are enhanced and complete.</p>
<p>55. Kξξyξξ yξξ nζζ enaa yζ gbabugbabuu shi akζ lampado saa enaa English (lit). The wind is unwieldy, however the sail controls it. Meaning: With wisdom, discernment and forethought one can overturn a seeming setback into an advantage.</p>	<p>56. Abusumakutre kζζ je↔ yζ lξgξligi no hewξ ekase emli shihilζ English (lit). The chameleon says the world is diverse, so he has learned to live with it. Meaning: One has to be bold resilient, flexible and resourceful in life.</p>
<p>57. Kokolonto tsζξ yζ mξ nine shi ni ekageξ yζ mξ hi↔mζi ↔shi English (lit). The top spins with one's hand and falls under one's eyes. Meaning: there is nothing that escapes the sight and attention of God, he controls all things.</p>	<p>58. Manpa↔ kζζ eye bem ni eku tso ewo etoi↔ English (lit). The monitor lizard was acquitted so, it's plugged its ears with stumps. Meaning: A wise person stays clear of trouble makers.</p>
<p>59. Kζ Nyξ↔mξ mi↔ kpζ lζlζ/meele hao ni o↔mζζ otsui shi, onaa lζlζ ni duξ English (lit). If God is carving you a canoe and you are impatient you get a leaky one. Meaning: One cannot dictate to God, patience, reliance brings enormous rewards.</p>	<p>60. Kζ okζζ ↔wζi nō lζ okζξ shikpξ↔ hu nō English (lit). If you speak with respects to heavens you must do so also with respects to the earth. Meaning: One should not be partial in his administering justice, fairness and equity is essential.</p>
<p>61. Nyanyξ↔ le mξ ni ekζ ↔mξξ English (lit). The tooth knows who it laughs with. Meaning: Close associates understand each other.</p>	<p>62. Odaakζlζo kζζ egbooo yζ klante naa English (lit). The lizard says it would it would not die by the machete. Meaning: One should not walk knowingly into danger.</p>
<p>63. Kζ tso kome kpee kξyξξ ahum naa lζ ekuξ English (lit). If a lone tree braves the storm it breaks. Meaning: A heavy responsibility must not be borne by one person, collective action, interdependence between individuals and nation is necessary.</p>	<p>64. Gbζ egbζ jio gbi egbi jio fofon Ofe le nonn afoo English (lit). Whether it's scattered, withered or fatty it's the Almighty, we cry too. Meaning: One cannot do without God in all situations.</p>
<p>65. Kζji ootao oshζ Nyξ↔mξ lζ wiemξ otsξξ kξyξξ English (lit). If you want to send a message to God speak to the wind.</p>	<p>66. Beni oklopξ↔ yζξ ↔wζi lζ kootsζ hu nbξle kutu English (lit). Whilst the eagle claims the sky the leopard is ogling around the raffia barn</p>

Meaning: When petitioning a person of high status (e.g. A King or an elder) you do so through a linguist or an emissary.	Meaning: When one is taking steps and making progress in achieving, others are clamouring over worthless things.
67. Kꞑ Nyꞑ↔mꞑ ↔mꞑ kpꞑ lꞑ moko nyꞑꞑꞑ afꞑne English (lit). When God ties a knot no one can untie it. Meaning: God's wisdom surpasses man's thinking ability and understanding.	68. Kꞑ Ma↔ baa butu otsaamꞑ muꞑ toi English (lit). If a nation heads for ruins its responsible leaders- Linguist becomes deaf – impervious to reason. Meaning: When something degenerates it is difficult to correct.
69. Kꞑ Nyꞑ↔mꞑ kꞑ tꞑ, efꞑꞑꞑ yꞑ oyaiyeli mli English (lit). When God picks up a stone he does not rush in throwing it. Meaning: God in his long suffering and compassionate nature does not wantonly punish, but his justice will surely come.	70. Ma↔tsꞑ fꞑ↔ bꞑ shi otsaamꞑ fꞑ↔ yꞑꞑ English (lit). A bad king does not exist, but a bad linguist does. Meaning: Incompetence of a group of workers reflects the bad administration of their leaders.
71. Nyꞑ↔mꞑ noko ji ↔metso English (lit). God's eyes are with our treasure the palm tree. Meaning: Toughness and resilience can be gained only through God's blessings.	72. Bꞑni o↔mꞑꞑ osaa ohaa lꞑ nakai akꞑ bo baa ↔mꞑ nꞑ English (lit). The way one lays his bed is how he would be laid on Meaning: If one is diligent and resourceful, he will enjoy the fruits of his labour.
73. Saa↔ꞑi ekako ↔wꞑi da English (lit). The kite never gets stuck in the sky. Meaning: Ones evil deeds will always catch up with him/her.	74. Nyꞑ↔mꞑ bei ji bei English (lit). God's time is the best. Meaning: One should be patient and lean on God to work out things when it is best.
75. Akꞑ shajo emaaa Bo↔o English (lit). The baobab is not used for scaffolding. Meaning: One's mere stature or physique does not qualify him / her for a position of responsibility.	76. Kꞑ owo tsu lꞑ owoꞑ kꞑ emli kwakwei fꞑꞑ English (lit). If you take possession of a house you also get the mice in it. Meaning: If one accepts a responsibility, an idea or contract he does so with the risks involved.
77. Santrofi kꞑꞑ ada shi ada shi dawadawa egba afoforo afi eje English (lit). The Nightjar says give thanks give thanks, the locust bean tree has blossomed a new year has dawned. Meaning: One has to be gracious and thankful to God for life and sustenance.	78. Agbeee shwuꞑ ni aja eloo gbi kome English (lit). Game elephant cannot be shared in a day. Meaning: When serious problems arise, they must be treated with due care and insight and not be rushed through to complete.

79. Kꞑ noko bꞑ tsun hu lꞑ a↔aa shinaa English (lit). Even when a room is empty the rooms are shut. Meaning: Every person is important.	80. Wala samfee ni kꞑ ohiꞑ ona nii English (lit). Life is a key if you have, you are rich. Meaning: The one having life has advantages and opportunities.
81. Tsuwolꞑ lꞑ atee lꞑ kpaa English (lit). One does not starve the rooster of cords.	82. Akꞑ waobii enumꞑ fꞑꞑ wooo daa English (lit). All five fingers are not put in the mouth.

Meaning: it is in one's own disadvantage if she plays false with the one supporting him.	Meaning: One should avoid greed and wastefulness.
<p>83. Tsatsu kꞑꞑ nilee, jeee ↔maayeli kꞑ blꞑmꞑ</p> <p>English (lit). The ant says its knowledge; not eating noise making.</p> <p>Meaning: One reaches heights of achievement through knowledge and industriousness not empty boasts and feasting.</p>	<p>84. Beni ahu ko la↔ma tꞑi anꞑ lꞑ jꞑmꞑ aduji yeꞑ nii yꞑ</p> <p>English (lit). Before the la↔ma hill became arable it was the feeding ground for monkeys.</p> <p>Meaning: Whatever happens, God will provide.</p>
<p>85. Toi ni nuꞑ nii akꞑ lꞑ ewieee shi enyꞑ</p> <p>English (lit). Their hearing ear is not to twitch.</p> <p>Meaning: One who is discerning acts accordingly when advised.</p>	<p>86. Weku tamꞑ fꞑfꞑi ewoꞑ kushai</p> <p>English (lit). The family is like a bouquet, it comes in bunches.</p> <p>Meaning: Family members should work intimately with one another in unity.</p>
<p>87. Kꞑ tso futu tꞑ lꞑ efoo jara</p> <p>English (lit). It is difficult felling trees amongst rocks.</p> <p>Meaning: Raising and educating children among older ones are a difficult task.</p>	<p>88. Kꞑji kꞑyꞑꞑ tswa ni anaa wuꞑ tsofi</p> <p>English (lit). When the wind blows the fowls butt is exposed.</p> <p>Meaning: The hidden deeds of hypocrites will be uncovered over time.</p>
<p>89. A↔mꞑꞑꞑ yaa yꞑ boka gbꞑ pꞑ</p> <p>English (lit). The net is not cast only in the eastward direction.</p> <p>Meaning: One has to be open minded to opportunities and ideas that come his/her way to be successful.</p>	<p>90. Yitso taaashi ni nakutso abu fai</p> <p>English (lit). The head does not forfeit its hat it the knee.</p> <p>Meaning: One should equally accept his/her due and not any less. Also one should equally accept his / her responsibilities or faults and not shift or blame others.</p>
<p>91. Yꞑꞑyi kꞑꞑ mi diꞑ shi mi ↔ꞑꞑ</p> <p>English (lit). The velvet tamarind says it's black yet sweet.</p> <p>Meaning: One should not be judged by mere outward appearance.</p>	

Designing the royal cloths

The designing process addressed the concept of traditional symbolism and contemporary design concepts from the perspective of African aesthetics. Colour combinations and motif arrangements were considered during the designing process. Based on the philosophical context of the proverbial symbols, sketches were developed for the actual cloth designs out of the symbols produced above (Fig. 1 - 9).

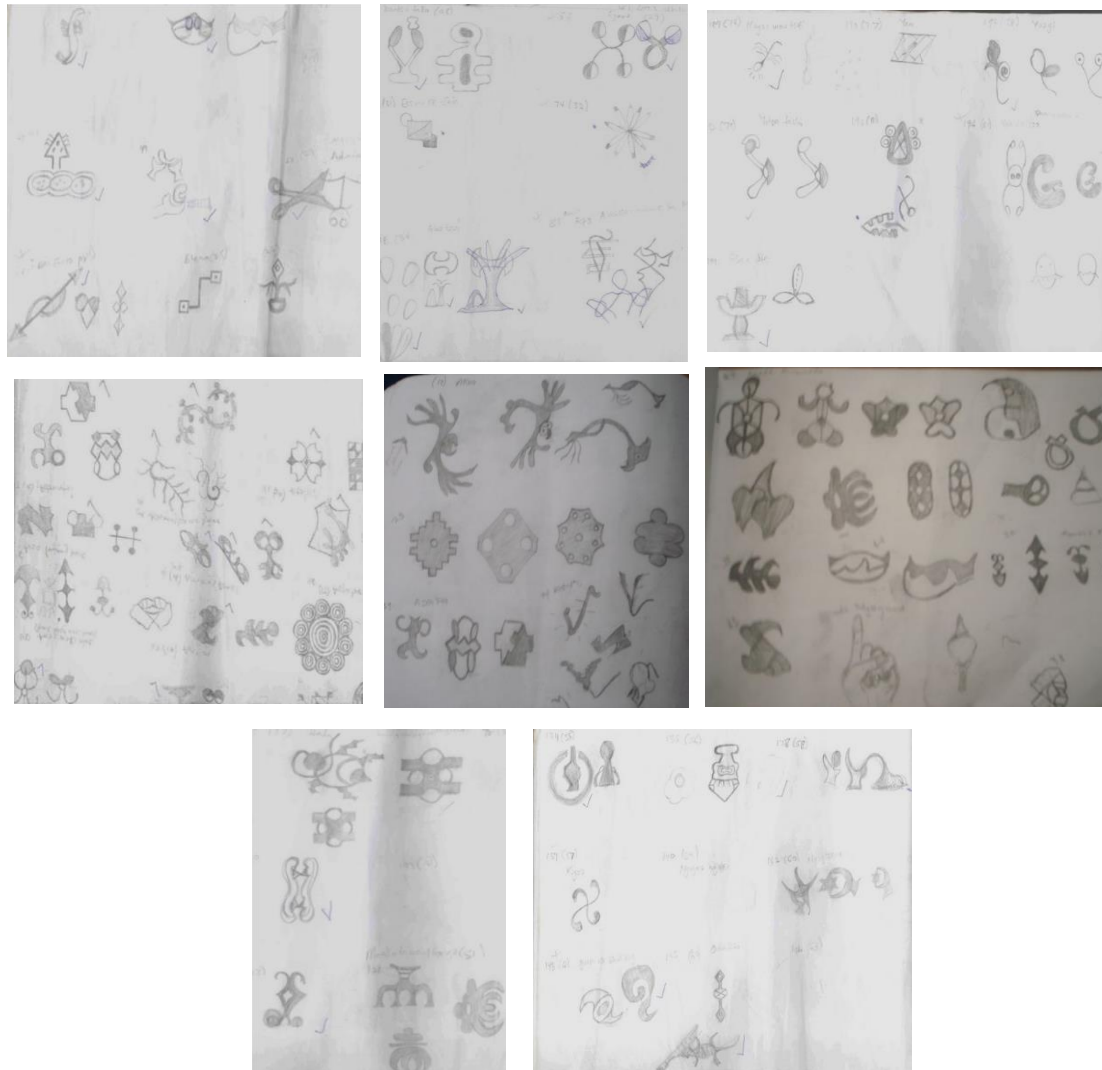


Fig. 10: shows some thumbnail sketches of translated *Ga* proverbs

With the help of the 2-D design program (Corel Draw), the researchers developed a composed cloth design out of the proverbial symbols selected for the King and the Queens (Fig 10 - 12).

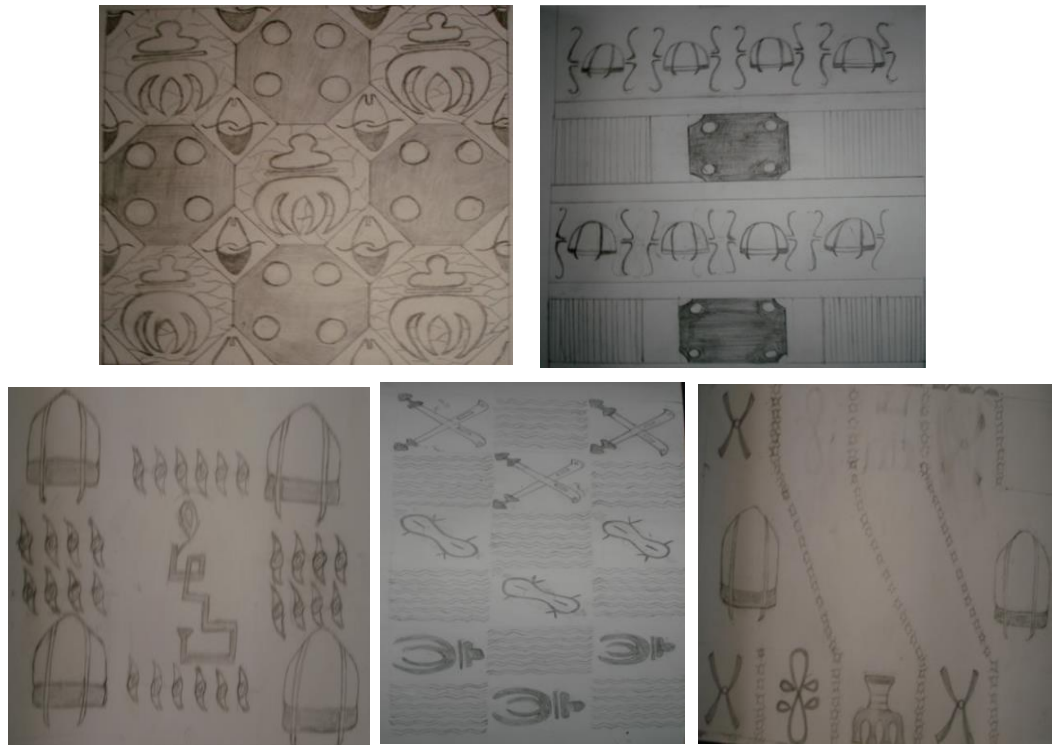


Fig. 11: Sketches of motif arrangements designed for the Kings' cloth.



Fig. 12: Sketches of motif arrangements designed for the Queen mothers' cloth.

These cloth designs were later developed with the aid of a computer 2-D design program (Corel Draw) for the King and the Queen Mothers' cloth (Fig. 13 – 14).

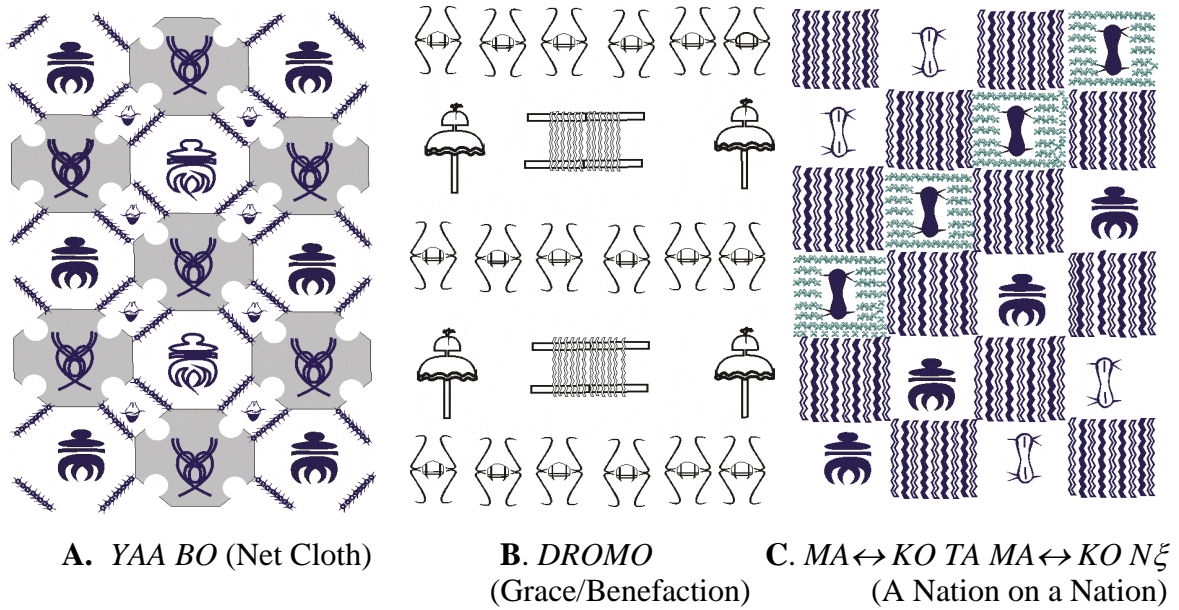


Fig.13A. B & C: Shows the Developed Cloth Designs for the King (*GA MANTSE MAMAI*)

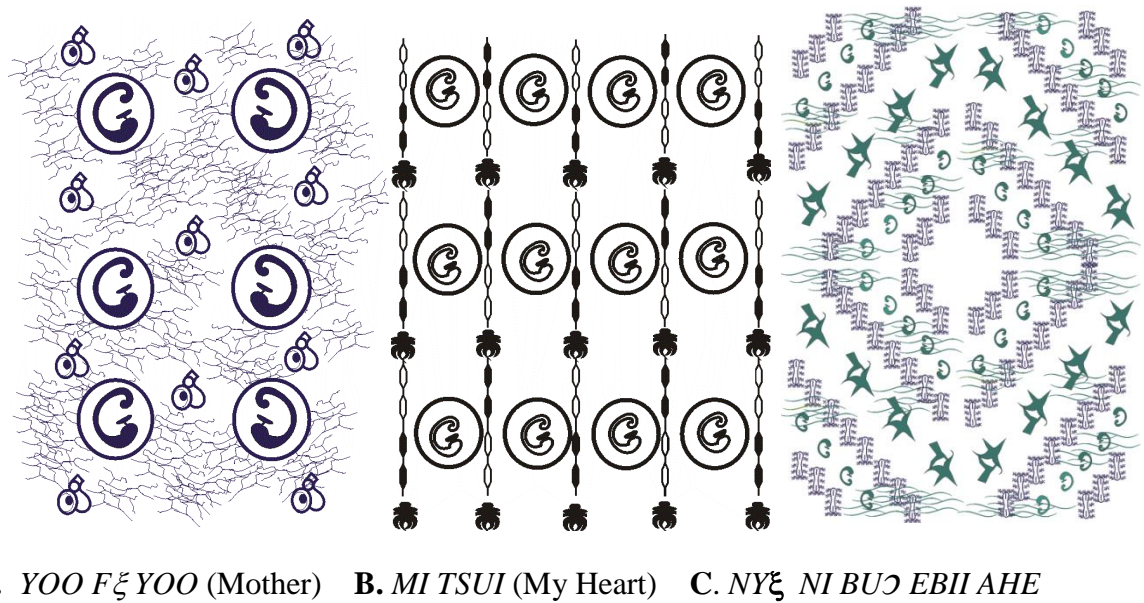


Fig.14A. B & C: Shows the Developed Cloth Designs for the Queen Mother (*GA MANYE MAMAI*)

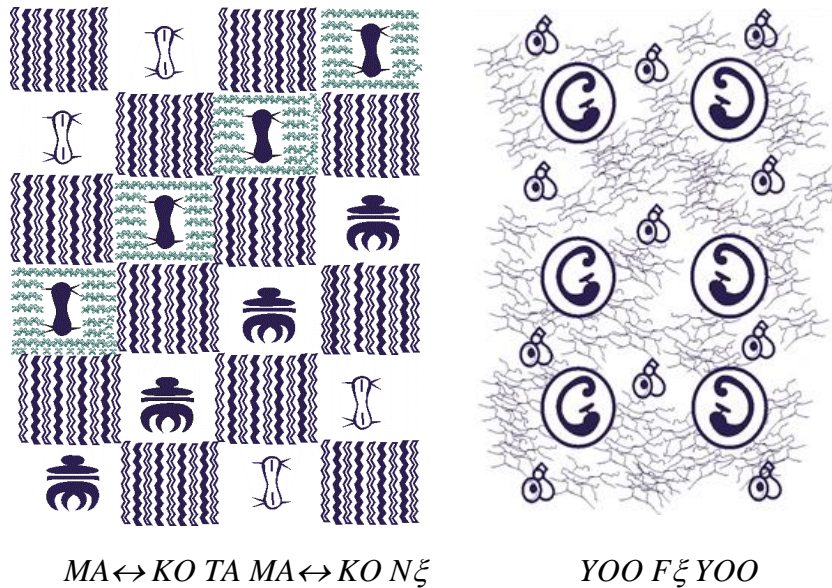


Fig. 15: Selected Cloth Designs for the King and the Queen Mother

Arrangement of symbols

The concept of the arrangement of symbols apart from implying “traditions”; signify the relationships amid two or more symbols (Asmah, & Okpattah, 2013). Special significance appended to these symbols were their arrangements made to conform to that of Kente cloth apart from the background textures introduced into the entire composition (Fig. 13A & 13C). The placement and the nature of relationships between the symbols was determined by the overall philosophy and the name given to the cloth. The arrangement of motifs for royal cloths are generally placed in full-drop, half-drop or in a counter-change form (Fig. 13 – 14). Such arrangement is regarded as majestic, peaceful or visually stable while the colouring of these motifs tends to communicate the purpose and the philosophy of the state. Thus, the permutation and the position of these motifs in relation to one another and the decisions that dictate these choices often reveal the importance of the cloth designed. Such display exhibits the flexibility with which the motifs are approached and the inexhaustible possibilities apparent in their concept of interactive design arrangement adopted.

According to Maxwell (1990) proverbs like symbols held high in religious and philosophical significance turn to change eventually with time in social circles. He also argues that elements chosen for their ornamental appeal may later assume religious and philosophical meaning and significance compatible with the culture. All these trends are usually apparent in the Ghanaian use of symbols in fabric design. However, these significant reasons for the use of patterns, motifs or symbols on fabrics can be either aesthetic, socio- economical, cultural, religious and political from community to community or consumer preference (Asmah, & Okpattah, 2013). Such factors usually determine the cloth types, processes, colour arrangements and motifs used. (Digolo and Mazrui, 2005). Proverbial motifs have thus become a ‘living’ ideology within the society. Despite the inherited traditional symbols, the requirements of modern contemporary consumer culture have provided the need for newer and innovative symbols for textile fabrics Adonteng, (2009).

The following symbols chosen among numerous proverbial motifs selected from various proverbs as stated above (Fig. 1 – 9) underwent adaptation and development. The CorelDraw

was used to develop several possible re-compositions of the adopted symbols (Fig. 10). Other design concepts were considered; such as colour, dominance and symmetry (Asmah, & Okpattah, 2013). Virtual prototypes of the designed patterns were then reviewed and the best ones selected (Fig. 11 – 12). The researchers now made wooden frames on which organdie (mesh) was stretched with the aid of staplers and the designs developed onto the screen. The designs were transferred onto sample textile fabrics; and then produced on the actual fabrics for the chiefs and Queen mothers cloths. These final cloths were then appropriately named to correlate to the original symbolism of the adapted motifs. The following images (fig. 15) are the virtually manipulated symbols designed for the two printed fabrics produced.

To ensure excellent printout, the repeat within the selected designs were calculated and worked out, its colour separations done before transferring it onto a Kodak trace (a transparent paper with the size 12”inches by 40” inches was used) with an opaque ink. The selected designs were then developed on screens for printing. Each colour of the design had a separate screen for the printout.



Fig. 16: Sample of Ma↔ ko ta ma↔ ko nξ



Fig. 17: Sample of Yoo fξ yoo

After successfully printing the samples (Fig. 16 – 17) the main cloths were, also printed (Fig. 19). The main motifs were printed first and the textures followed, in that order (Fig. 18). The fig below shows the researchers working on the main cloth (Fig. 19).



Fig. 18: Printing of the Ma↔ ko ta ma↔ ko nξ and the Yoo fξ yoo cloth



Fig. 19: Completed printed works of the Queen Mother and the Chief

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The *Ga*'s mostly use the white clothes, but other colours like orange, blue-black and golden yellow clothes as the study demonstrate are also used for festive occasions like *Hɔmɔwɔ* and *Asafotufiame*. The project advisedly used the golden yellow, blue-black and orange for both the Chief and the Queen mother's clothes. The design, arrangement took the form normally associated with the Ghanaian traditional colourful Kente pattern combined with linear elements of design based solely on aesthetic purposes to form the background texture. In our bid to make popular the rich cultural symbolism of the *Ga* people, the study revealed extensive possibilities of using *Ga* proverbs as motifs in the designing and production of royal cloths via the screen printing method. Such similar designed proverbial symbols can be used to produce varieties of festive clothing's for various functions as demonstrated in this project. This new optional approach of designing royal fabrics can serve as the foundation for effective designing of chief regalia and other forms of royal clothing in Ghana.

CONCLUSION

The investigation into Ga tradition proverbs has resulted into the display of Ga traditional philosophical culture portrayed through its proverbial symbolism for documentation. The new trend discussed in this study, shows the possibility and feasibility for translating Ga proverbs into symbols for royal clothing's. Other forms of application of these symbols for wood, metal, bamboo works are feasible and can be done with fairly modest technology. It is recommended, however, that lesser known proverbial symbols from other cultures like Nzema, Ada exert era should be researched into to raise their level of awareness.

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