

KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FABRIC AS SPATIAL METAPHOR

A dissertation submitted to the School of Graduate Studies,
Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology,
in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of

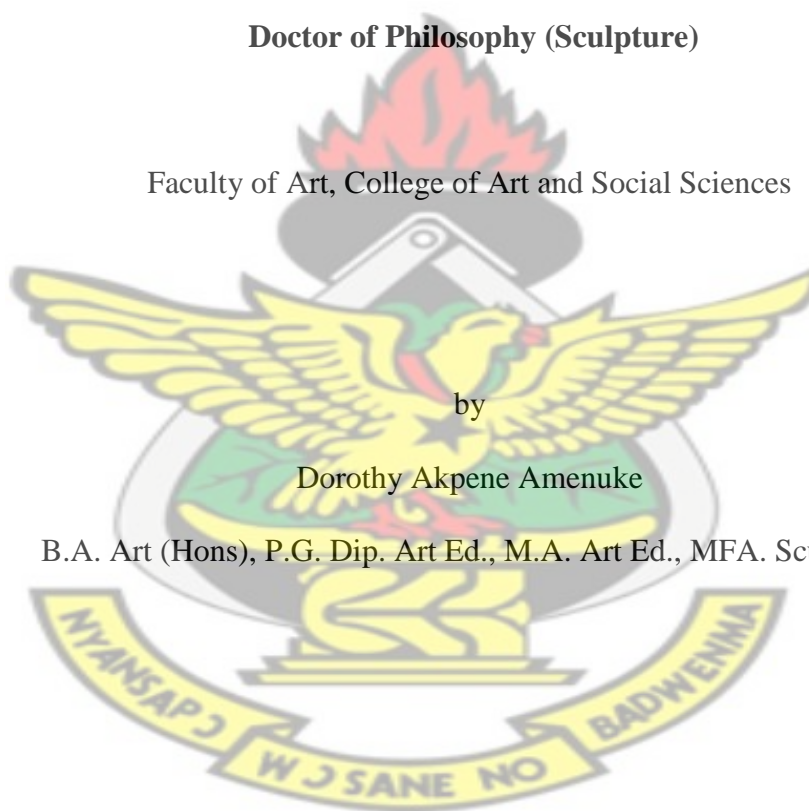
Doctor of Philosophy (Sculpture)

Faculty of Art, College of Art and Social Sciences

by

Dorothy Akpene Amenuke

B.A. Art (Hons), P.G. Dip. Art Ed., M.A. Art Ed., MFA. Sculpture



February, 2012

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards the PhD in Sculpture and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree of the University, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

KNUST

Dorothy Akpene Amenuke.
(Student)

.....
Signature

.....
Date

Certified by:

Karî'kachä' seid'ou.
(Supervisor)

.....
Signature

.....
Date

Certified by:

Mr. K. B. Kissiedu.
(Head of Department)

.....
Signature

.....
Date

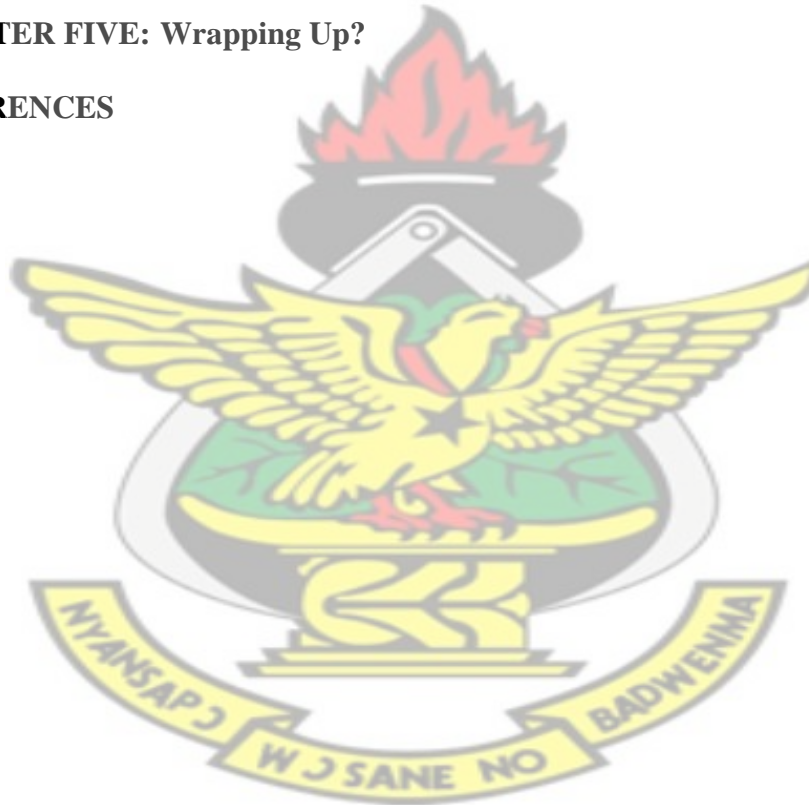
ABSTRACT

How is space conceived of? Where does spatiality reside? While some think space as a void, others think it as a product, still, others think it as a process of inhabiting location. *Fabric as Spatial Metaphor* is a studio-based research which investigates spatiality. It explored process and entity involving spatial subjectivization. The enquiry is made with the assumption that spatiality is embedded in the social fabric of life. Referencing thinkers such as Lacan, Kristeva, Lefebvre, Yi Fu Tuan and Rogoff, spatialization is understood here neither as static nor passive but as active where the human subject is interfaced with, penetrates or radicalizes an already named or emplaced location. In this research, the relationship between fabric and space is contextualized through an analysis of fabric and fibre works which are posited as analogues of space, spatiality and subjectivization. Works of Yinka Shonibare, El Anatsui, Shawn Major, Lucy Orta, Kosuke Tsumura and Lei Yan among others are examined and discussed in the context of spatial subjectivity and how it has been investigated artistically. A look is re-taken at everyday occurrences and situations; my Ghanaian and feminine social space and its content and what meaning could be made of the ordinary become my interrogated terrain. This should inform the way spatiality becomes encoded subjectively. Drawing an analogy between fabric and space, a body of works is raised to articulate this concept of spatial subjectivity. Using both conventional and non-conventional sculptural processes, the following conceptual works were created, installed and exhibited; *Weaving the Woven, Warrior, Palace, In the nestland 2, Securityland 2, Transparency, Dreaming Is A map, Inside Out* and *Seat of Life or Sweet Pain Space*. These works express various aspects of the self that come to give form to particular spaces thereby complementing the argument that spatiality reside within subjectivity.

Table of contents

	Page
DECLARATION	ii.
ABSTRACT	iii.
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv.
LIST OF FIGURES	vi.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xii.
GLOSSARY	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xiv.
 CHAPTER ONE: Overture	 1
Our Cover Cloth: Of Memory, Nostalgia and Loss	1
On Space, Subjectivity and Occupancy?	3
How It All Weaves in	7
 CHAPTER TWO: Within and Without: The Politics of Space and the Space of Politics	 13
Characterizing Space	14
Fabric/Fibre Sites	27
Ephemerality and Permanence: the Plasticity of Fibres/Fabrics	29
Innovations/Deterritorialization: Expanding the linguistic/artistic space of Fibres and Fabrics	31
Projection/Expansion: Pushing beyond Being (Clothes and Shelter)	46
 CHAPTER THREE: Wandering and Wondering	 65
Of Security and Accommodation?	67
Nets, Buoys and Sinkers	68
Position and Legacy	72
Authorship/Ownership	75
The Jacket Experience	82
Maturity through Networking and Entanglement: A Case of Multidimensionality	85

CHAPTER FOUR: Fabric as Spatial Metaphor: An Unveiling	96
Rhizomes and multiple models	97
On the Strength and Fragility of Materials	101
Fabric as Sites of Might and Contestation	119
Recycling and Reuse: A Legacy of Sustainability	123
Of Spaces Hidden and Subjectivities Revealed	130
Kindred Spirits: Inspiration from Sirigu	145
Life, Creation and Regeneration	150
Of Abodes and Belonging	155
Dreaming into a Broader Context	166
 CHAPTER FIVE: Wrapping Up?	 171
REFERENCES	176



LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. An example of, (<i>vikpavɔ</i> or <i>kpado</i>), from Akoefe in the Volta Region (a woven cloth given to my sister-in-law by her faher-in-law)	10
Figure 2. Figure 2, Dorothy Amenuke, Ghana, <i>kpowo</i> , 2006, in Variations on Devotion, (in the bamboo groove of KNUST botanical garden)	11
Figure 3. Dorothy Amenuke. Ghana, <i>viviti-kekeli</i> in Variations On Devotion, 2006, (in the bamboo groove of KNUST botanical garden)	12
Figure 4. Yinka Shonibare. <i>Three Graces</i> , 2001	33
Figure 5. Yinka Shonibare, <i>Scramble for Africa</i> , (2003)	34
Figure 6. El Anatsui. <i>Ancient Cloth Series VIII</i> , 1993, Flattened Aluminum liquor bottle tops and copper wire	35
Figure 7. El Anatsui. <i>Duvor</i> (communal cloth). 2007, Flattened Aluminum liquor bottle tops and copper wire	36
Figure 8. El Anatsui. <i>Fading Cloth</i> . 2005, Flattened Aluminum liquor bottle tops and copper wire	37
Figure 9. Michael Brennand-Wood. <i>Talk-talk</i> . 1988/88, Wall piece. Wire, wood, thread, paint and elements of text	39
Figure 10. Shawn Major, <i>Bud Sport</i> , 2008, plastic netting, fabric, doll cloths, stuffed toys, plastic toys, silk flowers, handkerchiefs, appliques, plastic leaves, thread	44
Figure 11. Shawn Major, <i>Animal Faith</i> . 2007, plastic netting, fabric, fabric fringe and trim, lace, plastic rings	45
Figure 12. Lucy Orta, <i>Parasite shelter costume</i> in the <i>Refuge Wear series</i> (1994-96)	49
Figure 13. Kosuke Tsumura, <i>Final Home</i> , 1994, Nylon parka with dozens of pockets	50

	Page
Figure 14. Oliver Herring, <i>Castle</i> , from <i>A flower for Eichelberger</i>	51
Figure 15. Elizabeth Atnafu. <i>A shrine for Angelica's Dreams</i>	52
Figure 16. Caroline Broadhead, <i>Seam</i> , 1987, in the <i>Skeleton clothes series</i> . Machine stitched cotton and nylon	53
Figure 17. Robert Knight, <i>Poor Flora (Sympat Hectomies)</i> , 1981, fibreglass, cloth, and mixed media	54
Figure 18. Elizabeth Deddeh, Ghana, <i>untitled</i> , 2009, batik fabric, zippers	57
Figure 19. Rose Garrand, UK, <i>La Pittura, the Spirit of Painting Reclaimed</i> , 1986, Installation using nylon dresses	58
Figure 20. Mitsuo-Toyazaki, Japan, <i>Social Plants</i> , (1988), installation of dyed tights	59
Figure 21. Lei Yan, <i>untitled</i> , 2009, camouflage fabric, twigs, photographs, chair, installation, 2009 Art Omi international Artists residency	60
Figure 22. Amal Laala, <i>untitled</i> , 2009, fabric, cords, trimming, Wall piece, 2009 Art Omi international artists residency	62
Figure 23. Barbed wire fence, cobweb and fabric. Oforikrom, Kumasi, 2008	69
Figure 24. Fishing basket and buoys on net, ready for fishing	70
Figure 25. Attaching sinkers on fishing net	71
Figure 24. An uprooted plant in dialogue with cement sculptures, CASS administration, KNUST, Kumasi	74
Figure 27. uprooted plant increases creating a mess, CASS administration, KNUST, Kumasi	75
Figure 25. Artists collaborating in workshop, (2nd international women artists' workshop organized by Kuona Trust, Kenya, 2007)	78

	Page
Figure 29. Artists collaborating in workshop, (2nd international women artists' workshop organized by Kuona Trust, Kenya, 2007)	79
Figure 30. Collaboration between artists and audience at the open day (2nd international women artists' workshop organized by Kuona Trust in Kenya, in 2007)	80
Figure 31. Detail of collaboration between artists and audience at the open day (2nd international women artists' workshop organized by Kuona Trust in Kenya, in 2007)	81
Figure 32. Presentation at J. J. Hills Montessori School, Minnesota, 2008	84
Figure 33. Tree attacked by parasite causing entanglement	87
Figure 34. Disintegration of fibres to reveal hidden woven structure of mature plant	88
Figure 35. Eaves of a thatch-roof shed	89
Figure 36. Mat screen for construction site on KNUST campus	91
Figure 37. Section of a pantry, UEW, Winneba	92
Figure 38. Cloth used as screen in Alexandria (Egypt)	93
Figure 39. Cut (offal) intestine	99
Figure 40. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>untitled</i> , 2009. coloured cotton fabric 'marbled'	101
Figure 41. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>untitled</i> , 2009. coloured cotton fabric 'marbled'	103
Figure 42. Colette, <i>Wall Panel</i> , (1978). Fabric painting of dyed black satin	104
Figure 43. Colette, <i>One View of Beautiful Dreamer: Bed II</i> , (1980)	105
Figure 44. Processing discarded paper for papier marché and container preparation	108

	Page
Figure 45. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Viviti kekeli</i> , 2006, from <i>Variations on Devotion</i>	109
Figure 46. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Aza kale vivie menyawɔna o</i> , 2006, from <i>Variations on Devotion</i>	110
Figure 47. Multipurpose fabric piece creation (front side), polyester cotton fabric pieces, jute fabric	111
Figure 48. Multipurpose fabric piece creation, (reverse side, forming short dashes)	112
Figure 49. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Palace</i> . 2009. Fabric, rattan, woven pandamus, papier marché, jute	113
Figure 50. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>In The Nest 1</i> , (2009), fabric, papier mache	115
Figure 51. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>In The Nest 2a</i> , (2009), fabric, jute cords, papier maché	116
Figure 52. Installation View of <i>Fluid Flow through Woven Screens</i> (2009), showing <i>In The Nest 2b</i>	117
Figure 53. Detail of <i>In The Nest 2b</i>	118
Figure 54. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Weaving the Woven</i> , (2009), fabric strips, rattan structure	121
Figure 55. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Security 1</i> , (2009), jute cords, rattan, fabric	125
Figure 56. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Security 2</i> , (2009), rattan, jute cords, dried Washiontonia Robusta leaves	126
Figure 57. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Transparency</i> , (2009), fishing net, fabric, rattan	128
Figure 58. Erica Spitzer Rasmussen juju dress, 2003, handmade paper, acrylics, gold leaf, watermelon seeds	132

	Page
Figure 59. Erica Spitzer Rasmussen, <i>Intimacy of Memory</i> , 2003, cotton, jute, dehydrated cherry tomatoes, acrylics, shellac, camel and human hair	133
Figure 60. Erica Spitzer Rasmussen, <i>A Coat for Two Occasions</i> , 2001, mixed media with joss paper	134
Figure 61. Jane Sterbak, <i>Vanitas: Flesh dress for an Albino Anorectic</i> , 1987. flank steak, salt, thread	135
Figure 62. Do-ho Suh , <i>Some/One</i> , 2001, stainless steel military dog tags	136
Figure 63. Jan Fabre, <i>Wall of the Ascending Angels</i> , 1993, beetles on iron wire	137
Figure 64. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Warrior</i> , 2008, silk, and cotton fabrics, trimmings	138
Figure 65. fishing net exposed to the toss of the wind which made manifest its weightlessness	139
Figure 66. fishing net exposed to the toss of the wind which made manifest its weightlessness	140
Figure 67. fishing net exposed to the toss of the wind which made manifest its weightlessness	141
Figure 68. veil without patches within it	142
Figure 69. veil with patches within it	143
Figure 70. Fishing net wedding dress against dark background	144
Figure 71. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Inside Out</i> , 2009, fabric, fishing net, light	146
Figure 72. Women preparing surface with cold-tar plaster mixture and smoothing stones	147
Figure 73. Women using traditional materials to paint designs	148

	Page
Figure 74. Edges of soft fabric lined with black, red and wine cotton fabric strips	151
Figure 75. <i>Inside Out</i> : installation blending with the surrounding space	152
Figure 76. Dorothy Amenuke, Installation View of <i>The Seat of Life or the Sweet Pain Space</i> , 2009, calabashes, fabric, plastic tubes, natural fibre cords	156
Figure 77. varied sizes of calabashes	157
Figure 78. Stuffed sewn fabric pieces and painted plastic tubing	158
Figure 79. Broken Styrofoam mixed with paint to give body texture calabashes	159
Figure 80. Sewing tubings/cords with stuffed pieces onto large orange fabric	160
Figure 81. <i>The Seat of Life</i> , (details) Arranged and sewn form on the ground	161
Figure 82. <i>The Seat of Life</i> , (details) Arranged and sewn form, installed vertically	161
Figure 83. Dorothy Amenuke, <i>Dreaming is a Map</i> , 2010, installation view in Migration Identity	162
Figure 84. Venessa Vegter, <i>Uterus Pillow</i> , 2009	164
Figure 85. Jan Haag, <i>Green pillow</i> , 1977-78, for Chinese Chippendale Chair	165
Figure 86. Two assistants help with filling pillows with kapok	169
Figure 87. Anna Kurtycz, <i>Going Abroad</i> , 2010, photographs of the back of peoples' heads	170

Acknowledgments

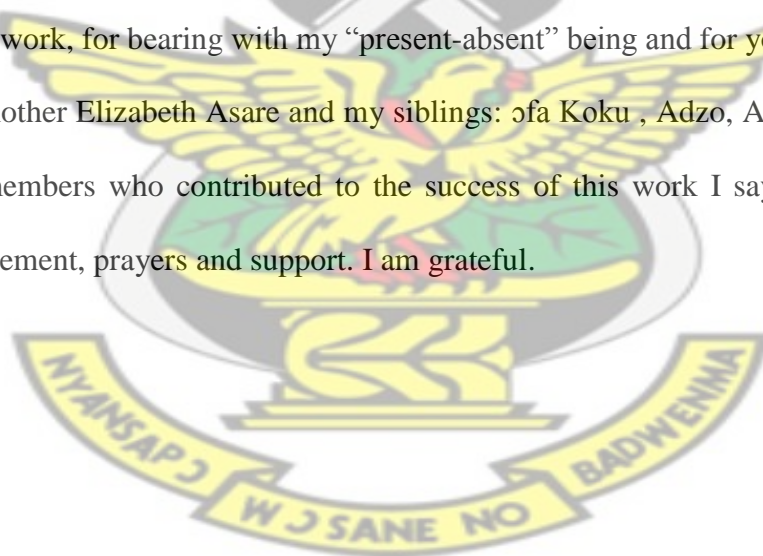
I would like to express my profound gratitude to all who have in diverse ways contributed to the successful completion of this work. Special thanks to the Artists and Authors whose works have been useful to arguments and proposals made.

I am utterly indebted to kɔrɛ'kɔchɛ seid'ou my supervisor, whose critical devotion helped put the work in the best possible shape.

This work could not have come to a successful end without the tremendous help of my Friend Mary Hark who helped me with some essential books for referencing. Bernard Akoi Jackson and Eyram Donkor, I am grateful for your various contributions.

I acknowledge with immense gratitude the contribution of my entire family especially my children: Yaw, Edem, Kobi and Millicent Hoya. Thank you for participating in my practical work, for bearing with my “present-absent” being and for your prayers.

To my mother Elizabeth Asare and my siblings: ɔfa Koku , Adzo, Amenyo and all other family members who contributed to the success of this work I say thank you for the encouragement, prayers and support. I am grateful.



Glossary

The following Ewe words are titles of works used in the context of previous art projects, and they referred not to their literal, but conceptual interpretation.

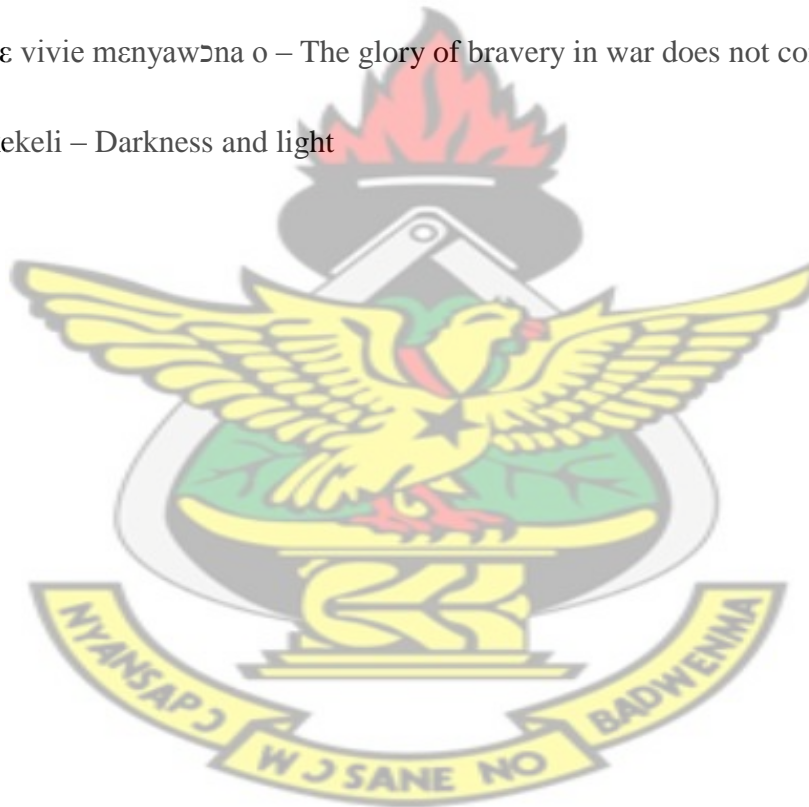
mɔdzi – Pathway (floor pieces)

MɔNU - Entrance

Kpɔwo –Embrace of Protection

Aɔa kale vivie menyawɔna o – The glory of bravery in war does not come cheaply.

Viviti-kekeli – Darkness and light



Abbreviations

KNUST– Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.

UEW – University of Education, Winneba.

KNUST



CHAPTER ONE

Overture

Our Cover Cloth: Of Memory, Nostalgia and Loss

Memory has a way of draping over feelings of longing. Often the longing for times past, mediated by memory's shroud of nostalgia, becomes embodied in the human subject and by extension, the social fabric. The shroud becomes a covering but it may also be an abode or tent, as apparel, a pavilion, a flag or a banner. When eventually time comes for an uncovering, exposing the subject to the vastness of space, there might be a holding back; a wanting to be in the safe place of the covering and never venturing into the unknown void of the unveiled. This is the sort of mix feeling that gives birth to my present inquiry.

Prior to this enquiry, I encountered this sort of feeling through a special relationship I had with a large piece of woven cloth, *vikpavɔ*¹ or *vikpado*. My mother used the *vikpavɔ* as a 'cover cloth' for my siblings and me, until we were all of age (i.e. old enough to leave the shelter of the cloth). As a child, this piece of cloth meant so much to my siblings and I because it brought us together under one warm protection each night. But how was it that mother came by such a big, heavy 'handsome' cloth and why did she use it as our cover cloth? When I was old enough to give voice to my wonderings, it was revealed to me that, traditionally, in the Ghanaian Ewe culture of the time, when a woman gave birth, her husband or father-in-law was required to give her a cover cloth; *vikpavɔ* or *vikpado*, (Figure 1). This unfortunately, my father or grandfather

¹ *Vikpavɔ* or *vikpado* among the Ewe of Ghana literally refer to cloth used to carry a baby at the back.

failed to, and so my maternal great grandfather, intervened by giving my mother his very expensive woven cloth which he hardly used. The story of the origins of this heirloom must have sunk very deep into my subconscious. For during many years of studying sculpture, I saw myself always gravitating towards, amongst other materials, fabric or any medium that had to do with fibres or filaments. Stitching, tying and joining became my most preferred means of making. Towards the mid-90s, I became fed up with clay, cement and even wood as sculptural media. I began applying the same sculptural vocabulary to such materials as leather, discarded paper and fabric off-cuts gleaned from seamstress shops. Along the way, I had also discovered the art of fabric dyeing. I could now control the way my own fabrics looked. Batik thus became one of my means of artistic expression. Owing to the versatility of fabrics, my practice began expanding to encompass more than just the immediacy of the autonomous sculptural object. Instead of merely creating objects of volume sitting in passive space, I started to consider space as an active constituent of my work. Sites such as a bamboo grove in the KNUST Botanical Gardens began to dialogue with my jute objects and together form a lively tableau of expanded reality and artifice (Figure 2 and 3). In numerous other works I had begun producing a short while later, fabric and space became more and more important to me. This is when I started cultivating ideas about embarking on this current research. At the same time, I started having this yearning to go back to my mother and to look for *our cover cloth*.

The long drive from Kumasi to Winneba where my mother lives and teaches at the University of Education was further lengthened by the nostalgia I was feeling for the cover cloth. Childhood images flashed across my mind's eye, even the feelings of warmth and protection that I used to experience under the cover cloth started coming

back to me. On reaching home, I asked after the cloth. It was only after some minutes, even hours that I could grasp the full magnitude of the news that had just hit me. Our cover cloth was no more! Not even a piece of it was anywhere to be seen. It was gone, with all the memories and meanings it bore. Wear and tear over years of usage had sent our cover cloth to fray and bits. Nothing of it remained, but nostalgic memories of warmth, security and natal enclosure. Time and space had taken their toll and now, what I was left with was a personal loss. Not even threadbare tatters to console myself with. But this loss I guess sends me musing about the extent of occupancy and belonging and for that matter, spatiality, the extent to which the self/subject is politically mapped, and how this could be expressed and articulated. I begin to wonder about the various ways in which the self could be attached and subsequently identified. Various questions run through my mind. I get interested in drawing parallels between space, subjectivity and fabric, playing on fabric as space² and cloth.

Of Space, Subjectivity and Occupancy?

Who am I? And where do I belong? These have been age old questions that have preoccupied mankind for centuries, and still is our preoccupation today. They are questions that in the words of Irit Rogoff “float the constant presence of a politics of location” (Rogoff, 2000, p.14). Attempting to find answers to such questions have led many towards musing and examining spatiality and the extent of occupancy, and this has also led me into this present enquiry, which was initiated by a personal fascination with this particular cloth that had been invested with so much meaning.

² Basic structure, way of life, relationships, traditions, etc.

At the commencement of this research, the aim was to identify how the self or subject could be mapped and recognized spatially and how this could be articulated artistically and specifically through fibres and fabric. This led to examining relationships and reiterating that spatiality resides within subjectivity. Beginning with the assertion that fabric has a way of draping over us a sense of longing, belonging, occupancy and ownership, and so is versatile and could metaphorically articulate spatial concepts, I launched into a multifaceted inquiry. Fabric has been used by many artists as Author confirms, not only to articulate “issues of gender, race and personal experience originating in the feminist appropriation of the material, but has also been expanded to include issues of hybridity, memory, sexual identity, loss, tradition, cultural collision, globalization and migration”(2010, p.163).

I therefore set out to examine how personal and/or communal objects such as a piece of cloth come to be invested with the various meanings that they become so significant, and are able to identify the self. I consequently examined spatiality, considering the extent of the political and artistic ramifications of subjectivity; in view of territoriality, boundaries and borders, freedom and restriction. Subjectivity here, theorizes the self/subject, not solely as a distinct self but a complex principle involving shared concerns where one's interior is inevitably connected to or linked with something outside of it. Subsequently, the Lacanian ideology or theory of subjectivity, as carried forward through Rogoff's reading of Lefebvre's Production of Space, presents an analysis of space through the social and the psychic and Yi Fu Tuan's experience as space, to name a few, were engaged.

Consideration is thus accorded the 'subject' as divided and/or alienated where Lacan differentiates between the 'subject' and the 'ego'. He believed the subject is not

the same as the ego but rather that it perceives the ego, which is formed when the subject identifies himself/herself with an image of the self, this occurring in the mirror stage. Subjectivity is thus divided or alienated because the image is only imaginary (an illusion). Subjectivity, is perceived as per Lacan as leaning towards the masculine and governed not by the penis as in the case of Freud, but by the symbol of the penis, the phallus (Mansfield 2000). Lacan's ideology of subjectivity however gravitated towards a stable /static state to which some feminists such as Kristeva and Simon de Beauvoir raised objections. They believed that the subject is non-static and always in process. Subjectivity, however seen by these thinkers, displayed spatial concepts such as displacement, projection and substitution.

Space as per Lefebvre is also seen "as 'made up' through a three-way dialectic between perceived, conceived and lived space" (Hubbard in Atkinson (2005) et al). Here, space is believed to be social and "is constantly in the process of production" (Rogoff, 2000, p. 24). Here also, space, among others is believed to be permeated with social relations, that is, it is "not only supported by social relations, but it also is producing and produced by social relations" (Brenner and Elden (ed), 2009, p.189).

Spatialization as an inhabitation of location through subjectivity and representation is Rogoff's point where she sees space as active and not passive or static. Here spatiality derives from the notion of active space replacing notions of static ones and the dimension of subjectivity is interfaced with or radicalizes the already named or emplaced location.

Consideration is also accorded Yi Fu Tuan's humanistic take on space, which is as a result of people's emotional attachment and which also has to do with their subjectivities. He draws attention to the "sensual, aesthetic and emotional dimensions of

space” which are as a result of the “desires and fears that people associate with specific places” (Hubbard in Atkinson, et al. (2005), p.42).

These notions of spatiality and subjectivity are examined, engaged and woven into the discussion of the self. They draw attention to the fact that space is active and a ‘becoming’, implying mediation, positionality, non-situatedness, race, gender, class and representation just to mention a few, thus throwing spatial experience open. These positions are also looked at in relation with contemporary art and artists and how they variously engaged the subject of the self and space.

Since space is subjective and has to do with the social, I take the chance to re-think my social space and its content by doing a ‘reconnaissance’ of my immediate community both at home and abroad. This involves a critical re-looking (re-investigation) at some of the ordinary but informative things; objects and practices that I normally would take for granted. This informs the various subjective “spaces” that I continuously engage with or encounter which also, in one way or the other inform my artistic creations.

Studio-based investigations go alongside the written document and address the issue of varied spatial subjectivities. Various art works are created with fabric and fibres to articulate the concept of the subject and spatiality.

Musing upon the everyday, culminated in my creating a body of work done within the period of the research. Ideas range from the nature of surfaces obtained from fabric gathering, to connectivity through integration where cloths and fabrics are collected from members of the family and rewoven into the work; *Weaving the Woven*. Other works created include *Warrior*, *Palace*, *In the nestland 2*, *Securityland 2*, *Transparency*, *Dreaming Is A map*, *Inside Out* and *Seat of Life or Sweet Pain Space*.

Each of these works addresses issues concerning among others strength in weakness, inside and outside of strengths and security, relational approach to selfhood, the unseen space that engulfs tangible space, and the emotional registers of different types of movement. They featured in both solo and group exhibitions, and also in residency shows within the period of the research, under titles such as; *Fluid Flow through Woven Screens*, *Art in Dailies*, *Migration- Identity*, Home-Show, 2008 Dwyer's International Women Artists' Workshop Exhibition and 2009 Art Omi International Artists' Residency Open Day.

These works suggest one way or the other, that subjectivity gives form to a particular space at a particular time. A particular space may be defined not by static notions of named spaces; their physical properties and designated identities and activities, but by the psychic subjectivities that the space is encountered with, concluding the argument that spatiality resides within subjectivity itself.

How then would we see spatiality to be conceived of? With its diverse possibilities, could spatiality be conceived of as being an encounter with the self? Could it be the embodiment of the individual/social experiences that a place is encountered with?

How It All Weaves In

Since my research borders on subjectivity, methodology is essentially qualitative. Experimentation is driven by chance and the element of surprise yields novel insights. I maintain the idea of fluidity in narration, so that the total study becomes analogous to one large piece of fabric, quite like the 'cover-cloth,' which initially instigated this

inquiry. By hinting at subjectivity, it gives that personal participation in the thinking and making processes and the observation of materials behaviour become my principal tools of inquiry. This allows adequate interaction between art as it is practiced and as it is theorized.

The chapters in this document have been designated into spaces, with thematic headings that allude to fabric. The relationship of fabric and space from the analogical and conceptual view point constitute the basic premise of my studio works and this dissertation. I open the document for instance, by reminiscing in *Our Cover Cloth*, over a family heirloom that held so much awe over me when I was a child. It is indeed more of a lament over the loss of this piece of shared cloth, than a reminiscing. Also, I introduce the broad concepts of fabric and space and at once, indicating my intent on seeking to embark on a subjective exploration into Spatiality as an artistic concept through the manipulation of fibre and fabrics. Thereafter, in the second space entitled: *Within and Without: The Politics of Space and the Space of Politics*, I take the interrogation of space and fabric further. Here, after looking at the two entities (fabric and space) into detail, I make critical readings of work by other artists in response to or as reactions to themes and concepts that are relevant to my current intent. I consequently gravitate towards the conclusion that Spatialization inheres in subjectivity itself and not necessarily in the dualistic extremes of “inside” and “outside” spaces. This then leads into the third space of embodied experience and experiment: *Wandering and Wondering*. I make conceptual and physical trips into the immediate and implied spaces that exist around me. These spaces are not limited only to one locality, but blur even beyond national borders into foreign lands and virtual spaces. I relate my experiences in the contexts of my personal studio, shared workshops and artists’ residencies, making

critical readings into the implied and subjective spaces in relation to my current intent. In *Fabric as Spatial Metaphor: An Unveiling* (the fourth chapter), the entire enterprise of *Fabric as Spatial Metaphor* is artistically engaged. The spatial constellations arising out of my subjective creations are at once, given a vigorous reading, discussion and analysis. They are looked at both in contexts of singularity, as individual objects and in plurality, as tableaux of ideas. Eventually, in *Wrapping Up?* (Chapter Five) the idea of the totality of *Fabric as Spatial Metaphor* standing as a major oeuvre in my artistic practice is considered and questioned with its implications registered.

In conclusion, I should reiterate that emphasis is on the conceptual and contextual considerations of the artistic ‘space’ of ‘fabric’³. It involves the manipulation of some natural and synthetic fabrics and fibres⁴ to express in the sculptural idiom, spatial concepts. Although the project is not specifically limited to ‘soft sculpture,’ a great deal of reference is made to the concept of soft sculpture.

³ In the document, I use the term Fabric to refer to the variety of cloths that are used to create the spatial constellations. Fabric and cloth are used interchangeably and may refer to any material made through weaving, knitting, crocheting, joining, stitching or bonding. The term Fabric is also used idiosyncratically to refer to ‘subjective space.’ In the same way, space could sometimes refer to fabric in the document.

⁴ Fibre - refers to natural and synthetic twines, cords and cloth.



Figure1. An example of *vikpavɔ* or *kpado*, from Akoe in the Volta region
(a woven cloth given to my sister-in-law by her father-in-law)



Figure 2. Dorothy Amenuke, Ghana, *Kpowo*, 2006, in *Variations On Devotion*, (in the bamboo grove of KNUST botanic garden), jute cords and fabric.

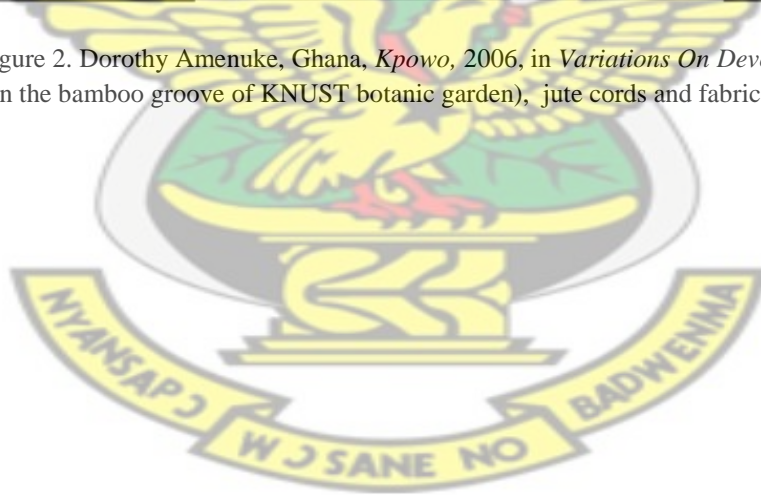




Figure 3. Dorothy Amenuke, Ghana, *Viviti-Kekeli* in *Variations On Devotion*, 2006, (in the bamboo grove of KNUST botanic garden), stretched canvas painted black and white, floor pieces made from black and white cotton polyester fabric.

CHAPTER TWO

Within and Without: The Politics of Space and the Space of Politics

“space as we have understood it, is always differentiated, it is always sexual or racial, it is always constituted out of a circulating capital and it is always subject to the invisible boundary lines which determine inclusions and exclusions...” (Rogoff, 2001, p. 35)

In this space of the text, ‘spatiality’ is discussed as an artistic and political concept. I discuss spatiality in terms of how human engages with subjectivity territories, boundaries and borders as the instruments and sites of negotiation of freedom and restriction. By subjectivity, I mean the theorizing of the self/subject, not solely as a distinct identity but a complex entity involving shared concerns. This is in terms of the connections between the personal, political, ideological and experiential, of being a particular someone at a particular time and place enabling the “question of who ‘I’ am to be brought into focus” (Mansfield, 2000, p.vi). This is seen as an embodiment of the within and without, where one’s interior is at once connected to or linked with something outside of it. Borrowing Mansfield’s terms, “the self is not a separate and isolated entity, but one that operates at the intersection of general truths and shared principles” (p. 3).

The chapter’s title: ‘Within and without,’ thus engages Rogoff’s dualistic characterization of space as an entity that has the propensity to both contain and exclude. This conversation should by extension, also reference space’s inherent dialectic as per Rogoff, of simultaneous ‘activity/dynamism’ and ‘passivity/lethargy,’ leaping some threads further than this, I argue that Spatialization takes place not exclusively in the

dualistic encounter between a ‘dynamic subjectivity’ and a ‘static named place,’ but within ‘subjectivity’ itself. This chapter also reviews work by selected artists who explore space as medium, seek to manipulate, or interrogate space conceptually, and/or have used fabric/fibre metaphorically as their spatial experience, as well as in their artistic propositions.

It is my aim eventually, to rummage through the different attitudes, codes and influences that can construct the physical, psychological and conceptual spaces people encounter on a daily basis, and to harness the concerns as a backdrop to which my own work is produced and to which the work and its discussion relates.

Characterizing Space

The experience of space as also asserted by Chiang (2004) is fundamental to life and society. But ‘space,’ in its broader manifestations, is usually much larger than the immediacy of the ‘place’ that we occupy. Whereas place (the “named-space”) has bounds and limitations imposed on it by human activity so that it assumes nominal specificity, space on the other hand, is boundless and vast, reaching out far beyond human limit. Chiang explains that scholars have attempted to utilize its instrumentality to understand cultural systems, to analyze the interactions between social actors, or to reinterpret the ‘grand narrative’ of modernity. Even though they may have different interests or ways of approach, in order to discuss the spatial organization constructed in social life, scholars inevitably need a set of spatial notions to analyze the object and, at the same time, to compete and negotiate with each other, he asserts.

Spatial concepts have become a natural way to organize information and, communication about spatial properties is a typical task for human endeavor. Concerning this, Chiang has said that;

In recent scholarship, the issue of space is heated again in the postmodern field of inquiry where different sets of spatial metaphors are employed to redefine the perception of modern space, to free cultures from the geographically bounded place, and to account for the complexity and subtlety of space in contemporary society. (2004, p. 2)

Spatiality especially in the public sphere, and in the personal domain thus generally gives to severe or even subtle political contestation. In its shared and private manifestations, spatiality has been said to constitute an entity, impregnated with the dualistic characteristics of homogeneity and heterogeneity and governed by various tropes of inclusion/exclusion or centre/periphery politics. These characteristics in turn, birth notions of migration, exile, border transgression and/or even the more vulgar notions of voyeurism, espionage and now in fashion, terrorism.

Homogeneity and heterogeneity as attributes of space have for long been sites of contention among philosophers. According to Kern (2001), there has been a traditional Western view of spatiality as being ‘one and only one space,’ continuous and uniform, with “properties” and “postulates” which Newton defined as “always similar and immutable”, an absolute space. This type of Euclidian rigidity robbed spatiality of flexibility till eventually, in Kern’s view, “New ideas about the nature of space challenged the popular notion that it was homogeneous (p.132)”. Various disciplines and groups have since explored revolutionary spatial perceptions with the discourse on spatiality growing to include the diverse aspects of the individual’s social life and

experiences in one sense and space being concerned with social relations, where it is socially produced and consumed in another.

A case in point would be Yi Fu Tuan's "notions of topophilia and topophobia which referred to the desires and fears that people associate with specific places", drawing attention to the "sensual, aesthetic and emotional dimensions of space" (Hubbard in Atkinson, Jackson, Sibley and Washbourne, 2005, p. 42). Another case would be the Marxist theorist Henri Lefebvre's notion of space being 'made up'. He proposes, according to Hubbard in Atkinson, et al. (2005), a "trialectics of spatiality that explores the entwining of cultural practices, representations and imaginations through a three-way dialectic between perceived, conceived and lived space" (p. 42). In this case he explains, place, emerges as a particular form of space, one that is created through acts of naming as well as through the distinctive activities and imaginings associated with particular social spaces. The dimension of space thus broadens by the day, with varied elucidations.

Werlen (2003) also joins the discussion thus:

Over recent years one of the most significant developments in social analysis has been the increasing interchange between geographers, sociologists, anthropologists and social philosophers concerning 'the spatial'. This debate involves the work of Giddens, Foucault, Bourdieu, Lefebvre, Harvey, Gregory and Soja and many others. As a result of these new developments a whole series of new forms of empirical work as well as theoretical innovations have come into being. Spatial considerations are thus no longer confined to the area of geography (p.i).

Space has thus become the concern of several other disciplines as also affirmed by Darian-Smith, Gunner and Nuttall (2005). They, in their discussion of the issues of land, space and cultural identity in South Africa and Australia confirm the heterogeneity of space by stating that:

The notion of space as a multidimensional entity with social and cultural as well as territorial dimensions has been a prime concern in recent scholarship, particularly in the fields of post-colonial literatures and history, and social and cultural geography (p.2).

The dimension of space subsequently continues to increase per the context in which it is used. Spatiality, however in our experience, presents a site that requires much more sustained artistic enquiry than has hitherto been accorded it. Indeed space has influenced art since time immemorial. Art has either depicted space or existed in relation to a certain space. Even in the showing of art, a named space, the gallery, became the place to be. After a while however, even the named space began losing nominality, thus significance. Artists started to interrogate the concept of space as an active component in the work and not just a passive 'container' for the art object. They thus began infusing space with (their own) subjectivities, subjectivity being a much contested subject.

Rogoff (2000) characterizes 'Space' as "the production of another dimension of inhabiting location through subjectivity and representation." In *Terra Infirma*, she discusses space in relation to 'geography' and how various artists have related to maps and mapping in their work. To her, "spatialization precedes geographical determination conceptually, while at the same time it is one of the tools by which 'geography' might be analyzed theoretically as a structure of subjectivity." (p.22)

Subjectivity had been variously discussed to encompass among others, the subject, the ego, the unconscious, and language. It had been discussed as the Freudian idea of the subject being able 'only to deal effectively with unconscious material' which dealt with 'the system of symbolization and mediation which structure human culture' (Mansfield, 2000, p.38). This was later brought to full significance through Jacques Lacan's ideas of language for psychoanalysis. "Lacan was concerned to distinguish the ego from the subject and to elaborate a conception of subjectivity as divided or 'alienated' (Homer, 2000, p.19). As opposed to the ego psychologists, Lacan believed that the ego is non-autonomous but rather an illusory unstable construct. McAfee (2004) attests to this by writing thus: "where the ego psychologists point to an innate self, Lacan would find only an illusory unity. The ego, for him, is a tenuous and provisional construct always vulnerable to the sway of the drives". (p.30)

In Lacanian theory, according to Mansfield, 'the critical stage for the development of subjectivity, the 'mirror-stage', occurs usually between the ages of six and eighteen months, prior to which, the child has no sense of itself as a separate entity'. Here and after, the image of the self, seen from outside of itself, leads to the formation of the ego which the subject only perceives. Subjectivity is thus 'divided and alienated' because the image is only imaginary. This, he expounded in terms of language, believing that the 'unconscious is structured like a language' (Homer, 2000, p.33), where subjectivity resides in the field of signification, which he calls the symbolic order. 'For Lacan, culture, language and unconscious desires produce subjectivity' (McAfee, 2004, p.30). This, McAfee explained, was illustrated in Lacan's ability to combine various disciplines: "linguistics, anthropology, and psychoanalysis" (p.30). Lacan, in bringing back to life Freud's idea of condensation and displacement (of his *Interpretation of*

Dreams) used Roman Jakobson's linguistic terms metaphor and metonymy, which he believed involved analogies and connections that operated in the unconscious, leading to the effect of the unconscious in language. Language's relation to the unconscious thus led Lacan to his famous statement "the unconscious is structured like a language".

The fathers of psychoanalysis (Freud and Lacan) associated subjectivity with some sort of gender biases, leaning towards the masculine. While Freud saw subjectivity as 'perpetually returning to the penis' and maintaining a masculine stance as the logic of identity and order, 'for Lacan, the symbolic order is a masculine domain, governed not by the penis but by the symbol of the penis, the phallus' says Mansfield (p.48). Subjectivity thus continues to display forms of displacement (spatial concept) through the various views of these thinkers. Attesting to this, Mansfield continues that, "Lacan's view of subjectivity repeats the Freudian schema, but with one major variation: the drama of gender and power is displaced from anatomy to language" (p.48).

Subjectivity in the Freudian and Lacanian sense perpetuated the idea of loss and incompleteness as regards the female but leaning towards the idea that subjectivity gravitates towards a stable state. Although the issue of gender has been fundamental to psychoanalysis' construction of the subject, it "chooses to present gender as determined by biology or sees the feminine as a by-product of the necessarily dominant masculine" (p.67).

This however had been criticized by feminist thoughts, as many feminists believed that gender identity and behaviour are socially or culturally constructed.

Simone de Beauvoir's 'becoming a woman' in *The Second Sex* attests to that. In the opening section of the second volume of *The Second Sex*, she uses the phrase 'One is not born, but rather becomes a woman', adapting existentialism's notion of 'existence

precedes essence' to the ways in which gender identity is experienced (Tidd, 2004, p. 51). She explained the construction of the woman as being the result of civilizations production of the "creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as feminine" since no biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society (Mansfield, 2000, p.68).

Kristeva also concerned herself with the speaking being. She discussed the speaking being or subject as consisting of a conscious mind containing social forces and the unconscious and thus the speaking subject is a divided subject. She theorizes 'subjectivity as incomplete and discontinuous, as a process rather than a fixed structure. She defines the "signifying process as a dialectical interaction between the 'semiotic' and the 'symbolic'. The symbolic, for her, is the formal structure of language, while the semiotic is linked to the pre-Oedipal primary processes" (Homer, 2005, p.118) She believed the subject is non-static, but always in process. She was however criticized by Bracha Ettinger as also being phallic. Ettinger draws attention to the understanding of the symbolic outside the paradigm of castration, speaking of the matrixial which designates the 'woman' "...not as the Other but as co-emerging self with m/Other, and *link a* rather than *object a* not as lack or a figure of rhythmic scansion of absence/presence but as a *borderlinking* figure of *differentiation in co-emergence*" (Ettinger, 2006, p.1). Spatiality is thus displayed diversely in the conception of subjectivity through the various forms of displacements, projections and substitutions that exist in the subject's construction.

A full comprehension of "subjectivity and differentiation" according to Rogoff, indicates that space is not to be perceived only via the nominal functions for which it is designated or through the tags that are used to demarcate the infrastructure that exists on

it. Rather, an active process of ‘spatialization’ replaces this “static notion of named spaces” and in this endeavour it is possible to synthesize relations between the “designated activities and the physical properties of the named space with structures of psychic subjectivities such as anxiety or desire or compulsion” (Rogoff, 2000, p. 23).

In considering this notion of subjectivity of space, Rogoff brings to the fore Lefebvre’s *The Production of Space*, which in her words, “has inspired many to integrate into their various projects, the critical concept of spatialization.” This involved for example, the discussion of the concept of the “antechamber” which Rogoff asserts is “a space of negotiation, the exact same space whose physical extent or aesthetic properties never changes, get re-written and re-constituted through conjunctions of social positions and psychic subjectivity” (p. 23).

It is my intention to court this notion of spatial subjectivity where, like in Lefebvre’s notion, ‘social space’ shifts from space as a context for material activity or manifestation to space which is produced by subjectivities and psychic states, and in which nevertheless social relations take place (Rogoff, p. 23). Further, my idea of subjectivity and representation is in concordance with Spengler who held the notion that symbolic indicators that encompass every facet of existence in diverse cultures are not universal or objective but are rather determined by inimitable spatial and temporal stimuli. According to Kern (2001), Spengler suggests that:

This sense of space or extension is a prime symbol of a culture, inherent in different aspects of social life including painting, music and sculpture. But it is never conceptualized directly, and it is necessary to interpret many aspects of a culture to grasp its particular notion of extension (p.138).

When we therefore wish to interrogate space adequately, we need to appreciate the several subjectivities that inhabit, influence and shape the space.

In Western art, Zupnik (1959) identifies at least seven varieties of spatial organization or what I would term 'spatial subjectivities,' being Classical, Renaissance Baroque, Primitive, Conceptual, Empirical and Relativist concepts. On the notions of subjectivity and representation in conceptual space, he suggests that illusion and physical function are of secondary importance in conceptual organization of space, even where they are present. Instead, the primary interest lies in the expression of ideas and/or emotional content which has to do with subjectivities and psychic states which Rogoff and Lefebvre attest to as the constituent of space.

This expression of ideas and/or emotional content in relation to space involves the subject and reflexivity - a reflection on the self in relation to space and society. This according to Cloke et al, (2005), has been used by "feminist and post- colonial 'geographers' in their respective political projects to persuade 'human geographers' to reflect something other than male, white orthodoxies"(p. 64). This is reaffirmed in the psychoanalytic readings of such feminists as Kristeva, and Bracha Ettinger who criticizes the theories of the "fathers of psychoanalysis as committed to stability, order and a fixed and constant identity" (Mansfield, 2000, p.80) so eminent in the male orthodoxies.

Pile and Thrift (2005) in discussing the non-static nature of the subject, and dilating the fixity/non-fixity notion of the subject, sought to break apart the shroud over the issue and content of 'the subject'. They in *Mapping the Subject; geographies of cultural transformation* sought to "...take apart the cotton-woolled security surrounding maps of the subject, to release the co-ordinates of subjectivity from static, uniform,

transparent notions of place and being, which seemingly inform the way the subject is thought of”(p. 5). This allowed for the theorizing of the self where the subject is seen through variety of windows, and also taking reflexive stance.

Pile and Thrift (2005) in discussing the mapping of the subject, theorized the self as being mapped out as the body which is ‘multidimensional’, the self which is ‘relationally dependent and often subconscious in nature’, the ‘culturally framed and therefore flexible’ person, and the ‘changeable and overlapping influence of identity’, which are all interconnected (Cloke et al, 2005). This interconnectivity they assert, present the subject as ‘detachable, reversible and changeable’ (spatial concepts) in some ways, and ‘fixed, solid and dependable’ in others (Cloke et al, 2005). The nature of the subject thus presented as not static, non-predictable and not-knowing against what the fathers of psychoanalysis claimed it to be. It however exists within the constraints of power concerns since it is in relation to the social. Pile and Thrift in their discussion of mapping the subject agrees by stating that “power, whether organized through knowledge, class, ‘race’, gender, sexuality and so on, is (at least partly) about mapping the subject; where particular sites, for example, the body, the self and so on, become ‘points of capture’ for power” (2005, p.12). Subjectivity thus cannot be separated from space, power and thus the social.

Socially then, it is observed that various meanings have been assigned to space. Space has been politically used to connote power, access, and territoriality. According to Agnew (2005a), *space* has sometimes been used as synonymous with *place* or, territory. He stipulates however, that, territory has never been a term as primordial or as generic as they are in the canons of geographical terminology, and that, the dominant usage has always been either political, in the sense of necessarily involving the power to limit

access to certain places or regions, or ethological, in the sense of the dominance exercised over a particular named space by a given species or an individual organism.

In the colonial experience for example, neutral and uncontended mutually traversed spaces between similar peoples suddenly assumed sovereignty through arbitrary nomination and a hitherto culturally homogenous society (usually made up of unique and complementary subjectivities), became fragmented. Allegiance was displaced or re-oriented towards the newly named place (the 'colony,' 'protectorate' or upon independence, the 'nation state'). Mutual exchange now became characterized by conflict. An unmarked definition of space creates invisible borders between a people. The Borders between Ghana and Togo having Aflao as the border town on the Ghana side-Ewe) and Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire with Elubo -Nzema/Baule) for instance create invisible divisions between peoples who speak the same languages live within the same vicinity but in different countries.

This notion of territoriality is common to many fields or disciplines (other than geography). In fine art for example, certain media and processes would be considered mutually incompatible, whilst some forms of expression are deemed more significant than others. Fibres and fabric, for a long time, were associated with the 'feminine and a craft'. A seeking to question the issue of power, especially in relation to inclusion and exclusion in the arena of visual cultural practice, is implicit in Mackenzie's thesis: (*The Fabric Of Art: Investigating the relationships of power between fabric and fine art through Frank Stella's Black paintings (1958- 1960)*). In it she argues for fabric as a valid medium of art production.

Garcia (2006) also confirms this sort of exclusion whiles discussing the versatility of textile/ fabric and its relationship with architecture. He reiterated that:

textiles and their qualities and properties were kept firmly indoors, within interiors. Until the advent of high-performance and technical textiles in the 20th century, this material group was perceived as temporary, incendiary, fragile, unstable, high maintenance and low performance. Though the technologies for tensile structures and metal meshes were available in the ancient world, they were, in general, conspicuously unexploited in architecture. Fashion and textiles were also traditionally associated with crafts, the feminine, frivolity, the ephemeral and the sensuous and, as such, trivialized in mainstream architecture. (p. 13)

This sort of attitude is what Agnew critiques, stating that “territoriality in its broadest sense is both the organization and exercise of power, legitimate or otherwise, over blocks of space or organization of people and things into discreet areas through the use of boundaries”. (2005, p. 3) It is usually this exercise of power that tends to exclude certain media, whilst heralding others that many artists have sought to confront in their art through the manipulation of non-conventional media and guided by the concepts of deconstruction. Kim Sooja is one artist who has expressed her misgivings about the power structure within the art world. She comments for instance on the way the art biennials’ scene focuses more on “power structures and their specific political alliances with the artists and institutions, rather than the quality of work and its meaning”. (Kapš, 2006). She uses her fabric works to dilate on everyday issues concerning women’s work and other societal concerns, but would not like to be referred to as a feminist.

One can argue that stratification continues to prevail in many sites of reference including KNUST. Power games are still played out in such ways that artistic expression in materials and concepts other than those inherited from the colonialist educational

project is disavowed. I therefore adopt the term ‘territory’ to signify not only the conceptual use to which I put the ‘fabrics’ and ‘fibres,’ but also the spaces/places that the fabrics and fibres create and occupy. This position of fabric usage could be said to be similar to Kim Sooja’s expression with fabric, where she uses her cloth works to express “conceptualization of the ordinary” (Tae Hyunsun, 2000). George Braque, in discussing his art of assemblage, once said that there is nothing but relationships. In like manner, this is what ‘fabric’ and ‘space’ typify for me: relationships. The terms function simultaneously within and without my locational limits. The fabrics and fibres act as the spaces/sites (of negotiation) within which ‘things happen’ and sometimes also constitute the very ‘things’ that happen or the ‘objects’ to be viewed. The components of territoriality such as boundaries, borders and their associative notions of restriction and freedom become serious points of contestation on these sites.

Borrowing Boer’s words, ‘boundaries have to be crossed in order to experience the beneficiary effects of diversity’ (2006, p. 3). Boundaries and borders relate with the inside and outside (within and without) so that bounds, ends and limits prevent or hinder someone from what would otherwise be transgressed (extent of boundaries). Each in their own way (bounds, ends and limits) seems to impose restrictions on the freedom and mobility. They all have a forbidding quality to them, closing off expanses within from those beyond, asserts Boer.

Alluding to the concepts of territory and its accompanying notions of boundaries and borders, one is tempted to ask who sets them and where are they placed? Boundaries are ‘perceived from within’ (Boer, 2006, p. 5) causing prevention from without. It has this static characteristic which no one tempers with. Boer continues that Geographical boundaries do not differ much from those dividing “ethnicities, religions, sexes, cultures

and so on” (p.11). They share the characteristic of simply being there of an immutable presence no one has the power to question, or so it seems.

This kind of position is what this thesis seeks to deconstruct where spatiality is sited within the arena of subjectivity which is multidimensional, non-static and active. This is expressed through fabric and fibre metaphorically and metonymically.

Fabric/Fibre Sites

Fabric is a very broad term that has been used by many to connote experiences in both objective and subjective existence. In its various forms, fabric has been used metaphorically to express numerous experiences. The form of fabric which is most readily relevant, but not strictly limited to this current undertaking is cloth. In this form, fabric has been an indispensable part of human existence. It has been shelter and ‘second skin’ to humans. Over so many periods of time, people have given to cloth every conceivable function, from commodity in trade to liturgical appointment, from scarecrow to security blanket, from sacred object to symbol of sovereignty (Constantine and Reuter, 1997, p.13).

Cloth has for example, served as regal adornment; it has also been a symbol of power, of wealth and of rank. According to Constantine and Reuter,

...among the early Egyptians, Hebrews and Greeks, priests wore linen as a sign of purity. In India, it was the unbleached and unsewn homespun cotton ‘Khadi’ that signaled the same purity. Historically, cloth seems to predate almost everything invented or created by humans, and for over a thousand years, even before pottery came into use, fabrics were already being made. (1997, pp.13, 14)

Though these facts can be enlightening, my interest in fabrics however, is in how and why they have been used in fine arts and how/why I also make use of them in my own work.

By the early 20th century, cloth had gathered momentum towards the fine arts. Taking variety of forms, cloth was manipulated by wrapping, tearing, fraying, compressing or pasting by various artists. Indeed apart from wood, fibre and fabrics have actually been one of the main materials used by many artists seeking to question the authenticity and nobility of the art object. With fibre and fabrics gaining so much popularity of use, contemporary art saw artists 'sky-rocketing' with new ways of making art. The definitions of painting and sculpture, for instance, changed dramatically. Whilst some painters abandoned the conventions of easel, canvas, oil and brush thus making painting an adventure in unbounded space, in sculpture as the old antagonism towards abstraction begun to break down, diversity of artistic expression, which hitherto, never had been thought of, now was opened.

By mid-twentieth century the concern of contemporary artists was for an art that must become preoccupied with and even be dazzled by the space and objects of our everyday life. Christo and Jean-Claude with their passionate involvement with cloth have packaged and wrapped, first small objects, then entire buildings and even natural entities and environments, with fabric. Today, the mention of fabric and its forming components (fibres) send the minds of many to the extent of its position in the social fabric of existence and the diverse meanings associated with it.

Fibre exists in a variety of forms; as raw tufts and bales, as strands, threads, strings and (when put together by weaving, tying or stitching etc.), cloth. Owing to the manifold manifestations of fibre, it has been possible to create art based on fabric as the

space, modality and the form. Fabric has been used symbolically to connote varied aspects of human's lives and expressiveness due to its varied physical properties and its metonymic abilities. According to Schneider and Weiner (1986), the properties of cloth such as its aesthetics, the labour of its production and the fact that it is malleable and can be reshaped adds to its potency as a symbol, allowing it to "say" things that words cannot. They emphasize that "just as it reveals and documents, cloth can also mask. Above all, it is flexible, transmitting different, even contradictory messages all at once". (p. 2)

Many artists use fibre/fabric (cloth) to create works of art that to a large extent, act as bridges between social life and the less accessible world of the poetic. In this sense, fibre/fabric becomes the sites/spaces where one may express personal and social concerns artistically, whilst broaching multiple discourses too. Fabric, a means of artistic expression thus becomes the symbol of life's expression.

But with the antagonism that fabric meets in the field of fine art, one will wonder how fabric works are considered and accepted? Have expressions in the medium not mostly been referred to as 'craft' and so not accorded the significance of 'high art'? These are some of the boundaries that a fibre artist would have to negotiate in a bid to bring fabric art into full view.

Ephemerality and Permanence: the Plasticity of Fibres/Fabrics

Since the so called "noble" materials for sculptural expression have for centuries been kept within the canon, whilst fibre and fabrics stayed without, much attention had not been paid to it as an intellectual medium for "high art". Yet by mid-twentieth century the concern of contemporary artists was for an art that must become preoccupied

with the ‘space’ and ‘objects’ of our everyday life. Fibre and cloth related materials began featuring enormously in the work of many artists and Constantine and Reuter see cloth “to be more than most materials, transformable; [...] fluid and although it is temporary it can also be made permanent.” (1997, p. 10)

Partly due to this aforementioned plasticity of fabrics, many artists have taken advantage of the medium and freely created works that have confronted issues of locational or territorial identity and even gender/body politics. Africa has been a dominant site of artistic expression in fibre and fabric for ages. Fibre and fabrics have been used in regalia, architecture, festivals and funerals. Whereas the contexts mentioned here are mainly anthropological, they are used only to indicate those aspects of indigenous African life that continue to inform contemporary African art in one way or the other. Nigerian artist, Yinka Shonibare MBE, has often commented on identity in his use of ‘African Textiles’ mostly printed outside Africa but sold mainly in West and Central Africa as ‘identity’ markers. In his tableaux and installations (Figures 4, 5), he has brought notions of power, coloniality, nationality, identity and authenticity to question. Through subjective inquiry, Shonibare is able to interrogate broader concerns without slipping into the generalities of universalism. To Shonibare, fabric is not a mere means to an end, but an active and highly loaded medium. He, for example, in his *Scramble for Africa* questions the idea of origin, authenticity and power, where headless bodies dressed in European clothes made of unauthentic African fabric (because it was originally produced outside Africa and sold to the African market) scramble for Africa.

His West African contemporary, Ghanaian El Anatsui also references fabric to a very large extent. Anatsui has used wood and flattened and joined aluminum liquor bottle tops to create different types of sculptural allusions to cloth (Figures 6 and 7, 8),

the latter of which I read the engagement of issues concerning a certain ‘legacy’ of alcoholism as a result of trade between Europe and Africa at the time of earliest contact between the two peoples.

Even though Anatsui has not made much use of ‘fabric’ in the ‘situated’ sense of cotton, wool or jute for instance, it is his ability to expand the visual appeal of fabric, whilst staying in the linguistic domain of the sculptural, so as to encompass metal that is of much interest to me. Indeed, cloth has remained his chief referential motif for quite a long time. In Anatsui’s work, fabric becomes not only a reference, but also a very fitting point of departure in dealing with the tradition of sculpture. His technique of ‘modeling’ (building up) metal cloths for instance, joins seamlessly within the concept of ‘stitching’ when one deals with fibrous fabrics.

Fibre in its various forms of existence, from the natural to the artificial, strikes several areas of confluence with the way in which life in general, takes form. In everyday life, arbitrary objects, different subjectivities and concepts are interdependent and literally become interwoven to portray a kind of filament construction that is so natural to the structural make up of cloth. Abakanowicz in her revolutionary use of fibre, according to Constantine and Reuter, sees fibre as the “basic element constructing the organic world on our planet, as the greatest mystery of our environment” (1997, p. 116). In her writings about fibre, she suggests that fibre is what all natural (and even sometimes artificial life) is fashioned from. In the late 1970s, such fibre artists as Abakanowicz and de Amaral probed the pastoral and basic uses to which fibre could be put. Simultaneously other artists began to investigate the possible affiliations between textiles, lightness and the wind. They did so using ultra-light tension fabric structures.

This also paralleled the development of light but strong fabric tension structures in architecture (Colchester, 1991, p. 140).

Innovations/Deterritorialization: Expanding the Linguistic/Artistic Space of Fibres and Fabrics

The interest in tension structures led to other innovative developments in fibre art which could be read as alluding to Deleuze and Guattari's becoming and deterritorialization of a reterritorialized fabric usage. Broadly speaking, "deterritorialization", according to Delaney in Brown (2005) referencing Deleuze and Guattari's *Kafka :Toward a Minor Literature*, "is concerned with disrupting traditional structures of expression, while reterritorialization reinforces traditional structures" (p.2). Thus textiles which had been designated for clothen for instance now would be used otherwise. For, as explained by Marie O'Mahony in *Textiles for 21st-Century Living* by Helen Castle in Garcia (2006), the current trend in textiles is towards the blending of materials, the application of textile techniques with nontextiles and general hybridization. Deterritorialization, as Brown recites Deleuze, "is the 'possibility of invention' in the face of reterritorialized mimetic representation" (p2).



Figure 4. Yinka Shonibare, *Three Graces*, 2001

Source: Collins 2007, p. 301



Figure 5. Yinka Shonibare, *Scramble for Africa*, (2003),

Source: <http://eof737.wordpress.com/2009/08/30/yinka-shonibare-mbe-where-art-meets-post-colonial-african-artifice/>





Figure 6. El Anatsui, *Ancient Cloth Series VIII*, 1993,

Tempera on okp-ocha, oyili-oji, opepe, and oke-oyo woods



Figure 7. El Anatsui, *Duvor* (communal cloth), 2007

source: <http://www.imamuseum.org/blog/2008/06/17/photo-of-the-week-duvor-by-el-anatsui/>





Figure 8. El Anatsui, *Fading Cloth*, 2005,
source: <http://www.artthrob.co.za/05sept/reviews/index.html>



The traditional support for painting, for example, the stretched canvas, would thus be recognized as a very basic sort of tension structure itself. So that while architects in modern architecture would create lighter buildings for which they used the latest artificial high resistance fabrics and membranes, some fibre artists would contribute by researching into and developing the traditions of tension structures (Colchester 1991).

This idea of employing fabric as a representation or a breaking of new frontiers (physically, symbolically and metaphorically), has been perpetuated since the 1960s. In individual artists' studios, 'textiles (fabrics) had been reduced to their basic form of fibre and filament, and nontraditional materials were being used in both conventional and innovatory production.' (Ginsburg 1991, p. 106)

Colchester also states that a number of artists including Al-Hilali (USA) and Chompre (Finland) worked on relaxed canvas in contrast to the use of the taut stretched canvas, as a way of expressing the floppy material qualities of fibre in the 1980s. Other artists such as Geluk and Bernard also experimented with different methods 'treating, pulping, tearing and plaiting paper to reveal its material qualities.' These works were said to be "gently provocative" in that they "questioned the divisions between fine art and decorative art" (Colchester 1991.p140).

While some artists manipulated fibres alone, others mixed them with other media. Michael Brennand Wood, "investigated the relationship between Painting, Textile and Wood in a new way by making wood grids invade the canvas" (Colchester 1991). In his work *Talk-talk* (Figure 9), small fragments of paper or patterned fabric are lashed to wooden grids, using coloured string. His construction can read as a comment on structure and narrative or pattern in fabric.

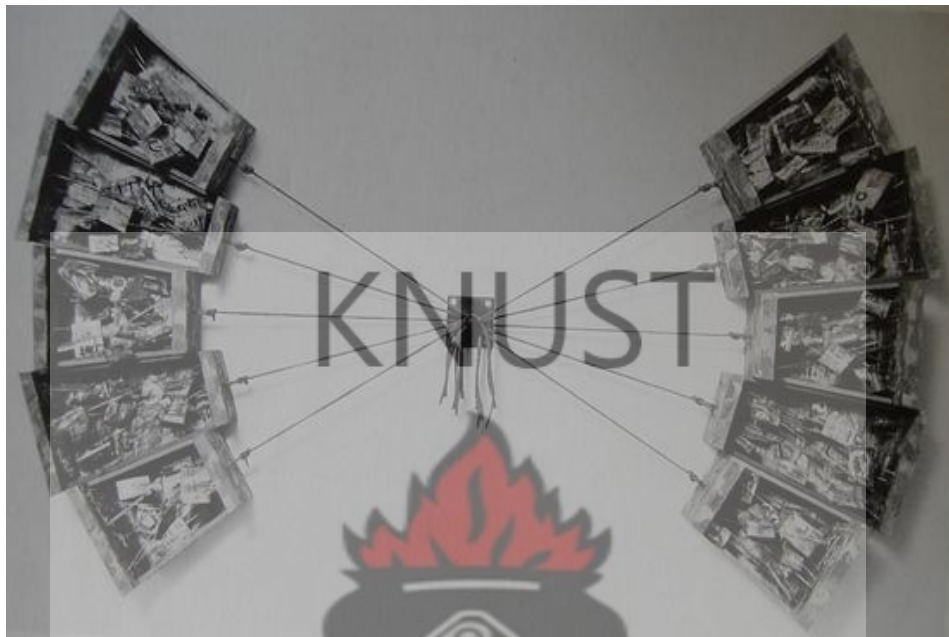
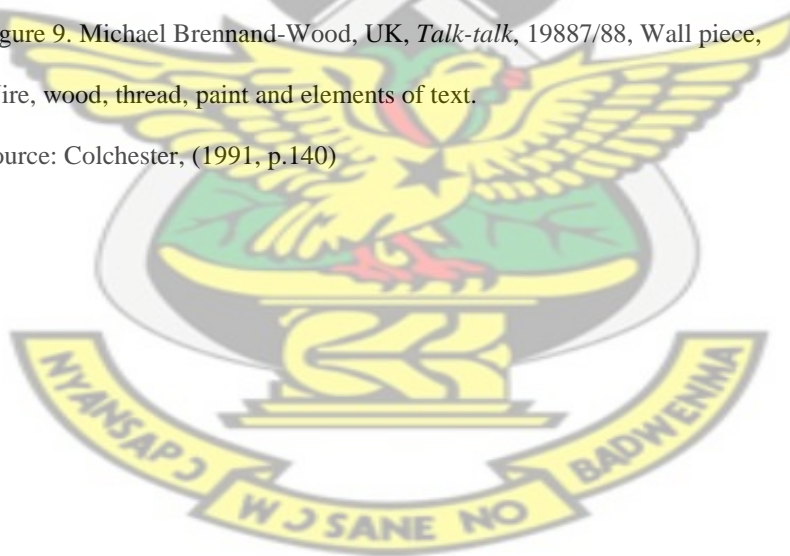


Figure 9. Michael Brennan-Wood, UK, *Talk-talk*, 1988/88, Wall piece,
Wire, wood, thread, paint and elements of text.

Source: Colchester, (1991, p.140)



Many of these fibre artists have mainly investigated the material qualities of fibre and fabrics. But many more artists not only explore material quality but also consider the social dimensions of life and therefore explore the eclectic, symbolic and the metaphoric dimensions of their creations and the materials in which they elect to express their aesthetic and artistic concerns. Schiffer, an independent lecturer on kente and other West African cloth-weaving customs was said by Tom Stabile to have seen textile as much more than just a beautiful piece of cloth and also comments that, “Textiles can reflect the accumulated knowledge of a society or the status of members of the society” (1998, p.1). She makes this claim, in her judgment of the Ghanaian Kente Cloth, which she says, “is a reflection simultaneously of the religious, political, and social values of Asante society” (p.1).

Certain artists also considered the use of fabric after certain life crises. A case in point would be Joseph Beuys who, probably from the consequence of what had been a mythical plane crash somewhere in the Himalayan ranges and the ‘redemption’ he experienced at the hand of natives who had rescued him, felt and fat became recurring materials in his work. Many have observed that he did not use these materials blatantly autobiographically but rather has expanded their meanings, employing them as metaphors of spirituality, rejuvenation and nurturing. Fat for instance, becomes his metaphor for spirituality, for the passage from one state to another, while felt becomes his reference to warmth; the harbour for energy, a protective covering against other possibly damning influences of banality or vulgarity.

By working with fabric, more and more artists continue their natural way in which they relate their life experiences with their art. A fine illustration to this point is *Journey Through the Fabric of Life*, an exhibition by artist Claire Carter hosted by

Bourn Hall Clinic in England (2009). Her body of works drew from personal experiences due to childlessness and her efforts to solve the problem and challenges that accompany such a situation. According to her, each phase of the treatment created new emotions, and she needed to express it (p1), and she did that by manipulating fabric. For her “working with textile was a very natural way of capturing and working through those feelings” (p1). She created six distinct pieces of work made up of layers of fabric, quilting and machine embroidery. *Delikkaya* is one work she claims was as a result of an encounter with a mysterious place in the mountain of Lycian Way in Turkey (p1). *Delikkaya*, meaning ‘hole in the rock,’ is a place, “with a letterbox- shaped opening, where the local people seemed to be putting their hopes and prayers...” (p1) she explains. Carter relates her emotions further thus;

The feeling of the emptiness of the hole and the hope that people placed there had resonance for how I felt during my treatment. I used fabrics which had associations for me...a dress I wore when I was first married, some curtain material from my childhood, fabrics my mother-in-law used for other works and a few new pieces too.(p1)

Conceptual expressions such as those related above, may involve abstract processes and forms in art and may not be those of rational discourse which serve to symbolize public ‘fact’, but [they are] complex forms capable of symbolizing the dynamics of subjective experience, the pattern of vitality, sentience, feeling and emotions. Such forms may not be revealed by means of progressive generalization. They are thus expressed symbolically, metaphorically and metonymically.

The essence of metaphor according to Lakoff and Johnson (2003), is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another (p6), and metonymic concepts

allow us to conceptualize one thing by means of its relation to some-thing else (p39). These devices have been a means by which various artists express themselves over the years.

Pertaining to metaphoric expression, Layton refers to Aristotle's *Poetics*, stating that,

the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor. It is the one thing that cannot be learned from others: and it is also a sign of genius, since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilarity (1991, p.5).

Metonymic thinking however, according to Green (2006) "implies the fusion of the inner spiritual and outer material world" (p. 25). Metonymic thinking in art, he asserts, "implies that one must take into account the inner world of the artist". When artists create metonymically, he explains, "the outward aspects of the art work are seamlessly connected with the inner state of the artist" (p.20). Artistic presentation could therefore be said not to be only concerned with formal qualities such as volumes, lines and planes in sculpture for example, as Greenberg would have it, but with "structures of psychic subjectivities" (Rogoff, p.23). One of Greenberg's key arguments was that art should be intrinsic to itself, purged of social and political intention (Green, 2006), and this has influenced many artistic underpinnings today. But as related earlier, artistic presentations are affected by the subjective, which is also influenced by what happens within and without the subject. Artistic presentation and representation would thus not only be mimicry and or minimal but rather multi- dimensional/ presentational. Spatial relations/concepts such as substitution, displacement and projection would therefore be in place.

This is probably why many conceptual artists tend to pay more attention to the symbolic and the metaphoric than the formal in their works. Although they might be working with common-place objects they do not only see the literal, instead the figurative and abstract images that penetrate deeply into the common-sense ways of thinking are what their deeper yearnings reach out for. A case point in is that of Shawn Major, who employs everyday items and toys to make her works (Figures 10 and 11) and her statements. In her artist's statement, she explains;

I am interested in how the perception of reality is colored by dreams, memory, superstition, religion, bias, prejudice, and fear. My mixed media tapestries, in general, refer to the overlay of belief systems created by the individual to piece together their personal paradigm. My vocabulary – a combination of kitsch, ersatz and craft materials, junk and personal objects – is re-aesthetized into accumulated forms that serve as metaphors for the build-up, organization and assimilation of information. The personal objects are evidences of pain, happiness, loss, guilt, shame – the material detritus of the everyday human experience. (Major, 2010)

Using vernacular as a language of objects, Major transforms the kitsch of popular culture into the elite fine art object, through collage and intensive manual labor, subverting the hierarchy of high art. She is fascinated by the fetish object, the way disparate elements connect, and so chooses particular elements for their visceral qualities, their symbology and their real world reference. These materials, she treats in equal manner, each bringing to the fore its bit of significance and narrative to the visual story.



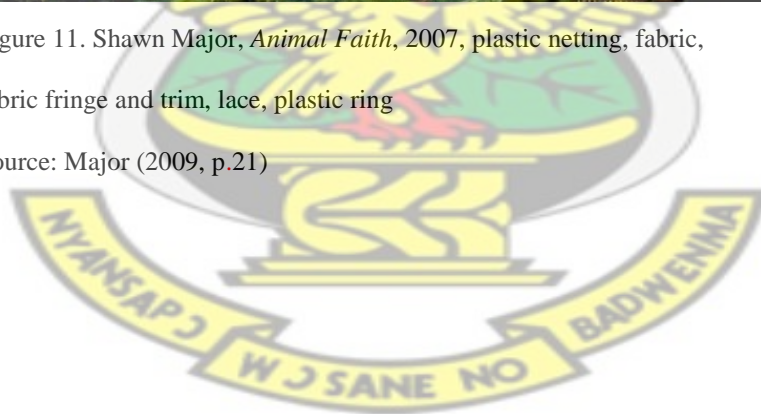
Figure 10. Shawn Major, *Bud Sport*, 2008, plastic netting, fabric, doll cloths, stuffed toys, plastic toys, silk flowers, handkerchiefs, appliques, plastic leaves, thread, 72*56"

Source: Major (2009, p.21)



Figure 11. Shawn Major, *Animal Faith*, 2007, plastic netting, fabric, fabric fringe and trim, lace, plastic ring

Source: Major (2009, p.21)



Major and many other artists express themselves through their individual perceptions which are affected by their subjectivities, within which are the unconscious; “the unconscious being formed by the disciplines of a culture, by its particular pattern of interdicts and permission” (Ross, 2005, p. 104). Experiences in the individual’s daily life thus shape his/her visuality, expression and thus space, making use of symbolism, metaphor and metonym, which operate differently from the empirical or the denotative. The works of many artists are thus made up of value-charged experiences for contemplation.

In this direction, many fabric and fibre works present cloth sometimes not only in the functionalist terms of ‘wearability’ or ‘clothing,’ but suggest far more than mere body covering. In some of the works, clothing connotes social class; clothing even becomes an outward expression of emotions such as “despair,” joy or even antagonism. Clothing becomes a means of being adequate to the dreams of the body beneath the superficial covering.

Projection/Expansion: Pushing beyond Being (Clothes and Shelter)

The possibilities of conceptual expansion that inhere the use of fibres/fabrics, is what Mackenzie (2004) looks at in her doctoral thesis. In this document, she discusses the practice of such artists as Orta, who, as an alternative direction to clothing manufacture, created ‘garments’ that became sleeping bags or forms of shelter for the homeless (p.11) in the artist’s ‘Refuge Wear’ series (Figure 12). In a similar manner, Mackenzie makes mention of Tsumura, who in his ‘Final Home Project,’ also created a shelters within a garments (Figure 13). She explains about the work Jacket-Jacket that

Tsumura “deconstructed the tailored suit jacket by peeling back the outer layer of the fabric and uncovering the inner sculptured structure” (p.13)

Other artists have also used the concept of clothes conceptually, whilst seeking to create memorials to people dear to them. An example of this is the project, *A flower for Ethyl Eichelberger* made up of a series of garments in Mylar (a flimsy shiny plastic material). Quite contrary to Orta’s or Tsumura’s deconstructionist approach to the manufacture of clothen, the artist Herring employed the craft of knitting to create works like *Castle* (Figure 14), a light filled ghost-like coat and it has been suggested that Herring’s use of knitting was a deliberate tribute to Eichelberger’s “gender-bending stage persona” (Amenuke, 2006, P.17).

Similarly, Atnafu created *A shrine for Angelica’s dreams*, (Figure 15) an eclectic work, conceived in a white dress, a fancy hat, mixed media and collectable items, as a vivid example of a memorial or tribute. (Hassan and Debela, 1995, p.137), It is this sort of conceptual instinct’ that led me to create *Transparency* (see Figure 62) a sort of ‘wedding gown’ with fishing net that had its contents exposed, which was part of the constellations in *Fluid Flow Through Woven Screens* exhibition. This is probably a seeking to deterritorialize the medium (fishing net), and also an expression of spatiality via the subject’s psyche.

An Artist like Broadhead who according to Colchester (1991) has “been interested in the intimate aspect of clothing, the idea that they have been shaped not just by fashion but by somebody’s life,” (p.141) expresses the idea that clothing is a projection of the self. In commenting on clothing and the way in which it is perceived, Broadhead sees Clothing as holders and projectors of the visual memory of a person and it is this closeness to a human being that interests her. Thus in her series of

‘Skeleton clothes’ (Figure16), she uses what in normal clothes construction would have been the ‘seams’ to create ‘three-dimensional line drawings which express emotional states, movement, gesture, aspirations and even dilemmas.

In exhibiting ‘colourless clothes of indeterminate styles, she avoids the anecdotal, but boldly courts emotional states and dilemmas’ (p.141). Clothes thus, not only covers the individuals body by leaving it at the point of the reterritorialized, but becomes a vehicle for conveying the content of spatiality; psychic subjectivities. Spatialization here is thus not only about designated/named space but about the ‘presence’ of the self. Whereas Broadhead looks at the emotive state of clothes, Knight, in his sculpture, Poor Flora (Figure17), makes cloth take on far darker connotations.

Constantine and Reuter (1997) have said this about Knight’s sculpture:

The work is figurative and realistic but succeeds in its otherness. In this work, the artist truncates the body, leaving only a relief of the core of the most vulnerable area of the Figure, the belly. He then swaddles the body in the cloth that curiously represents the discomfiture of its existence. (p122)

Towards a further expansion of the implications of fabrics, the concepts of space, shelter and accommodation have also been portrayed in diverse ways by various artists using the fibre/fabrics as the medium. While some explore these grounds through clothing, others do so through forms of enclosure or demarcation with fabric. So that autobiographical themes may be communicated.

Through personal encounter with Deddeh, a Liberian batik artist based in the Buduburam Refugee Camp in Ghana, I became privy to her interest in the creation of ‘shelter’ for the un-accommodated.

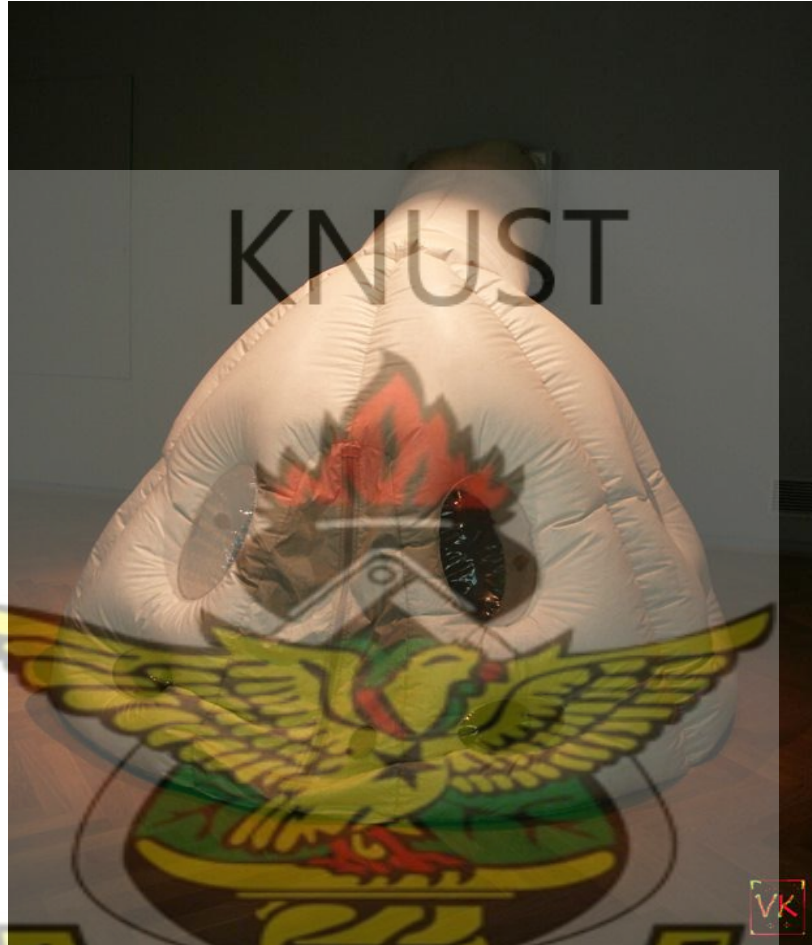


Figure 12. Lucy Orta, *Parasite shelter costume-Habitent*, in the *Refuge Wear series* (1994-96)

Source: <http://www.kraeuter-sternchen.de/blog/archives/155-Die-Ausstellung-zum-Klimawandel-Klimakapsel.html>



Figure 13. Kosuke Tsumura, *Final Home*, 1994.

Nylon parka with dozens of pockets

Source: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/nearnearfuture/3095805779/in/photostream/>



Figure 14. Oliver Herring, *Castle*, from *A flower for Eichelberger*

Source: Getlein (2002)

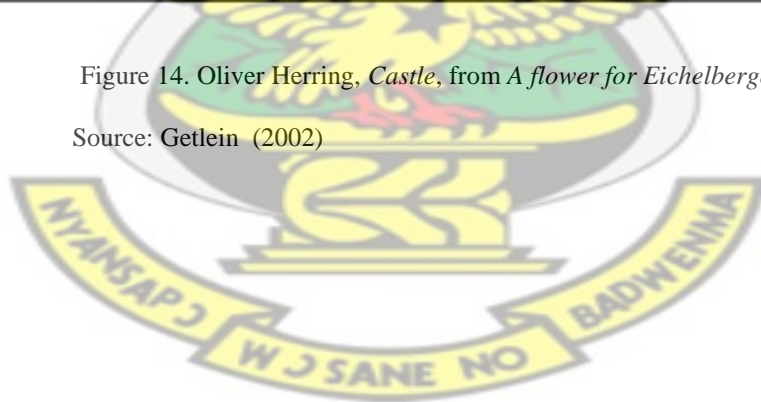




Figure 15. Elizabeth Atnafu. *A shrine for Angelica's Dreams*

Source: Hassan and Debela (1995)



Figure 16. Caroline Broadhead, *Seam*, 1987, in the *Skeleton clothes* series.

Machine stitched cotton and nylon.

Source : Colchester, (1991, p.154)



Figure 17. Robert Knight, *Poor Flora (Sympat Hectomies)*, 1981, fibreglass, cloth, and mixed media, 43 x31 x 6"

Source: Constantine and Reuter (1997, p.123)

This interest I read as a possible subconscious gesture, informed by vestiges of suffering and displacement that she and other people experienced during the war in Liberia. At the International Women Artist Workshop organized by the group *Art in Aktion* in Kwabenya, Accra 2009, Deddeh created an enclosure with pockets, from fabric (figure 18). In her own reading, the work “symbolize open houses and a mother that take cares of every child even if he or she is not hers” (personal conversation, 2009). Such a flexible material as cloth readily constitutes the sites/spaces where Deddeh artistically expresses her traumatic personal experiences.

Quite like Deddeh, Garrand comments on a related idea of clothing as a cultural ‘envelop’. Her installation ‘La Pittura, The Spirit of Painting Reclaimed’ 1986 (figure 19), is said to be about “a female artist attempting to find her bearing within the male tradition of fine art” (Colchester 1991, p. 141). In this work two nylon dresses printed with a medley of French impressionist and old master paintings ‘pose’ as ‘model’ and ‘artist.’

On the metaphorical side too, artists continue to present works that comment on psycho-social issues. Mitsuo-Toyazaki’s works for instance, have been said to

...hang in the balance between fetishisation and social comment, bland optimism and concern. By filling rooms with identical objects such as paper tissues, respiratory masks and brightly dyed nylon tights, he transforms them into an alien presence. (Colchester 1991, p. 141).

Also in his “Social Plants” (1988) (figure 20), an unnatural pseudo-forest of upended lurid nylon, dyed in shades of green, in effect resembles stalagmites. In a dark way, he uses artificial materials and objects to “ape” or ‘imitate’ the natural, subverting the long tradition in textile art of expressing concern for nature. (Colchester 1991, p. 141)

At the Art Omi International Artists Residency 2009 in New York, Lei Yan, a participant who was a former military officer, also commented on social/military territoriality and relations by creating everyday 'civilian' objects like photo frames, drinking cup, flower vase, floor mat, a chair and a small pillow from military camouflage fabric that were displayed on the floor (Figure 18). These objects could have been mounted on the wall or on a pedestal/platform, but the artist displayed them on the ground. The implications could be that as a former army officer, she was critiquing the military, suggesting that to the civil populace, the military carries perception of unapproachability. To her, the armed forces are meant to be for the people. They are to be protecting the ordinary civilian; but normally the contrary is perceived. The uniforms, guns and other paraphernalia of war tend to deter civilians from engaging in cordial or 'intimate' relations with them. When even they are to bring order in disorder, they wield their guns. In my opinion, they are a feared sect.

However Yan thinks that the image formed by the ordinary people about this 'sect' could be changed through new engagements or interventions, like hers. Since the fabric from which military uniforms are made, carry so much implications, she decided to let it speak through her art. This time, the uniform fabric finds its place in the ordinary; the civilian home setting. Lei Yan in her work deterritorialized the military uniform, pushing the boundary of the 'named space' or designation, making space active by mediating the destination of the fabric. The static notion of named space (military uniform fabric usage), is replaced by an active process of spatialization (military uniform fabric usage in the context of the ordinary and as an art medium) (Rogoff 2000, p 23).



Figure 18. Elizabeth Deddeh, Ghana, *untitled*, 2009, batik fabric, zippers, photograph by Dorothy Amenuke



Figure 19. Rose Garrand, UK, *La Pittura, the Spirit of Painting Reclaimed*, 1986, Installation using nylon dresses.

Source: Colchester , (1991, p. 152)



Figure 20. Mitsuo-Toyazaki, Japan, *Social Plants*, (1988),
installation of dyed tights.

Source: Colchester (1991, p.142)

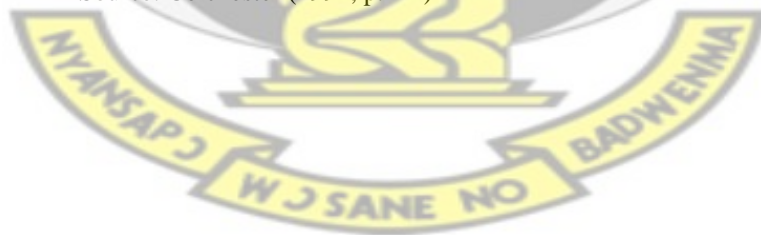
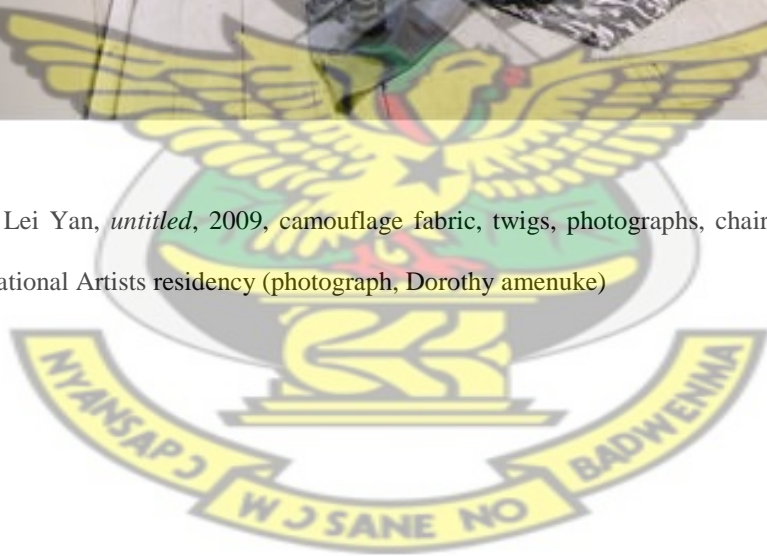




Figure 21. Lei Yan, *untitled*, 2009, camouflage fabric, twigs, photographs, chair, installation, 2009 Art Omi international Artists residency (photograph, Dorothy amenuke)



The accommodative space within fabric was being explored by Lei Yan. By allowing the camouflage fabric to speak as an artistic medium, she tries to bring the untouchable home. Probably, it is to emphasize the 'down to earthness' of the camouflage, drawing the attention of the armed forces to their responsibilities, and also exploring the poetic space where fabric and existence inter-relate and synthesize new reflections.

At the same residency, Laala, the Moroccan participant expressed her idea about territoriality using fabrics within the same colour scheme, from different geographical areas, to show unity in diversity. She tried to express the relationship between the United States of America and Morocco by placing the American map on tapestry from Morocco and the map of Morocco on fabric with the American flag colours which was bought in New York (Figure 22). Like many other artists, Laala tried to express the fluidity and multiplicity of the concept of spatialization. Territoriality, being a spatial concept is about boundaries and borders, inside and outside, within and without. These boundaries which bring division and difference among people are many a time imaginary lines of demarcation that bring about limits, bounds and ends. The artist in her work deconstructs the notions and definitions of these boundaries.

One's ethos, no matter how trivial, consciously or unconsciously becomes the site/space of expression. This is evident in Schapiro's work for example, which employs handkerchiefs as a medium of expression. She said, in an interview with Bradley and Appelhof in Gouma- (Peterson, 1980), that, besides being interested in their aesthetics, handkerchiefs are also repositories of oceans of tears and curiously enough messages from the body. She says "When you blow your nose into a handkerchief, you are leaving a message from the body. But I am most interested in the handkerchief because it's

patently a sentimental carrier” (p.19). She thus uses fabric as her tangible symbol for connection to ‘domesticity’ and to express her belief that art resides in domesticity.

My work tends to be similar to Schapiro in Peterson (1980) when she said; “for me, the fabric of my art and the fabric of my life neatly equate each other” (p.19). An artist’s presentations are not devoid of her/his experiences/subjectivities which in Roggof’s terms, is the inhabitation of another dimension of space. The artist’s presentations are affected not only by him or herself, but also the ‘other’. Spatiality is influenced severally by ‘colonialism’ and the ‘power games’ that exist within and without a particular cultural setting causing varied boundaries with their inherent limits, bounds and ends. These ‘power games’ give rise to a reterritorialization where certain conceptual and literal boundaries must not be crossed, thus rendering space passive or static. Concepts of spatiality however concern multi-dimensionality where space becomes active, throwing spatial experiences open. Active space would thus imply mediation, positionality and situated knowledges, and would also imply a deterritorialization. Artists are thus influenced by the varied cultural experiences as they move from place to place or are related one way or the other. As artists move from place to place asserts Green, “...their selves become like mosaics composed of stones from different cultures. This complexity becomes part of their language as artists. Within the experience of each stone there is a different story to recount” (p29). They consequently create with their “own languages and varied spiritual, conceptual, religious and philosophic views” (Green 2006, p26), and so deterritorializing language, thereby stopping to be representative in order to move towards its limits. An artist would therefore not necessarily be glued to the preconceived or the reterritorialized but rather

enact a deterritorialization of the usual, liberating her/his art from "the cares of daily life" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1986, p 6).

KNUST





Figure 22. Amal Laala, untitled, 2009, fabric, cords, trimming,
Wall piece, 2009 Art Omi international artists residency (photograph, Dorothy amenuke)



CHAPTER THREE

Wandering and Wondering

“The uniqueness of a work of art is inseparable from its being imbedded in the fabric of tradition. This tradition itself is thoroughly alive and extremely changeable”. (Benjamin, 1968, p.233)

KNUST

Our third space is a site of embodied experience and experiment. Since there is no longer “being” as is suggested in the previous chapter, but a “becoming” driven mainly by whims of subjectivity, the body of work that I produce is not a monolithic mass but develops as Deleuzian and Guattarian rhizomes. My methodological route is thus exploratory and ridden partly by chance and spontaneity. There is no actual starting point and no particular end. Dreams give birth to expression and out of these, several other constellations rhizome into existence. But not to suggest an idea of hedonist purposelessness, the work is also rooted in rigorous theory; relating closely to the practice of like-minded artists (as seen in the previous chapter).

My own spatial specificity broadens out from the initial subjective site of the mind. This is where the qualms, haunches, ideas and dreams are birthed. It then encompasses the immediacy of my private studio, where trial-and-error comes into ingenious exchange with traditional techniques and methods that are, as per Benjamin, “alive and extremely changeable.” The entire affair eventually blurs into spaces further beyond my immediate limits. Here, I refer not only to my Ghanaian locality, but rope in my experiences gathered in the contexts of international workshops and residencies in

Kenya, Egypt and the USA. These become for me, the unlimited studio spaces where the simultaneity of opportunity and risk play out; where I could hazard my propositions and challenge my conceptual musings in the presence of artists of various other disciplines and philosophical dispositions. The works produced in these contexts of an expanded studio space bring to my own practice very enriching quirks that I might never had imagined, had I not taken the chances which came my way to do so.

Working on *Fabric as spatial metaphor* thus called for a rethinking of my social space and its content. This need led me to questions like: “What meaning could be made of the ordinary?” I wandered within my immediate community on what I would call “reconnaissance” or “re-discovery.” I had to re-take a critical look at some of the ordinary but informative things; objects, practices that I normally tended to take for granted. I therefore took walks or long drives into the community, to interact with the people who play their social roles on a daily basis. Women and men who work tirelessly at the Kente weaving sheds, those who sell their wares in the make-shift fabric ‘tents’ and canopies, fishermen who spend long hours mending precariously thin fishing nets, all become enmeshed into my huge referential fabric. It is a journey that is ridden with as much chance and spontaneity as deliberate mapping. On the way to a mapped source, one could come across a scene or event of immediate or even fleeting interest. Though this would take some scheduled hours off the intended results for the day, the richness it introduces cannot be taken for granted. This is how slowly and serendipitously it all weaves into a large tapestry of surprise and delight.

Sometimes one encounters the very mundane in a new light. The clichés we were always at home with suddenly transform, by dint of re-discovery into vast fields of embedded information. One is confronted by already known signs, symbols and codes

which have to be re-interpreted. New meanings would have to be assigned to them. Sometimes too, altogether new codes are developed to help make sense of current trends.

Since symbolic and metaphoric ideas are quite common place in the Ghanaian social fibre, deeper meanings are readily assigned to what others might view as the most ordinary things. When someone is attired in black for instance, she/ he may be asked what calamity has occasioned the wearing of mourning clothes. This is because colour and symbolic associations in Ghana border on analogy. Similarly, the sighting of a bottle or an earthenware pot with white netting protruding out of it and placed at the entrance to a hut, may signify a palm-wine sales point. In my wanderings therefore I began to wonder about the different natural and synthetic fabrics and fibres and how they have in one way or the other interacted with constructed and existing spaces.

Of Security and Accommodation?

Moving to-and-fro, I chance upon a fence (Figure 23) in Oforikrom, in Kumasi, Ghana and am intrigued by the non-deliberate entanglement of netting in barbed wire. The barbed wire, supposedly used for fencing and protection is caught up and entwined by lace-like netting, or is it the other way round? This sight makes me question the extent to which one's ability to seek protection from real and perceived external dangers can go, in the name of security and accommodation. So much happens in the quest for private/public security.

From road safety measures, where signs are put on the road to indicate a direction or a diversion, to home fencing and burglar proofing which often unearths

from the subconscious, allusions to imprisonment. To this end, more questions arise. How safe are we really when we put our faith in conventional signs and symbols that could be susceptible to misinterpretation and misreading? What if another does not share the same conventions with us? Is communication possible in such situations?

Nets, Buoys and Sinkers

Questions keep arising as the wondering kept increasing. My wandering starts to expand and the horizons begin to multiply instead of broadening. The mind almost became saturated with information. On one occasion, whilst returning from my village, in the Volta region, I visited some fishermen at Kpong in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The total process of fishing, which involves preparing the net with buoys and sinkers and weaving fishing ‘baskets’ fully enclosed, leaving a trap-entrance of no return (Figures 24 and 25) becomes a source of metaphoric inspiration for my eventual studio work.

I had the opportunity to observe their fishing nets at close quarters. The attachments or accessories on the nets and how they are used proved an interesting opening reference for the discussion that developed. The first set of these attachments or ‘accessories’, as I call them, are made of light-weight materials at one end of the netting, serving as buoys. At the other end, there are heavier objects (fashioned from lead) and they serve the function of sinkers. But apart from the physical objects, I was drawn in on their everyday activities and experiences at the coast.



Figure 23. Barbed wire fence, cobweb and fabric. Oforikrom, Kumasi, 2008





Figure 24. Fishing basket and buoys on net, ready for fishing (photograph by Dorothy Amenuke)



Figure 25. Attaching sinkers on fishing net, (photograph by Dorothy Amenuke)

This strangely brought up images and ideas of slavery into my mind. Fishing as a conceptual process, makes allusions to ideas of entrapment. The “subject” (fish caught in a net) soon becomes the object of torment. How it is ensnared and caught becomes a source of concern for me. I however put my concerns to rest when I come to the realization that the fish would after all serve as food. But what if, a subject becomes enslaved or becomes the object of oppression?

The issue of slavery continues to be a subject in Ghanaian history. The trans-Atlantic slave trade, Colonial rule and their consequences have always occupied a large space of our collective memory. Attainment of Ghana’s political independence in March 1957 did not necessarily do much to erase this memory and the vestiges that we bore with it.

Struggles and debates continue to rage. Does political independence imply cultural and economic independence? Are there any counter-productive vestiges of the colonial project still at work in our present experience? If there are, what could they be? And how do we rid ourselves of them? Are these not what Dr. Nkrumah referred to as neo-colonialist influences? In the arena of contemporary Ghanaian art, are we still to deal with the extremities of the conservatives, who insist on ‘templates-gone-stale’ which have become the standards for the model of 21st century art education? Can we then say that the adherence to these conventions has normally been publicly navigated?

Position and Legacy

Public ‘space’ and its related concerns have usually been collectively owned and therefore, publicly navigated. A navigation of public space as hinted above is hinged on convention and a reaction to normative extremes. In this, we “always” tend to find ways

of introducing individuality or the private identity into the larger space. In so doing, we leave behind traces and in the more grandiose sense, monuments.

For instance, a head of department in KNUST, Kumasi, Ghana, would like to leave behind laudable projects like car parks, air conditioning in offices, swivel chairs for lectures etc., as a sign of this presence by the end of his/her tenure of office. Yet, another might only choose to leave less obtrusive objects as chronicles of “having been here before”, an example is in the work of the anonymous artist “A” who “installed” an uprooted plant in the pristine space near the provost’s office in the college of Art, KNUST Kumasi (Figure 26). Then again, one cannot categorically say that this was the deliberate art proposition of an artist. It might definitely have only been a fluke happening.

At my first confrontation with this “contemporary art” situation, I wondered what relation the rather odd installation had with the cement sculptures beside the College of Art and Social Sciences administration block of KNUST.

Every subsequent day I witnessed a change in this interesting “pile” of plant roots (Figure 27). The pile kept growing till there were so many of them, the place began to look like a “mess.” Ironically this piece provoked more thought, from me than its cement counterparts. They were uncanny and probably thus more deserving of my attention than their concrete counterparts. Even the hypothetical dialogue that played out between the organic and the inorganic natures of plant roots and cement Figures communicates deeper reaches of ambiguity and irony and indicates the refrains of contemporary discourses around permanence and the ephemeral in art. As per fluke, and to my utter disappointment, I returned another day to find all the tree roots gone. Just as they had appeared seemingly out of nowhere, their departure was also as dramatic.

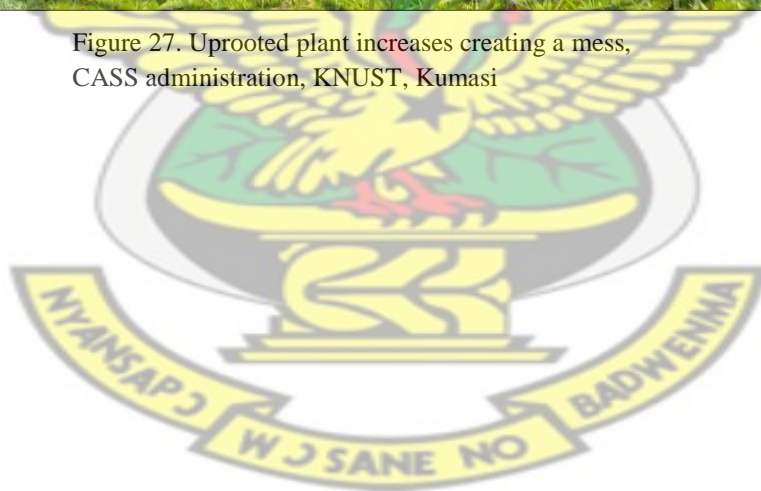


Figure 26. An uprooted plant in dialogue with cement sculptures,
CASS administration, KNUST, Kumasi





Figure 27. Uprooted plant increases creating a mess,
CASS administration, KNUST, Kumasi



Art today, no longer just stays glued to the mechanical production of an intent or idea from an artist's studio. Readings into the un-assumed also make room for art exploration. Attention paid to a position could be read into this particular presentation. Who occupies what position? Who has the power to do what? What is the relevance of the artist as an individual in the larger public sphere? What impact does her/his work have on the society? And to what extent do these concerns inform the oeuvre of the artist?

Authorship/Ownership

The public space also yields manipulation in that; it is an arena of power play and even oppression or the transgression thereof. A space that was previously collectively owned suddenly assumes exclusivity just by the sudden introduction of a “developmental project”, or even a public order notice. For example car parks in any public office area, has spaces allotted to particular persons and positions on staff. So that when one's term of office is over, one no longer has the spatial right to park there.

Issues of authorship and ownership become more pronounced in the contexts of experimental art communities of say, workshops or group residencies. In such situations, collaborative work is encouraged. This however does not imply that individual expression is relegated to the background. The collaborative work that is specifically produced in the thematic context of a workshop or group residency for instance; or that which emerges in response to a particular curatorial instigation or call, in comparison to one which is independently conceived as “personal” expression, if any such concept exists tends to have open-ended claims to authorship.

In the personal space of the studio, an artist would conceive an idea, develop it and come up with works that would be exhibited. In many of these exhibitions, the audience/viewer participation are solicited where they participate by interacting with the work, developing additional understanding and meaning other than the one stipulated by the artist. In this case, what would be said about authorship? In the private space of the artist's studio, where the work began, one would say the work belong to the artist, but once it has entered the public domain and 'subjective eyes' begin to read, understand and give meaning, would the work totally belong and be authored by the artist?

Similarly, participation in artists' workshops and residencies also present cases of ownership and authorship. In the case of workshops, sometimes, with particular themes, participating artists would be working with their individual ideas but on the same theme. The works are finally looked at as a whole and not separate. In the same workshop situation, artists come together, collaborating, either helping to build a participants work or building works that have been conceived together (Figures 28, 29), as I experienced at the international women artists' workshop organized by Kuona Trust in Kenya, in 2007. In these cases, the issue of authorship/ownership is left open-ended. In the case of residencies, similar situations of personal and collaborative space are experienced. Here ideas and philosophies are discussed and shared and these affect works created. In the case of residencies too, the creations are not left with the artists alone but is opened to the public, where they could be 'performed' at public spaces or the public is invited to the space of creation, and they are even allowed to participate in the art experience (Figures 30, 31). Collaboration then becomes the designation and destination of the artistic endeavour. This does not imply relegating the idea of personal expression to the background as mentioned earlier.



Figure 28. Artists collaborating in workshop, (2nd international women artists' workshop organized by Kuona Trust, Kenya, 2007)





Figure 29. Artists collaborating in workshop, (2nd international women artists' workshop organized by Kuona Trust, Kenya, 2007)

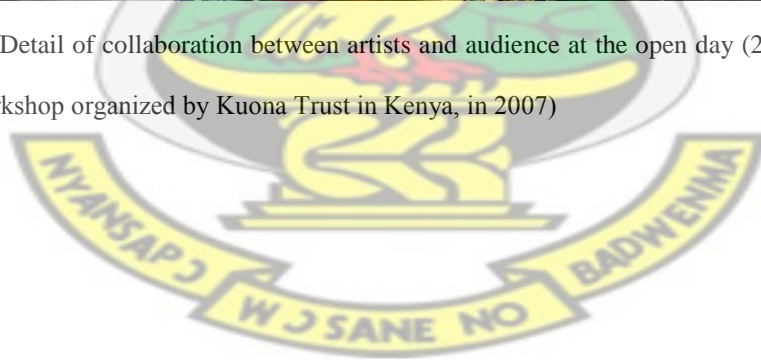


Figure 30. Collaboration between artists and audience at the open day (2nd international women artists' workshop organized by Kuona Trust in Kenya, in 2007





Figure 31. Detail of collaboration between artists and audience at the open day (2nd international women artists' workshop organized by Kuona Trust in Kenya, in 2007)



The Jacket Experience

Working as an individual in the personal space of a studio, or in the shared space of workshops and residencies, then may cause an artist to move from one geographical space to the other leading to diverse exchanges. Several of these exchanges and encounters tend to be fleeting, but their impact on us can be far reaching, causing far expanses of spatiality. Working as an artist and engaging in various forms of inquiry, needs one to dialogue. This may be made possible through varied movements and travels to meet varied situations, experiences and people with different or similar interests. All these tend to inform the way the artist expresses him/herself.

Several such travels have occurred during this period of research, where I have moved from my usual, singular space of experiences and art creation (in Kumasi, Ghana) into different and shared spaces/environments of workshops and residencies in Kenya, Egypt, USA and other parts of Ghana. With the pursuit of the concept of spatiality in terms of the experiential and the subjective, the travel to these spaces offered rich experiences which have contributed tremendously to the discussion at hand. They have offered the ground for experiencing new spaces: different geographical regions and what pertains there in terms of the weather, the people, their beliefs, and the discourse on various issues including art. They have also offered the grounds for sharing and exchange of ideas and art works through seminar presentations, ‘artists to artists’ talks and sharing of art media and process with various levels of education quite different from that of my home country (Figure 32). These brought about various levels and degrees of understandings of cultural exchanges.

One such occasion was an invitation to Minneapolis by the Perpich Center for Arts Education in collaboration with the Metropolitan State University (all in St Paul,

Minneapolis) and the artist Mary Hark, to have a joint exhibition. This exhibition, *Tradition and Innovation: Contemporary Textile Art in Kumasi, Ghana*, was with the Boakye family of Ntonso in the Ashante Region of Ghana, who produce adinkra cloth. My participation in and presence at the exhibition spaces and the discussions on the fabric art pieces were not the only captivating spatial consumptions but readings into the various experiences in terms of differences in geographical space and the cultural exchange were also fascinating.

Getting to the airport in Minneapolis in April 2008, dressed in a traditional “slit and kaba” and a slip-on, a lady asked me, “Are you sure you are ready for this weather?” I responded “Yes”, nodding, without really thinking through why she had asked that question of concern. I had also not really fathomed the true extent of the cold at the time. I had to wait for my friend to pick me up and the wait took over an hour. While waiting, I had to stand outside and there the cold engulfed me so much that my toes were almost freezing. There, I began to understand why the woman asked how ready I was for the weather. Finally, my friend arrived and we have to drive to St. Paul. By this time I guess I really got the concern message of the earlier lady. We quickly had to drive straight into a thrift shop, where I got a jacket. This jacket became the most important item of clothing for me, for all the time I spent on the trip. Although it was got from a thrift shop it drew the admiration of many and interestingly I was asked whether I brought it from Ghana and whether I anticipated the weather. One might ask? What Readings could be made into all these? What kinds of spatial consumptions are brought forth? Here, spatiality is considered not only in terms of designated named spaces or activity but as per Lefebvre and Rogoff, spatiality has to do with subjectivities and the “multi-inhabitation of spaces through bodies, social relations and psychic dynamics” (p 23).



Figure 32. Presentation at J J Hills Montessori School, Minnesota, 2008



Experiences such as these could be said to be the informing niche of an artist. Here the artist reads into these experiences and grows her art.

In this case varied relatedness, interconnectivity and networking are read. How am I able to get the necessary information for the various travels, for example? Various forms of communication are available and people get connected through them. One such means, the internet, makes absence so present. It makes possible, networking and interconnectivity which has facilitated, the necessary communications that my travels needed. Thoughts of the internet and its related networking sent me musing about entanglement, the various presentations of entanglement and how and in what situations one gets entangled.

Maturity through Networking and Entanglement:

A Case of Multidimensionality

The elemental forces of wind, water, earth and fire have their own way of influencing the fabric of life and society, and these are made manifest in the everyday observations and experiences. As I observe and ponder over existence, I realize how the natural environment sometimes presents maturity, protection and entanglement. Nature does its own weaving as observed in some of the trees seen on my tours. I noticed that one of the trees was attacked by tree parasites which wove themselves around it (Figure 33), a typical nuance of the banyan tree. This normally happens to some mature trees; other plants deriving their survival from them by entangling them.

In another instance, fibres of a tree may begin to disintegrate to reveal its hidden woven structure as it matures as seen in Figure 34. In a typical example of nature sculpted fibre the banyan tree and its intertwining behaviour becomes an index to life

and survival. The deterritorialized readings of these natural phenomena present an operating ground for the quest into subjective spatiality. Readings thus continue to be made into the unassumed and the varied presentations of fabric and fibres.

Whilst wandering I tried to identify characteristic concepts of space, (i.e. horizontality, verticality, flexibility, solidity, multiplicity, transformation) and how these concepts interrupt spatial relations. I noticed that the presentation/designation of fabrics and fibres in the varied ways in everyday life did not necessarily denote artistic value, but rather referenced a largely functional attribute. This should however not suggest that aesthetic value is not considered in the composition of the different examples of fabric and fibres in the society. Even the way cloth/fabric is arranged in the market place for example, or in the construction and thatching of a roof as I witnessed in Saltpond, Ghana, present cases or situations of subjective readings of spatiality as an artistic concept.

These concepts reveal themselves in the way the fibres are presented and could be read. In this single space, of roof thatching in Saltpond (Figure 35) for example, one sees fibres (straw) packed, regulated and unregulated, rough and smooth, vertical and horizontal, onto fabric (fish netting) that lie on a cross-work of rafters. The combination of netting and straw for thatching the roof could at once instigate deeper readings of cooperation or multidimensionality.

Whereas fibre has been used variously for roofing in many cases, in others they have been used for screening or partitioning. Screens for me are symbolic and metaphorical and any time I see them I give a second look and try to read meanings of inclusion and exclusion into them. On the KNUST campus, I often see the use of tin roofing sheets to screen off construction sites.

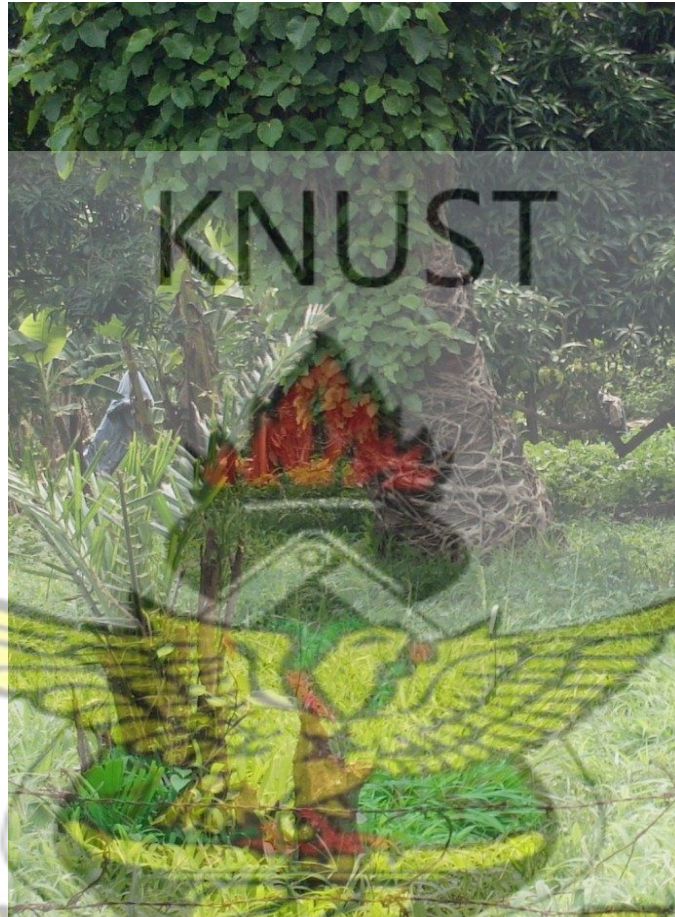


Figure 33. Tree attacked by parasite causing entanglement.



Figure 34. Disintegration of fibres to reveal hidden woven structure of mature plant.

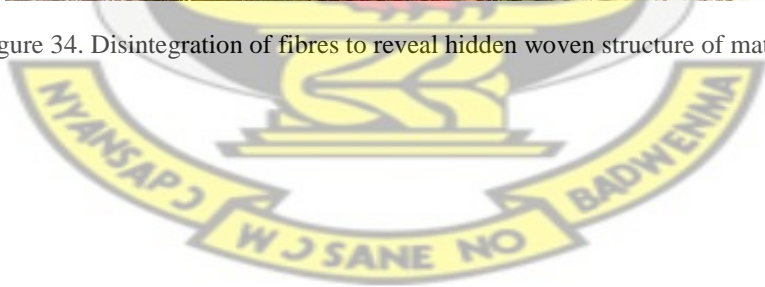




Figure 35. Eaves of a thatch-roof shed

What interests me here is the trend in the use of straw matting for the same purposes of partitioning off these sites (Figure 36). This causes me to ponder notions of strength and weaknesses, importance and unimportance of the exclusionist strategies and voyeuristic attitudes that operate in the public sphere. I ask myself for instance, what people would want to hide or protect from the public in a public space and with what material would this sort of “hiding” be made more appropriate? What voyeuristic readings could be made from these exclusions and partitionings?

Fabric and fibre have been combined to trigger notions of concealment or containment. Here, one thinks of temporary enclosures that serve as stalls, make-shift restaurants or even the numerous places of worship mushrooming everywhere nowadays. Figure 37 for example, shows a section of a kitchen/pantry in the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. What one might probably ask is why this kind of space rather looks more open than hidden? It is this openness of space that interests me. Suddenly, the usually private pantry space assumes an interestingly public stance, inviting voyeurs to take a sneak peek into the objects, bodies and activities that inhabit it. This subject of containment and concealment, public made private, is not only encountered in my home wandering.

In Alexandria (Egypt) in 2008, whilst on one of the International Women Artists workshop trips, I encountered the rich display of cloth used as screen to prevent the public from interfering with renovation works on the ground floor of a three story building (Figure 38). This compares with the tin roofing sheets or straw matting referred to previously in the case of KNUST’s screening off or partitioning off for construction.



Figure 36. Mat screen for construction site on KNUST campus

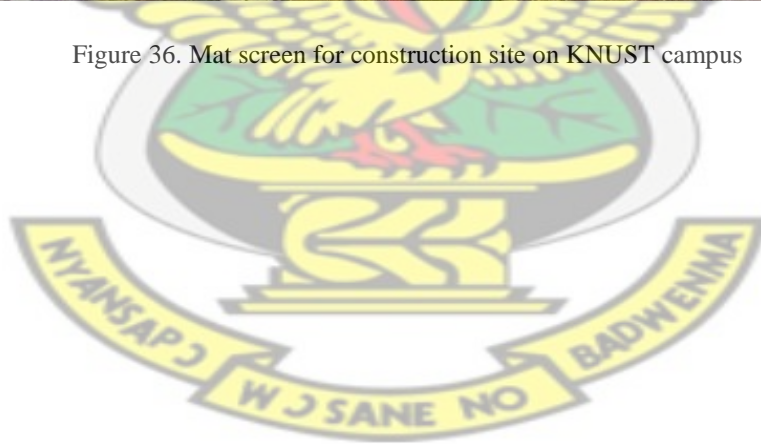




Figure 37. Section of a pantry, UEW, Winneba, Ghana



Figure 38. Cloth (Rug) used as screen in Alexandria (Egypt)



What is of concern to me is the way the concealing of the space takes place, and how this is related to the other forms of concealment discussed earlier in terms of material, intention and their reading. Even though the gaps or spaces in-between are not a deliberate action in the case of the fabric 'screening off' in Alexandria, it offers the viewer a glimpse of the very thing being concealed, drawing attention to the diverse ways of seeing, looking or gazing, such as those referred to by Laura Mulvey when she discussed film spectatorship.

Mulvey distinguishes between two modes of looking (for the film spectator); voyeuristic and fetishistic, the former involving a "controlling gaze associated with sadism in which 'pleasure lies in asserting guilt' and the latter involving the "substitution of a fetish object or turning a represented Figure itself into fetish so that it becomes reassuring rather than dangerous" (Mulvey in Chandler 1998). Although Mulvey refers to 'looking' in film, such tendencies are noticed generally in our societies. There are so many instances in the public sphere where there is the pretense of not looking but yet much looking and vice versa. Looking according to Chandler is socially regulated. "There are social codes of looking", he asserts, "including taboos on certain kinds of looking" (p.1). Depending on the particular cultural set up, a kind of looking is given varied meaning. Looking could thus be instructive reflecting on what codes there are in that cultural set up. At one point, looking directly is polite and in another instance, impolite.

Similarly, the duration of the gaze according to Chandler, is culturally variable. Whiles too little gaze may be seen as insincere, dishonest or impolite in one cultural setting, too much gaze ('staring') may be seen as threatening, disrespectful and insulting (Chandler, 1998). Within the bounds of cultural conventions, people may be 'looking'

differently. There is however the choice of the individual still looking depending on what he wants to look at but which could be controlled by the social codes. This issue of looking and with diverse interpretations is what is implicit in this current endeavour of the issue of the self, giving meaning to art and which can be explained as a spatial concept. *Fabric as Spatial Metaphor* thus articulates this spatial concept through diverse fabrics and fibres as “seen” in the next chapter.

KNUST



CHAPTER 4

Fabric as Spatial Metaphor: An Unveiling

This present enquiry is a subjective exploration into spatiality as a political and artistic concept through the manipulation of fibre and fabrics as form and content. The study induces a notion of space not necessarily residing in a named place and its designated identity but (as reiterated by Lefebvre and Rogoff) spatiality produced through subjectivization. By subjectivization, I mean the understanding of the self as being involved with what is outside of it. Spatial themes such as territoriality and specificity which in turn imply human subject's engagement with boundaries, borders and even notions of freedom and restriction, are artistically interrogated. Since space is essential to the project, such concepts as horizontality/rhizomatics and verticality/arborescence become covert influences in my artistic considerations.

My employment of fibre and fabrics also connote ideas of flexibility, fluidity and multiplicities in engagement with fixity, solidity and stability. This manoeuvre notions of human subjectivity held as fixed, stable and immutable. In the end, my dreams, emotions and thoughts eventually become transformed through the sculptural idiom, to relate a personal narrative, wrought by nostalgia, loss and an optimistic yearning toward a more expanded space of possibility. The 'objects' and 'environments' that manifest, I call "Spatial constellations." These constellations may be mediated or otherwise, but a richer reading is given them, when they are encountered by people. Here, mediation is not located only in the singularity of the maker (artist) but dispersed among a broader

social fabric. Meaning thus manifests as a consequence of analysis and critical interpretation.

In practice based research, evidence of work process is necessary to ascertain the validity of the research. According to Nimkultrat, “when the artistic process is performed, it needs to be presented as evidence for practice-based research. To transform an interactive process into evidence, it needs to be represented in textual and visual form” (2007, p.2). In this light, pictures of the various studio works, investigating spatial subjectivity have been included in the text. Taking a phenomenological and hermeneutic stance, this space discusses works produced, emphasizing “that art works do not merely re-interpret and re-present subject-matters but extend and alter their being” (Heywood and Sandywell, 2005, p.4).

Rhizomes and multiple models

Adopting Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of rhizomes, the enquiry follows a heterogeneous model which has to do with an endless expansion in a number of directions without necessarily having a center (Mansfield, 2000, p.143). With the rhizomatic model, multiplicity becomes part of the nature of the work, with a number of directions at the same time. This spatial enquiry thus finds fabric responding in diverse ways to manipulations, consequently feeding on “practice” as well as the practitioner’s reflections, such that, the art production and the reflective parts stimulate each other. My engagement with artistic materials thus intermingles with my subjectivity to create a total experience which I describe as an unveiling.

Notions of subjectivity, territoriality, boundaries and borders, freedom and restriction and their emotional registers were explored through fabric and fibre

manipulation. In these concepts, domain, containment, connectivity, flexibility, solidity, singularity and multiplicity among others are explored. These have been variously experimented and explored with materials, techniques and related reflections. Processes involving cutting, joining, weaving, knotting and tying to among others, were employed to achieve these spatial concepts.

One might ask, what informs the various experimentations and explorations? Spatiality in terms of psychic subjectivity drives the exploration. Life's responsibilities and connectedness come with certain observations and experiences which seem rather ordinary but into which much reading is done. As Ursula McCarty relays in her MFA thesis, "our lives are a succession of connected experiences with the past affecting the present and the future" (1992, p. 22). Everyday life brings many instances of inspiration; motherly chores in the kitchen, for instance, could be transformed into epiphanies of insight. For example, it is midday or late afternoon and a mother rushes off into the kitchen to prepare lunch or dinner contemplating what is available and how best it could be put together for the good of the family. While these contemplation and preparations are ongoing, deep thinking and observations accompany them. One's everyday experiences one way or the other thus inform his or her practices. One such experience is an observation in my kitchen on my chopping board. A piece of tripe or offal (cow intestine) is cut and the structure of the 'inside' is rather intriguing (Figure 39). This piece of meat is meant to be cleaned for consumption and not necessarily meant to be studied, but this is what happens to an artist. The structure of the 'inside' reveals a used soft accommodating 'bed' with undulating lines, which could also be repelling at the same time. What is fascinating about this piece is its ambiguous nature; its ability to create multiple sensation and strange polarities at the same time. This experience



Figure 39. Cut (offal) intestine, photograph by Dorothy Amenuke, 2009



reminds me of and took me to my fabric dyeing processes where one of the techniques involve pinching and drawing wet fabric together before dyeing is done. This is sometimes called marbling. I therefore set out again to do some dyeing, this time not with the intention of making a wearable fabric, but to do a comparison with what I observed in my kitchen.

Varied coloured cotton fabrics are dampened and put through the pinching and drawing processes to create textured pieces (Figures 40 and 41). This draws my attention to Colette's *Wall Panel* (1978) and *One View of Beautiful Dreamer: Bed II* (1980) (Figures 42, 43), which are fabric architectural works that Constantine and Reuter said expressed extensions of the artist's private life (1997, p.161).

Various questions arise such as how communications arise in the artistic process of manipulating fibres and fabrics. Different fibre properties, their presentations and what they could be communicating are examined as the research proceeds. Fibres come in various form; filaments, yarns, cloth, and to any individual, they may be communicating diversely.

To Abakanowicz, says Constantine and Reuter (1997), "fiber is the basic element constructing the organic world on our planet, the greatest mystery of our environment... Handling fibre, we handle mystery" (p.116). Still deliberating on the extents of fibre, Abakanowicz wonders;

what is fabric? We weave it, sew it, we shape it into forms. When the biology of our body breaks down, the skin has to be cut so as to give access to the inside. Later it has to be sewn, like fabric. Fabric is our covering and attire. Made with our hands, it is a record of our souls. (Constantine and Reuter 1997, p.116)

In this research, the communicative potentials of fibres are explored by manipulating varied fibres including Paper, jute, fabric and strings through various processes. The nature of material determines/informs how it is worked. It thus shows the space and for that matter the territory that it occupies.

On the Strength and Fragility of Materials

In territoriality, strength, weakness and fragility are key factors. Who occupies what space? The 'subject' in various capacities is thought of. The imaging of the self, which could come about through displacement, substitution or projection is deliberated. Thinking of a breaking down of the self and rebuilding it into a new structure, I consider paper. In this case I see paper weak in certain cases and strong in others. It could be manipulated through various processes to give different presentations. The immediacy of manipulation of matter and the intimacy that is experienced becomes primary. Discarded papers are thus collected, torn into pieces, soaked in water for some days and blended. Blending is done with lots of water and straining and squeezing takes place to remove excess water. The mass is mixed with PVA glue for papier-mâché. It is then made into open containers which are to be used variedly in the research/project (Figure 44).

While these processes are ongoing, I reflect on the ability and capacity of maintaining one's position or acquiring a higher desired position. Physical outlooks, perceptions, appearances might need to change to make room for promotions, or maintaining positions. The papers which formerly carried vital information at a particular time past are no longer of use and would have to change their form to be of essence in a different context.



Figure 40. Dorothy Amenuke, untitled, coloured cotton fabric 'marbled', 2009



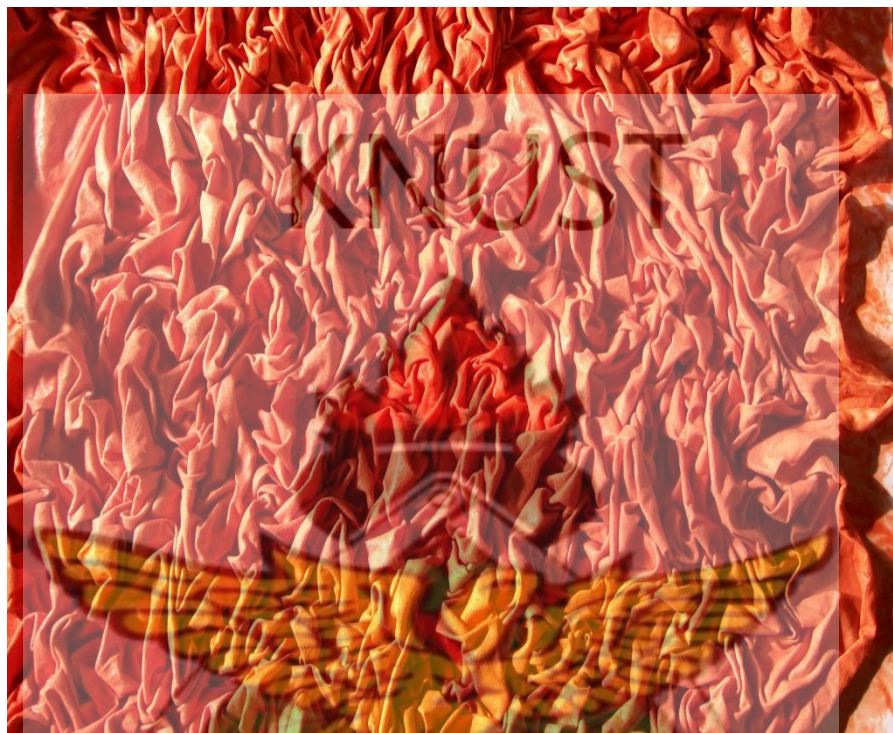


Figure 41. Dorothy Amenuke, untitled, 2009 coloured cotton fabric 'marbled',

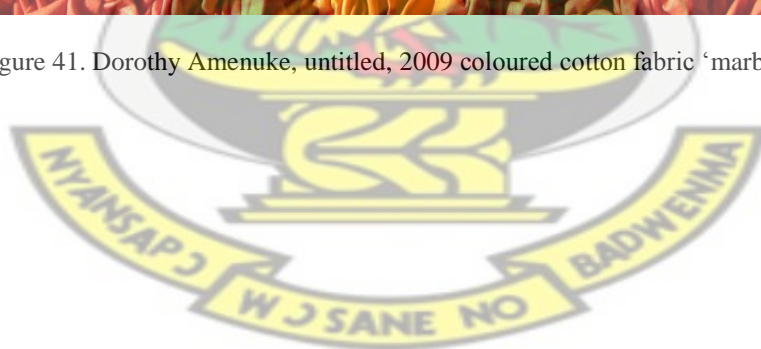




Figure 42. Colette, *Wall Panel*, (1978). Fabric painting of dyed black satin.

source : Constantine and Reuter (1997, p. 74)



Figure 43. Colette, *One View of Beautiful Dreamer: Bed II*, (1980)

Source: Constantine and Reuter (1997, p. 162)

By my singular act of immersing the papers into water, my subjectivity imposes a new identity upon them. The containers created become the abode in the work: *In The Nest 1 and 2* (Figures 49, 50, 51, 52) in the exhibition/constellation *Fluid Flow Through Woven Screens*. These containers, due to the process of creation, have become tough, presenting an allusion to secure accommodation. But just as some houses may be covered so that the building block or material may not be seen readily, in *In The Nest* works (Figures 50, 51, 52), one might not see the ‘building blocks’ because it was covered to only present the comfortability or accommodation. What then is the accommodative component apart from the structural strength? This takes the project to another communicative level of ‘fabric’; that of the soft covering.

These soft coverings (or downy paddings, depending on the contexts in which they are presented) come in the forms of floor or hanged pieces. They are made with fabric on jute and have featured severally in my oeuvre. They have been carried on from my MFA project *Variations on Devotion*, in which they featured as *Modzi in Viviti kekeli* (Figure 45) and *Ara kale vivie menyawɔna o* (Figure 46) and their variations. The technique used in making the pieces in my MFA work was employed here too. Jute sack is cut open and cleaned (since it previously housed cocoa and then maize). With the help of an assistant, about 20cm long strips of orange and brown cotton polyester fabrics are pushed through the jute fabric and tied on the front side forming short dashes of about 2.5cm intervals at the back (Figures 47, 48). In doing this, I try to maintain a balance between control and spontaneity because I really do not pull a tape to measure each length and interval.

This is especially important, in order to capture the duality of the contrast of the grid-like structure organized thought a laborious process and the joyous experience of

randomness that is involved in life's experiences and my work processes. The process, rather slow and time consuming, is reflective. Several of these multipurpose pieces have, featured in many of my works such as *Palace* (figure 49), *Security 1 and 2*, *Transparency*, and *In The Nest 1 and 2* (Figures 50, 51, 53, 54,).

In many cultures, floor pieces have featured with several denotations and connotations. Fabric floor pieces have served as cleaning objects for the feet at the entrances of rooms, at bed sides and at the foot of beds to name a few. Symbolically and philosophically, they have connoted varied forms of carpets which, as with Foucault's concept of 'heterotopology,' represent gardens in certain instances.

In Foucault's heterotopology, the garden, in the *Order of the Things*, has been used to exemplify his notion of 'convenientia' which 'refers to adjacency of dissimilar things, so that they assume similarities by default through their spatial juxtaposition' (Porphyrios, 1978 in Velibeyoglu 1999). Foucault in his third principle of heterotopology sees 'heterotopia' as being capable of juxtaposing in a single real place, several spaces, several sites that are in themselves incompatible' (Foucault, 1967). Here, he sees carpets basically as somehow mimetic of gardens. He asserts:

As for carpets, they were originally reproductions of gardens (the garden is a rug onto which the whole world comes to enact its symbolic perfection, and the rug is a sort of garden that can move across space). The garden is the smallest parcel of the world and then it is the totality of the world. The garden has been a sort of happy, universalizing heterotopia since the beginnings of antiquity (our modern zoological gardens spring from that source) (p.5).



Figure 44. Processing discarded paper for papier marché and container preparation.



Figure 45. Dorothy Amenuke, *Viviti kekeli*, 2006, from *Variations of Devotion*,





Figure 46. Dorothy Amenuke, *Ava kale vivie menyawna o*, 2006,
from *Variations of Devotion*,

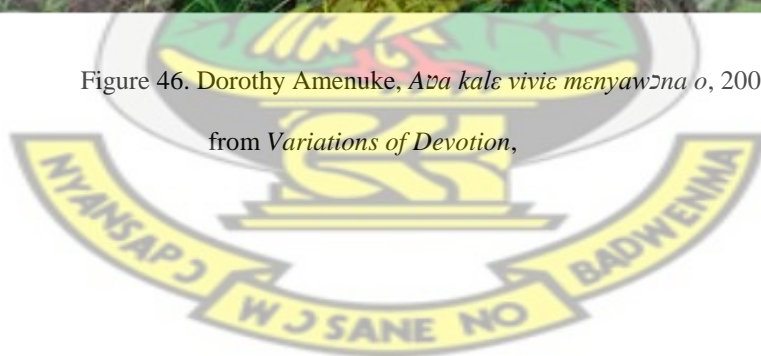




Figure 47. Multipurpose fabric piece creation (front side), polyester cotton fabric pieces, jute fabric.



Figure 48. Multipurpose fabric piece creation, (reverse side, forming short dashes)

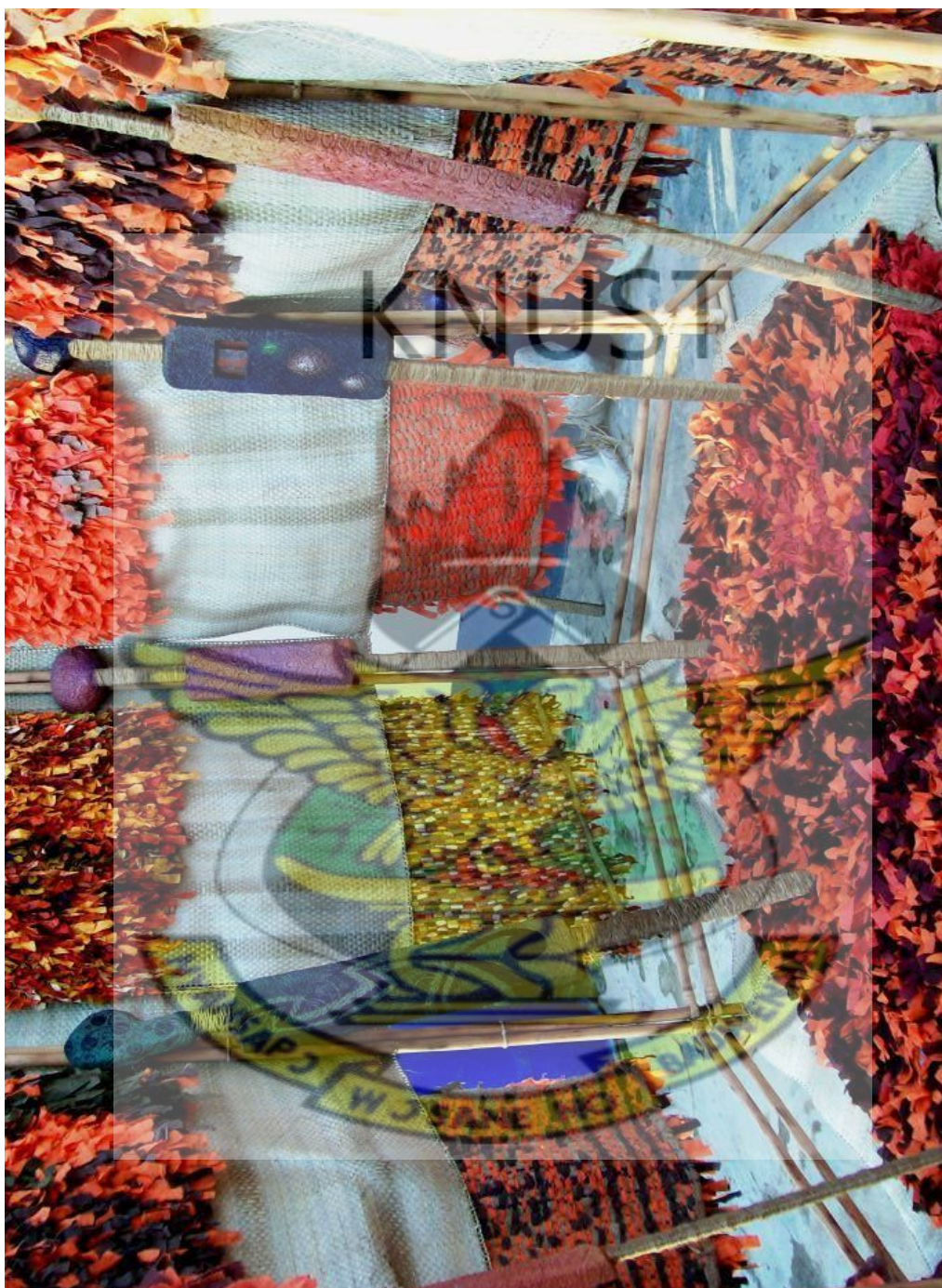


Figure 49. Dorothy Amenuke, Palace, 2009, fabric, rattan, woven pandanus, papier maché, jute.

This idea of juxtaposition and adjacency of dissimilarity and garden and carpet is eminent in my enquiry and seems to agree with Rogoff's active process of spatialization replacing a static notion of named space.

The Floor pieces (if we are to call them so) in this project may thus not necessarily be gardens or even floor pieces, but have worked as abodes, and at the same time projecting the notion of rest and comfortability. This also agrees with Lefebvre's concept of spatialization which emphasizes 'social space' as space shifting from 'material activity or manifestation to space which is produced by subjectivities and psychic states' (Rogoff, 2000, pg. 23). In *In The Nest 1 and 2* (figures 50, 51i, ii) in the exhibition *Fluid Flow Through Woven Screens* (2009), these floor pieces are either paddings in the a container or floor, providing a 'cozy' space or a wall piece which extends to the floor of the center of the exhibition space.

Fabric in its various presentations has been used as a tool for dissemination of information. It has been used symbolically to connote different aspects of social life such as relationships and connectivity as related by Trouton (2007). She pointed in her work: *The Plea for Peace and Interconnection through Public Textile Projects*, that, works in fabric have been used as a vehicle by which international and local groups, sometimes led by female artists or crafts workers, have publicly pleaded for human rights and security. She asserts that:

Women have felt comfortable with the intimacy-secrecy whereby needlework processes and techniques can convey encoded political statement, communicating controversial ideas specific and dear to them, which could be seen as radical or divisive in the greater public arena.(2007, p. 2)



Figure 50. Dorothy Amenuke, *In The Nest I*, (2009), fabric, papier mache



Figure 51. Dorothy Amenuke, *In The Nest 2a*, (2009), fabric, jute cords, papier mache.

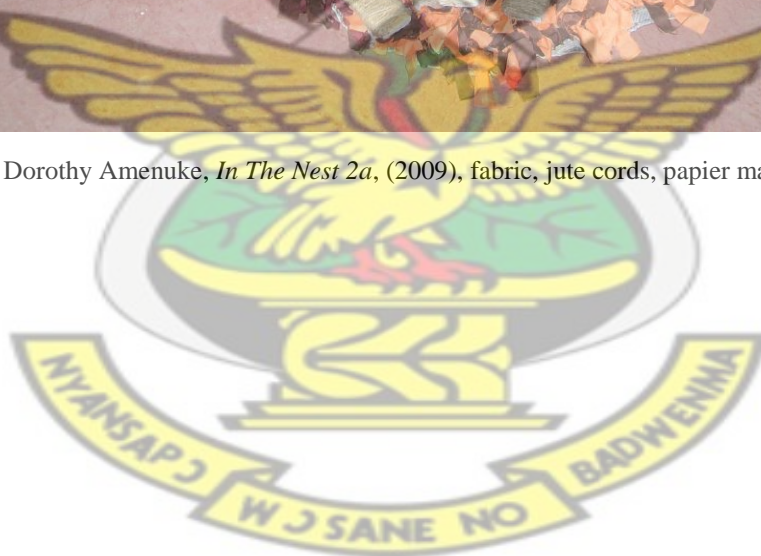




Figure 52. Installation View of *Fluid Flow through Woven Screens* (2009), showing *In The Nest2b*



Figure 53. Detail of *In The Nest 2b*,

Fabric, taking various forms has continued to be a means by which individuals and communities address personal and social issues.

Fabric as Sites of Might and Contestation

In many cultures, the body's apparel which is often made up of fabrics has the capability of transmitting notions of character, contestation and might. An innocent act of selecting garments, could transform into a strong declaration of individuality, articulating sublime defiance, or overt rebellion. Here, I consider for instance, Mahatma Gandhi's insistence on wearing traditional Indian cotton swathes in consolidation with the Indian masses on an official trip to England in the early 20th century, coupled with his 'gift' of a 'handcrafted' cotton doily to the Queen of England. These acts may be read as symbols of India's ability to self reliance. It is worth noting that Gandhi did this during the heated era of colonial India's struggle towards independence.

Carol Henderson (1990), reviewing Annete B. Weiner and Jane Schneider (1989) agrees that 'All cultures do indeed invest cloth with symbolic values. The cloth one wears is a symbolic presentation of self: sex, age, marital status, class, political affiliation' (p.2). Henderson, in analyzing the symbolism of such ideas as the circulation of banana leaf bundles and pandanus fiber mats between kin groups in the Trobriand Islands and Samoa as represented by Weiner, as a solution to the existential puzzle of "giving while keeping", affirms this idea of symbolism. Other ideas such as the "blueness" involved in Sumbanese ikat warp dyeing, symbolizing the life-cycle changes through which a woman passes and the reproductive power of women, Feeley- Harnik's, writing on an ancestral cult in Madagascar in which symbolic connections, linking cloth,

society, and funerary ritual are outlined, all exemplify the extent of fabrics' relationship with the social.

She argues however that, with the advent of industrialization and merchandizing having transformed ecological, economic, and political relationships in a community, the meaning of cloth is transformed as production becomes divorced from consumption and new economic and political pressures arise. 'Symbols associated with cloth thus need not passively mirror societal integration. Cloth may provide a focus for the expression of conflict or reflect commentary on current affairs' (pg. 1588), she says.

That fabric may be imbued with political, social and ritual powers, informs the creation of the work *Weaving the Woven* (figure 52). Cloths and dresses, donated by members of my family, are undone and cut into strips. They are then rearranged on a wide table and rewoven using, initially plane and later twill weave, intentionally leaving gaps in-between weaves, imitating *Kilim* or slit weaves which leave holes in the fabric but still keeping it strong. The weaving is done by fastening warp strips to the table and manually weaving the weft through them. They are held in position with back stitches at the various intersections. A flexible, interspaced piece of cloth which by definition could be said to be laced is the result. What is fascinating about this whole idea and process is; why reweave cloth? Why the type of weaves? Why take clothes from members of the family and reweave them into a screen? The idea of re-weaving informs the interlacing of ideas, people, places, spaces and construction. Spatiality as seen earlier has to do with displacement, substitution and interconnection. It involves the subject who is not isolated but connected to that which is outside of it. Textile processes and for that matter 'Weaving' and its many relations have been used as metaphors for creation to articulate different spaces; many aspects of social life.



Figure 54. Dorothy Amenuke, *Weaving the Woven*, (2009), fabric strips, rattan structure.



The concept of weaving has been used as an analogy to describe various systems in our world. It describes how different aspects of society (races, religions, beliefs and values) all co-exist. It has been used to describe the different articulations and spaces of architectural and social spaces with the different types of weaves denoting and signifying varied interpretations of the architectural space for example. Rosario Caballero expounds this when she wrote that:

“The metaphorical schemas and language that portray architectural practice as a manipulation of physical matter may be further grouped into three distinct sets in compliance with how concrete or abstract the sources involved are. The metaphors are described under the headings of textile metaphors, malleability metaphors and experiment metaphors.” (2006. p.91)

In explaining how space could be metaphorically viewed as concrete, physical matter, by drawing on textile and cloth making, she gives such examples as:

the architect’s interpretation of the spirit of the place is restrained and lyrical, *and the delicacy with which he has stitched the new to the old* recalls Foster’s work at...’ and also ‘the architect cut a whole measuring 80 feet wide by 100 feet high by 71 feet long from the building’s center, *floated a concrete box inside it and wove the building back through it*’. (p.99)

‘Weaving’ has thus been used to create divers forms of interconnectedness, linking concrete and physical entities with their corresponding abstract ideas.

According to Merrill (2007),

The art of weaving is a profound metaphor for understanding the workings of the universe and our place in it. Through the physical process of weaving, we gain a

better understanding of this world and how we as human beings are woven into it (p.1).

Weaving the woven for me relates the divers ‘others’ that contribute to the constitution of the subject. Within this space are the various possible connectivities that get involved with the structural system of the inside and outside. But how does this ‘rebuilding’ come about?

KNUST

Recycling and Reuse: a legacy of sustainability?

Recycling and reuse is a phenomenon that has been with the Ghanaian. It is experienced in almost every aspect of the lives of the people; from the food, to what is worn and to the provision of shelter. Leftover food for instance is reheated and eaten, used clothes are sold in ‘bend down boutiques’ in the various market places to provide clothes for some people. Various types of spaces are appropriated for accommodation for various purposes. This is probably why El Anatsui would conveniently use bottle tops from used liquor bottles for his various metal cloths and for his statements on encounters between Europe and the Africa and alcoholism, which has left behind several legacies.

In the case of *Weaving the Woven* however, it is about the building of an inner self portrait and how family (both nuclear and extended) and community could be influenced and affected by the fabric of one’s life. This holds for many individuals. And as the old adage goes, ‘no man is an island, complete in himself’, others have helped weave an individual’s life’s spaces through simple and complex means. In the creation of this piece, space is active; moving fabric from one domain to another, the idea and use of fabric from one point to another; one subjective point to another, thus radicalizing

named or emplaced location and the dimension of subjectivity. Spatial concepts of displacement, substitution and connection become the active components of this 'becoming' in this situation. Weaving as a process could thus be said to lead to these 'becomings', which also inform other works in this enquiry.

The concept of weaving and its processes and connotations are also involved with the works, *security 1* and 2 (figures 53, 54). The notion of spatiality with its attendant boundaries and borders informed the making of these works. Borders according to Rogoff, have been seen in terms of "either a mode of containment or a final barrier leading up to an ultimate liberation and freedom" (2000, p. 112) but which also have a concurrent notion of division. Within these borders are barriers which prevent but also allow. In *security 2*, amorphous rattan cane structures are made. Jute cords and dried leaves of '*Washiontonia Robusta*' plant are strung and sewn respectively to these structures. In *security 1*, coloured jute cords are strung on the cane skeletal structure to give a look of a type of basket/trap used for fishing in shallow waters in some parts of Ghana. With this type of fish trap the whole basket is enclosed leaving a trap-entrance of no return. Reflecting on this type of entrapment, thoughts of different types of enslavement came to mind. What type of societal progression, retrogression or stagnation is experienced one time or the other? And what forms of intervention are used to counteract these? Are we able to sustain the interventions?

In *security 2*, the cane structures were covered by hanging the jute cords and sewing the dried *Washiontonia Robusta* leaves, at various parts of the structure. In this case there is no 'door of no return' but instead, hangings are made flexible, allowing easy dangling, back and forth movement although initial appearance gives an impression of full covering in certain areas. *Security 1* and 2 connote the various restrictions and



Figure 55. Dorothy Amenuke, *Security 1*, (2009), jute cords, rattan, fabric



Figure 56. Dorothy Amenuke, *Security 2*, (2009), rattan, jute cords, dried Washiontonia Robusta leaves

boundary breakages that inhabit subjectivity, and the way the variously re-territorialized notions of the subject get de-territorialized. Rogoff affirms this thus:

We find many instances in contemporary literature and in visual culture where the border is represented as a zone of danger in which norms get undone, temptations rear their head, transgressions take place and solid, reliable identity gets undone. (2000, p. 112).

Boundaries and borders are often made up of imaginary lines of division. They do not only denote geographical accentuations, but connote psychically internal concepts of boundaries and repressions which are as a result of the re-territorialized cultural constructions which needed to be crossed or breached from time to time.

These connotations of boundaries and borders are also exhibited in the installation *Transparency* (figure 55) in which fishing net is used to produce a wedding dress, within which are black and white visible 'hangings'. This dress with its long trail is installed in a see-through screen made up of a collapsible cane structure, covered with the same type of fishing net used for the dress. Within this 'open' enclosure, are black and white floor pieces. The fishing net connotes entrapment just as the fishing basket discussed earlier. The difference however is in the type of waters they are used in. While the basket is used in shallow waters as stated earlier, the net is usually used in deep waters. What does this connote? Could it be that the context in which the fishing net is used here is entrenched in a deeper meaning than just a dress and net? Why would a wedding dress be fashioned out of fishing net, and installed within a see-through net enclosure? Clothing has been used by many artists to examine discussions on spatial subjectivities, and on such issues as corporeality, gender and identity politics.



Figure 57. Dorothy Amenuke, *Transparency*, (2009), fishing net, fabric, rattan

Erica Spitzer Rasmussen for example, being inspired by childhood myths and adult anxieties regarding her body (she recounts), references and creates sculptures which are in several instances, clothes, (as in *Juju Dress*, *A Coat for Two Occasions* and *Intimacy of Memory* (figures 58,59,60), to tell her stories. She says in her artist's statement that:

I use clothing as a subject matter because it allows me a ground on which to investigate identity and corporeality. My garments are metaphors. They can encompass narrative qualities, illustrate and dissolve bodily fears, or act as talismanic devices: to protect myself from physical injury or psychological harm (2008).

Many other artists have also used different materials to create clothing in varied contexts as metaphors and metonyms. Artists such as Jane Sterbak, used flank steak (figure 59), Do-ho suh used stainless steel military dog tags (figure 60) and Jan Fabre used beetles (figure 61) to create clothing in the context of art. They have variously expressed their emotions through these media. A banal material or object which may have a designated property and 'destination' is presented and viewed in a different context, telling a different story other than its designation. This reaffirms the thesis of active space replacing a static notion of named space, and also spatiality being a product of subjectivities and psychic states.

In a personal conversation with Rasmussen in 2008, she revealed that, *Juju dress* was created for instance, within a period that she had to seek medical attention. She created this work believing that objects could be imbued with healing powers. She requested to wear it whenever she had to undergo examination by the doctor, to literally 'dissolve' her fears.

Of Spaces Hidden and Subjectivities Revealed

Clothes have been used by many artists to express their subjective spaces. This similarly happens in *Transparency* where the ‘unseen realities’ related to marriage are implied in the black and white dangling cords and made visible in an installation with what looks like a wedding gown. In a related instance, the ‘strength’ of women is contemplated in the work: *Warrior* (figure 62) which was created in 2008. Connotations of deep reflections of such psychic states as desire, worry, fear, anxiety, solitude, strength and weakness could be read from these works. On the other hand, the aura around the work communicates bliss, thoughtfulness and the type of quiet that could be experienced in a serene space. Ironically, however, weightlessness is one characteristic that is evoked when the work is being shaped. The ideas of marriage, commitment and responsibility which are all heavily loaded, being depicted in a light-weight medium could be said to be paradoxical in the case of *Transparency*. While contemplating the weight of the idea and the power of the medium, the fishing net is exposed to the toss of the wind which makes manifest its weightlessness (figures 63, 64, 65). While contemplating the weightiness or weightlessness of marriage experience and other such commitments, veiling presents a situation for contemplation. In a conventional wedding ceremony, a bride may wear a mesh veil which is supposed to cover her face from the groom until the vows are said after which he removes it to reveal the identity of the bride behind it. It is possible to read in this act of veiling, connotations of concealment and probably deceit. But one wonders how well or to what extent the nets used for the veiling in a wedding ceremony really conceal, and what the need is, for the concealment. Is it that there is a ‘forewarning’ to what is to come or what is to be expected? Does this veiling connote a reading of what is?

In *Transparency* the dialectics of revelation and concealment are embodied in the material considerations, the objects created and the contexts in which they are installed. The content of the 'inside' of the wearer of the wedding dress is revealed in black and white, denoting the 'hidden' insecurities and probabilities within the subject. The 'encasement' provided by the open screen also reveals its content, the wedding dress and the wearer within a created/built space.

The creation of the installation *Transparency* thus calls for a reconsideration of not only the 'veil,' but also the entire concept of concealment that marriage is often enshrouded in. The veil is looked at in two ways; as covering for the face and also as a trail, the veil with nothing beneath it, and the veil with black and white patches within it (figures 66, 67). This idea of veiling connotes the different possibilities of masking.

Masking could just be a superficial covering without any deep reading and so would suggest opacity. Nothing shows through. Yet masking could also permit transparency, showing clearly what is underneath and yet cannot be 'reached' directly. This raises connotations of voyeurism; the 'stolen' gaze with which certain situations and entities are often looked at.

In another context, the 'dress' is examined without the screen but rather on a dark background which made it more explicit (Figure 68). These extended examinations are to emphasize further readings of the work. The net wedding dress does not only feature in *Transparency*, but due to the multidimensional and active nature of the enquiry, ideas and media find themselves transposing from one point to the other.



Figure 58. Erica Spitzer Rasmussen *juju dress*, 2003, handmade paper, acrylics, gold leaf, watermelon seeds.

Source: Open Studio information card, November 2004



Figure 59. Erica Spitzer Rasmussen, *Intimacy of Memory*, 2003, cotton, jute, dehydrated cherry tomatoes, acrylics, shellac, camel and human hair.

Source: Exhibition information card (*Second Skins*) 2003



Figure 60. Erica Spitzer Rasmussen, *A Coat for Two Occasions*, 2001,
mixed media with joss paper,

Source: Exhibition information card (*Seamless: An Exhibition of paper Garment*) 2001





Figure 61. Jane Sterbak, *Vanitas: Flesh dress for an Albino Anorectic*, 1987. flank steak, salt, thread

Source: Collins 2007, p. 309



Figure 62. Do-ho Suh , *Some/One*, 2001, stainless steel military dog tags,

Source: Collins 2007, p.305



Figure 63. Jan Fabre, *Wall of the Ascending Angels*, 1993, beetles on iron wire.

Source: Collins 2007, p. 313



Figure 64. Dorothy Amenuke, *Warrior*, 2008, silk, and cotton fabrics, trimmings,



Figure 65. Fishing net exposed to the toss of the wind which made manifest its weightlessness

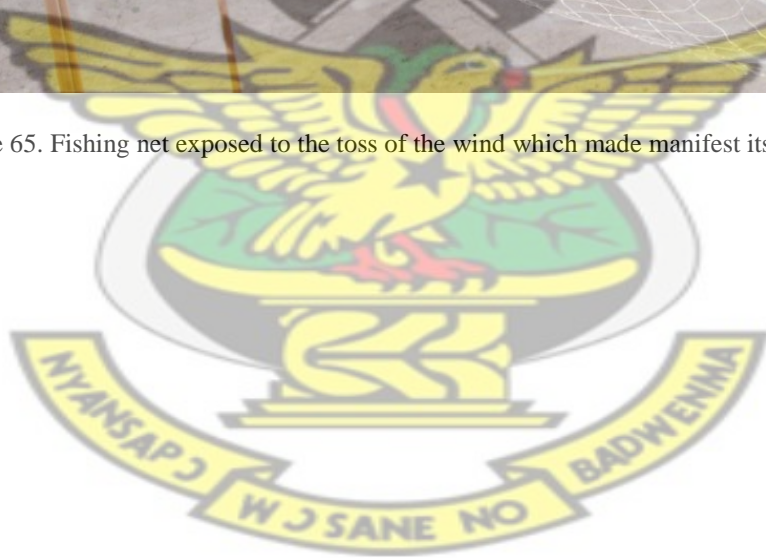




Figure 66. Fishing net exposed to the toss of the wind which made manifest its weightlessness



Figures 67. Fishing net exposed to the toss of the wind which made manifest its weightlessness



Figure 68. Veil without patches within it.



Figure 69. Veil with patches within it.



Figure 70. Fishing net wedding dress against dark background

Kindred Spirits: Inspiration from Sirigu

With *Inside Out* (Figure 71), another installation which uses the fishing net wedding dress, 50 yards of white soft sagging fabric are used to create spaces/abodes within which the wedding dress and other works are installed. This work seeks to question the strength and powerfulness/powerlessness of the wearer of the wedding dress. The skills of the Sirigu women of Upper Eastern Ghana, who decorate their houses, inspired this work. What was especially considered was the colour scheme that they usually employ. Accounts related by these women 'painters' show that, they come together in groups, sometimes build the houses and then decorate them or in cases where the houses were built by the men, they embellish them (Figures 72, 73), making them habitable for their families. In decorating these houses, the women paint using traditional iconography. They also use particular colours dug and prepared traditionally from earth and cow dung. While these women possess the strength, ability and solidarity to do all these, including taking care of their children, one wonders if they have the same power when it comes to community decision making. These considerations reveal the extent of the strength of the women as significant 'other[s]'. After all, most of the communities in these areas of the country are male dominated when it comes to major decision making. But the women still have their areas of influence.

The strength, energy and communality exhibited by these women when they pursue their architectural endeavour, moves the installation *Inside Out*. Their versatility and their ability to move from one responsibility to the other stimulate the fluidity and flow in the installation. This subject of interdependence and responsibility has been an issue of discussion for many feminists.



Figure 71. Dorothy Amenuke, *Inside Out*, 2009, fabric, fishing net, light



Figure 72. Women preparing surface with cold-tar plaster mixture and smoothing stones

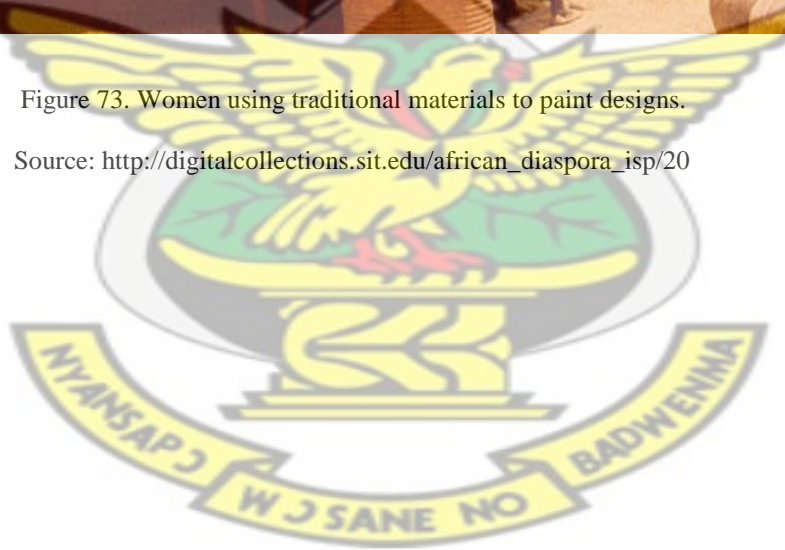
Source: http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/african_diaspora_isp/20





Figure 73. Women using traditional materials to paint designs.

Source: http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/african_diaspora_isp/20



Genevieve Lloyd discussing *The "Situated" Self: Feminist Critique of Individualism*, in Mackenzie and Stoljar (2000), reiterated that:

Themes of connection and interdependence have been strong in feminist ethics, political theory, and epistemology. Many feminist philosophers have emphasized the need for a relational approach to selfhood—the need to highlight the connections between persons rather than what separates them, community rather than individuality, sociability rather than the solitary self. (p.112)

What comes to mind then, as Lloyd also questions, is the thought of “what is involved in relations of interdependence” (p. 113). Conceptualizing space and subjectivity, one would be considering the collective dimension of responsibility which intersects with the collective dimension of the self. This, Lloyd explains could be realized through a look at “the processes through which human beings enter relations of solidarity that challenge oppositions between self and other and thus gaining insight into the different dimensions of the self and the realities of interdependence” (p. 114).

The 50 yards of fabric for the installation is therefore not cut but arranged in a flowing manner in the exhibition space. It is visually ‘strengthened’ by lining the edges with black, red and wine cotton fabric strips (Figure 74) which index the natural colours used by the women of Sirigu for their buildings. The arrangement allows for the creation of space within and without the fabric’s positioning. Within this space, the fishing net wedding dress is installed this time without its black and white content, and not fully upright. Light is thrown on the work allowing it to cast a shadow on the wall. The flimsy looking image emphasizes the other side of the woman as a symbol of potential and strength. The woman has all the strength to build and nurture, but she usually would say so little because of her position in a cultural set up.

Working on this piece involves a look at the self and how the ‘other’ gets involved with her/his being and becoming. But here, who is the ‘Other’? How has one been culturally built to think of her/himself? How are the ‘Other[s]’ within and without that culture been made to think of this ‘self’? How do these external forces influence this ‘self’?

The installation cannot be taken in isolation, but in connection with its immediate surroundings and what could be read from it. The space within which the installation takes place is examined in relation to the work. What things are in common and what are not. Looking directly above the installation reveals a relation of the work with the ceiling of the space. The white dome-like ceiling, supported with strips of metal, give a continuous flow from the installation into its immediate environment (Figure 75), making the surroundings become a part of the work. This emphasizes the connectivity and interdependence within a particular space. Could this be emphasizing the fact that, a work of art does not exist in isolation, but in confluence with its ‘environment’ be it tangible or not? Or that the work would read differently depending on its context of presentation and who is viewing it? Would this not then be confirming Rogoff’s explanation of the extent of spatiality in her statement that ‘the meaning of a named place is never its designated activity or physical properties but their interaction with far less obvious subjectivities...’(2000, p. 23)? This kind of reflexivity and positionality could also be read in the work: *The Seat of Life* (Figure 76).

Life, Creation and Regeneration

The Seat of Life (Figure 76) (which I also call ‘Sweet pain space’) is another work which seeks to investigate the direct flow of energy from life’s source, and it’s possible



Figure 74. Edges of soft fabric lined with black, red and wine cotton fabric strips





Figure 75. Dorothy Amenuke, *Inside Out: installation View*.

adulteration through culturally created subjectivities. It is by extension looking at the natural world of 'existence' and a culturally created one. It is investigating the '*Sweet pain space*' occupied by the woman through her varied responsibilities. Her naturally given responsibilities and culturally created ones construct a kind of ironic space around her. She occupies a space which involves both the tangible and the intangible and so she is said for instance to possess a warm bosom and a big heart which accommodates and comforts. While she is carrying out her responsibilities, there is the flow of life - the flow of blood and life through tears, breast milk, sweat, sighs and even her breath. *The seat of life*, with its meandering movement of lines of cords and flexible tubes, flow as blood and life from dabs of sewn fabric of tears drops, breast and sweat drops, into a natural 'common' recyclable receptacle. This work is an index to continuity, for which the woman also stands. There is an unceasing flow of life, blood and energy, a stop to which could bring an end to a generation's existence.

The Seat of Life, in its warm presentation, brings to life, regeneration, comfort, accommodation and the hustles involved with living and nurturing. This warm space presented in reds and oranges brings to life the discussed dynamism and ambiance related to the said responsibilities and capabilities of the woman. In this work, varied sizes of calabashes (Figure 75) may be a 'Chora', borrowing Plato's term, which he used to explain how the universe was created. This term, meant the original space or receptacle of the universe. The term in Plato's view according to McAfee (2004) is either "amorphous, formless, and completely malleable to whatever fills it" or is "the 'wet-nurse' of becoming". The Chora which Kristeva adopts, to explain the pre -oedipal stage of the child in the discussion of the subject, is a maternal psychic space in which an infant resides and in which it expresses its energy. This space she believed was

“capable of generating (not just receiving) energy...” (McAfee, 2004, p. 20) and which I also adopt to acknowledge both the receptive and generational energy embodied by women. These receptacles (the calabashes) from which and into which life flows become the container and producer.

Creating this work involves cutting red polyester cotton fabric into pieces, stiffening them and sewing them with a hand sewing machine into shapes which looked like cocoons, tear drops and pawpaw shaped empty breasts. Some of the sewn pieces are stuffed with tiny fabric pieces and beads to give them weight and form while some are left empty (Figures 76). There are also plastic tubing and twines made from beaten tree barks which are normally used to tie goats in Ghana. The tubes and calabashes are painted with red acrylic paint. For the calabashes, broken styrofoam is mixed with the paint to give body texture, and content to the smaller calabashes (Figures 77). The tubings and cords are then arranged and sewn with the red sewn fabric shapes and forms onto a ten yard orange polyester cotton fabric (Figure 78). The sewing takes into consideration the meandering nature of blood flow in a living being and so the tubing and the cords are arranged to have a feel of undirected movement. They trace the path of life's force and vitality and so pass through and from the red blobs. After all these are put in place on the ground (Figure 79), the work is installed vertically with the bottom part feeding the calabashes (Figure 80). This work was first exhibited with works of other women artist in 2009 at the Goethe-Institut, Accra. Just as is explained about Inside Out, a work has an influence on the environment and vice versa, it was observed that, the warmth of the work affected its immediate surrounding and the works exhibited in the space, giving them an aura different from that which they would have emitted were they alone.

This de-territorialized reading of works in the exhibition is also experienced with the installation *Dreaming is a Map* (Figure 81) which was part of the exhibition *Migration-Identity* held in 2010 in Accra.

Dreaming is a Map takes a look at and focuses on the complex act of dwelling. It considers maps and mapping as saying as much about the fears, hopes, dreams and prejudices of people as it does about the relationship of places on the surface of the Earth. Rather than emphasize home as a static commodity or social signifier, *Dreaming is a Map* focuses on how we physically, psychologically and metaphorically inhabit spaces.

Of Abodes and Belonging

Often, questions such as ‘Who am I? Where do I belong?’ come up. Such questions refer to varied forms of dislocations which are as a result of diverse forms of displacement. They may be referring to dislocations felt as a result of cultural differences or internal disruption of histories. They may also be referring among others to “the ability to live out complex and reflexive identities which acknowledge language, knowledge, gender and race as modes of self-positioning”(Rogoff 2000, p.14). They may also be referring to the uncertainties that are encountered through life’s journey. What do the players in this displacement encounter? What kind of “feelings at home” do they experience, which has to do with the “consumption” of space; constant movement and its accompanying emotional registers – security, confinement, resignation, intimacy, boredom, contentment, embodied in all kinds of boundaries and borders, freedoms and restrictions?



Figure 76. Dorothy Amenuke. Installation View of *The Seat of Life or the Sweet Pain Space*, 2009, calabashes, fabric, plastic tubes, natural fibre cords.



Figure 77. Varied sizes of calabashes



Figure 78. Stuffed sewn fabric pieces and painted plastic tubing



Figure 79. Broken Styrofoam mixed with paint to give body texture calabashes



Figure 80. Sewing tubings/cords with stuffed pieces onto large orange fabric.

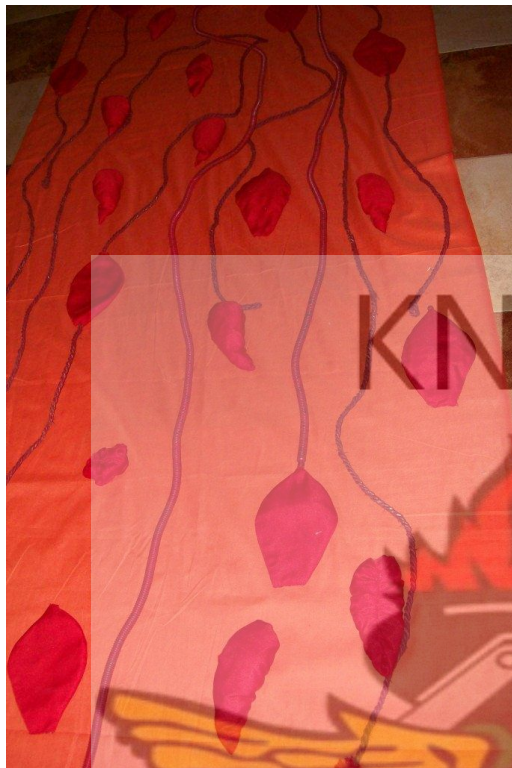


Figure 81



Figure 82

Figure 81. The Seat of Life, (Detail), Arranged and sewn form on the ground:

Figure 82. The Seat of Life, (Detail), Arranged and sewn form, installed vertically

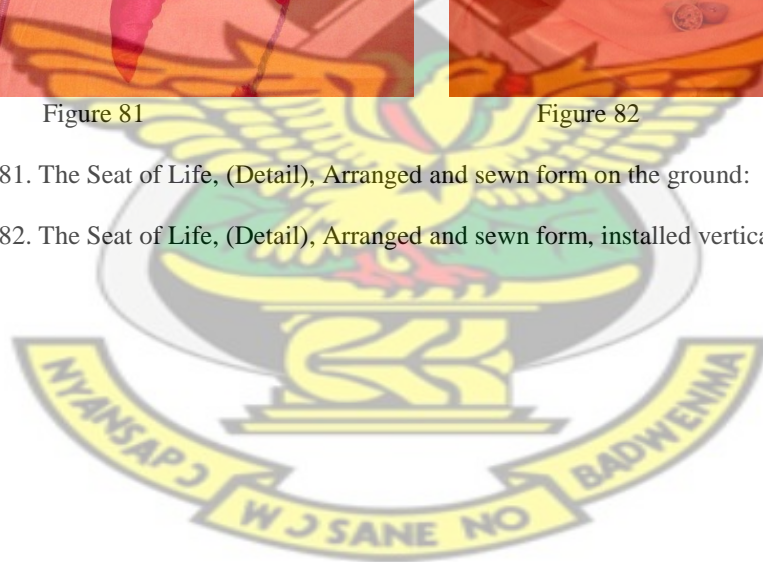




Figure 83. Dorothy Amenuke, *Dreaming is a Map*, 2010, installation view in *Migration Identity*

Making use of different types and sizes of pillows and ropes in undulating lines, *Dreaming is a Map* articulates emotional, psychological and metaphorical journeys that one encounters in life. Pillows have been metaphorically used by many peoples such as

Africans and Chinese to articulate notions of comfort, rest or dreams. They have been used as a form of language to communicate varied intents. For instance when a Ghanaian wants to be given time to think about an issue s/he might say “let me consult my pillow”, or “let us see what the pillow has to say”.

Some artists have created pillows as ways of providing comfort for the unfortunate, for instance people who have lost their breasts or uterus due to one form of ailment or the other (Figure 84). Other artists also create pillows to depict interconnectivity. Green pillow (figure 85), for example, according to Haag (2003) designed for a Chinese Chippendale Chair, represent a marriage of many cultures. He explains that one side of this pillow is bordered with a pattern suggested by a Bokhara rug, while the central part is based on the *Bhupura*, which represents a sacred enclosure with portals in both Hindu and Buddhist symbolism. It is interesting to note however that, not all pillow makers may consider or call themselves artists, or call the pillows they make art. But the fact still remains that at any point in time, a created pillow may be gravitating towards some form or idea of rest.

Making of the pillows in *Dreaming is a Map* started with the musing on the ideas of comfort seeking; the fact that there are many people who probably need only ‘listening ears’ due to one uncomfortable situation or the other. Thoughts of varying degrees of uncomfortable situations from various directions of life and the longing for rest from these states sparked off the making of different types of pillows. Longitudinal and



Figure 84. Venessa Vegter, *Uterus Pillow*, 2009,

Source: <http://streetanatomy.com/2009/11/09/a-cozy-uterus/>





Figure 85. Jan Haag, *Green pillow*, 1977-78, for Chinese Chippendale Chair

Source: <http://janhaag.com/NP03green.html>

rectangular pillows of varying lengths and sizes are created with red polyester cotton fabric and filled with kapok. This is done with the help of two assistants. (figure 86).

Is it possible that life's journey, which is full of uncertainties, could be mapped out onto various directional lines, masking and encoding the real narration of a situation? These pillows thus seem to encase the varied journeys and their consequent connotations. While this musing and building proceeded, various thoughts and ideas in connection with movement became paramount.

Dreaming into a Broader Context

In April 2010, an invitation came for me to participate in the exhibition, *Migration-Identity*, organized by Studio Kurtycz, a private space of creation in Accra (Ghana). This exhibition which was held in December 2010, sought to create an art experience, in which invited artists were to express themselves on unique and universally similar contentions of travel through time. Participating artists, both local and foreign, expressed themselves variedly. While some were looking at issues concerning travel from conception through birth, maturing and to death, others were looking at issues of identity through self-imaging in passport photographs. Still, others were looking at what people have to go through acquiring visas to travel outside their home countries. The feelings of frustration and rejection that sometimes accompany visa acquisition; long queues, that people have to join, for example and for which there is even no guarantee that the visa would be issued. This is often to be witnessed at any foreign embassy in Accra. This is what Anna Kurtycz, in her *Going Abroad* series (figures 85), a kind of banner made up of reverse portraits of various people and featured in the Migration Identity exhibition portrays. By choosing to photograph the backs of

the heads of some of the people who were standing in long visa queues at the consular section of the Netherlands Embassy, Kurtycz makes her commentary on the visa acquisition process and the type of anonymity that this subjects onto applicants. For her, people who seek to relocate or travel abroad may be leaving behind a past and this past may literally reside behind them. In her artist statement, she suggests that those who stay behind when she travels abroad will remember her in a way she might not see herself. She is carrying all their memories at the back of her mind.

These various aspects of spatiality being tackled through the individual artists' subjectivities obtain through their various experiences and are in confluence with the idea of spatial consumption per Yi Fu Tuan, which focuses on the "experiential properties of space" and seeing space as "created and maintained through the 'fields of care' that result from people's emotional attachment". (Atkinson et al, 2005, p. 42).

For the *Migration-Identity* exhibition, *Dreaming is Map* featured as an installation, where the pillows were mounted as a cluster in the case of the rectangular ones and the longitudinal ones hung from above in serpentine modes. These pillows, have surrounding them, on fabric walls, meandering paths formed out of different sizes of ropes. These paths move cartographically, complimenting the serpentine movement of the longitudinal pillows. Viewing this installation and interacting with the space, from 'without' creates diverse kicks. Whilst some visitors to the installation are thrilled by the ambiance of the space, others seem to be flowing with the movement within the space. Yet others still sit musing about the conceptual; the diverse physical and conceptual spaces there are and how they are inhabited, diverse forms of abodes, migrations, sojourns, and the varied narrative structures that could be symbolically read and spatially mapped.

This chapter has been one of a rhizome growing from various points of one root, discussing at length the practical and conceptual mission of my endeavour. It has grown out of my musings in relation to their philosophical and conceptual stances. Since much discussion has taken place, the next chapter briefly assesses the overall enterprise of *Fabric as Spatial Metaphor*, and gravitates towards a final space of conclusion in “*Wrapping Up?*”

KNUST





Figure 86. Two assistants help with filling pillows with kapok



Figure 87. Anna Kurtycz, *Going Abroad*, 2010, photographs of the back of peoples'

CHAPTER FIVE

Wrapping Up?

Art has the potential to engender various readings and interpretations. It creates the grounds on which certain boggling questions could be investigated and explored and where emotions and experiences could be expressed. Several artists have therefore used this as a platform to metaphorically articulate personal and social concerns. But one may ask; what might issues drive the artist to investigate particular concerns?

This research has explored spatial subjectivity where spatiality is analyzed, considering the extent of the political and artistic ramifications of subjectivity. It has looked at spatiality and spatialization as a process and product of social construction and experience and how this is variously articulated by artists. It has expressed spatiality as being embedded within subjectivity in the sense that, a particular space comes to form when it encounters with human subjectivity. What makes this subjectivity? The expression of the self not solely as a distinct self or entity, but a complexity involving shared concerns where one is definitely involved with an 'Other'. It is this notion of subjectivity that gives space its being, rather than an assigned activity or as titles that such spaces uphold. These notions of spatiality and subjectivity have thus been observed, engaged and woven into the discussion of the self. I have drawn attention to the assertion that space, being active and a 'becoming', implies mediation, positionality, non-situatedness, race, gender and class. This should throw spatial experience open so that it engenders another question like; how can space be envisaged or visualized in

arena where spatiality is given very minimal consideration or even often taken for granted?

Various disciplines have engaged the issue of spatiality and have discussed it through diverse windows. But what implications have these notions of spatial subjectivity for art had in general and particularly, how have individual artists dealt with space and subjectivity?

In this research, a subjective exploration into spatiality as a political and artistic concept was taken. The issue of the openness of spatial experience was artistically engaged with, where these positions were looked at in relation with contemporary art and artists and how they variously engage the subject of the self and space.

In Fabric As Spatial metaphor I have interrogated the issue of spatiality through the manipulation of fibre and fabrics as form and content. The study induced a notion of space that does not necessarily reside in a named place and its designated identity but (as reiterated by Lefebvre and Rogoff), a spatiality produced through subjectivization. Spatial themes such as territoriality and specificity which in turn imply a human subject's engagement with boundaries, borders and even notions of freedom and restriction, are questioned and engaged through artistic processes and with a variety of media. These were made manifest through such experiential registers as; positionality, mediation, situated knowledge, race, gender and representation, being ramifications of the opening up of spatiality.

Consequently, questions on how I would begin to perceive art in the light of my own practice become essential. In the conception, execution and consumption or reading of art, what does one expect? One possible implication for art would be its contextualization. This may involve personal experiences, beliefs, ideas of identity and

motives of the individual. The artist may consciously or unconsciously create and exhibit with this positionality, coming up with art that may or may not be familiar. Does this necessarily imply that an audience will be 'seeing' through the artist's window?. Audiencing, a term used by John Fiske according Rose (2005), to refer to "the process by which meaning is made of images depending on the various ways of seeing and other kinds of knowledges, is very crucial to art viewing and meaning making. Just as the artist brings some positionality into the production, an audience may do same, making sense of the art with reference to their varying backgrounds.

This ushers in the issues of societal identities and practices that art usually encounters. Who is viewing the art and what societal norms are there regarding art making and reception; and the space or place of viewing? All these factors could determine the meaning art engenders. Also concerns of disparity in the society, issues of race and class are sometimes brought to the fore by the artist through the work. This happens most especially, when the work confronts the public sphere. An artist's subjectivity and positionality is usually represented in his or her art and it may be judged as either good or bad, authentic or not. Or nothing may even be made out of it, depending on who is doing the viewing and with what capacity one takes to do the viewing. The question of who views and appreciates art and therefore could make some meaning of it could depend, according to Bourdieu and Darbel in Rose (2005), on the knowledge or understanding of the work in its contextual ramifications, considering art as a symbolic good which only exists for those who have the means to understand and decipher them. This they believe are taught to the middle class. According to Rose, Bourdieu and Darbel think that, "those who are not middle class are not taught to appreciate art... and that competence in such techniques of appreciation actually defines

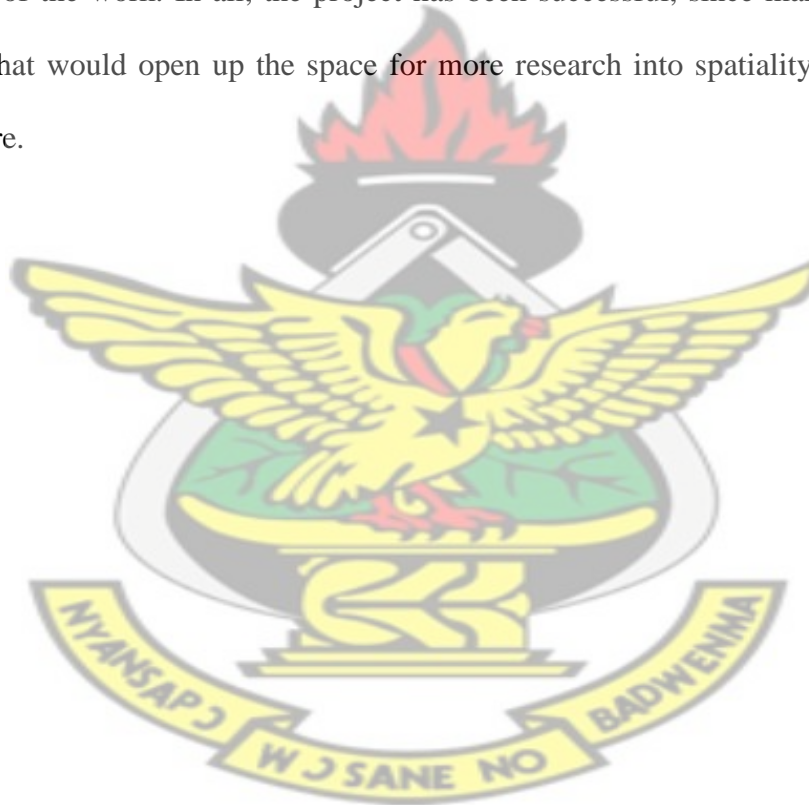
an individual as middle class” (p.28). This assertion I believe was made with the understanding of art as a physical object which could be appreciated by its observable physical qualities alone.

However, with the understanding of spatiality as being largely a product of our subjectivities, does one need special tuition in art appreciation to make something of art that has been presented? Could it be said that, this notion stems from an assumption that locates art appreciation in elitist society, thus excluding the so-called ‘illiterate’ constituents of the society from participating in the production and reception of art? Must a reading of art only inhere in a formalistic perspective? If this is the case, what happens to the numerous subjectivities that the audience brings into the viewing space?

As regards the issue of race, there has been the tendency of exhibiting Eurocentric attitudes towards almost any art experience. The West’s largely infamous colonialist encounter with non-western peoples and the types of formal art training that make no room for multi-cultural flexibility, reduced discourses on art to uncomfortable formalist preoccupations whilst oblivion was cast on contemporary concerns to a large extent. This is what may have inflicted on our local audiences the ailment of the inability to articulate adequately on contemporary art encounters. To this reason, they usually ‘come’ to art without their subjectivities and seek an object reading that may, in often cases be missing. When we throw spatial experience open, as this research suggests however, the active spatialization begins to offer up opportunities for the expression of the self with all its constituents which are myriad.

The project Fabric as Spatial Metaphor has sought to deal, theoretically and artistically with all the issues mentioned above and more. Being based on theories rooted in discussions in post-coloniality, post-modernism and many others, there has been the

need for my engagement with deconstructivist readings of my own art foundations. This has proved both challenging and emancipatory to me, since my notions of art have witnessed considerable augmentation. My own spatiality has been thrown open and the intention is to, through further work in the future, effect this opening up of spatiality in the general Ghanaian artistic ethos. When these works confronted the public, they were met with several varying levels of appreciation. Whereas awe, intrigue and elation were common responses, other audiences also felt repulsion to; and confusion at certain aspects of the work. In all, the project has been successful, since many questions have arisen that would open up the space for more research into spatiality, subjectivity and sculpture.



REFERENCES

- Agnew, J. (2005). *Spatiality and Territoriality in Contemporary Social Science*.
[Conference paper] 'First International Seminar of Social Spatial
Studies: Geopolitics, Power Spaces and Spaces Power', UCLA.
- Amenuke, D. (2006). *Variations on Devotion in Soft Sculpture*. Unpublished
MFA Thesis. Kumasi: Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.
- Author, E. (2010). *String Felt Thread: The Hierarchy of Art and Craft in
American Art*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Benjamin, W. (1968). *Illuminations*. New York: Schocken Books .
- Brenner, N., Elden, S. (2009). *State, Space, World : Selected Essays / Henri
Lefebvre*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Brown, W. C. (2005). *Becoming Origin(al): Deterritorialization and Postcolonial
Theory from the Caribbean*, Issue 1, Forum, University of Edinburgh
Postgraduate journal of Culture and the Art.
http://www.forumjournal.org/site/sites/default/files/01/Brown_Deleuze.pdf
- Boer, I. E. (2006). *Uncertain Territories, Boundaries in Cultural Analysis*, Amsterdam -
New York, NY: Rodopi B.V.
- Caballero, R. (2006). *Re-viewing space: figurative language in architects' assessment
of built space (Applications of Cognitive Linguistics)*, Berlin ,New York:
Mouton de Gruyter
- Carter, C. (2009). *Journey Through The Fabric Of Life*.
(Textile exhibition hosted by Bourn Hall Clinic).
<http://www.bourn-hall-clinic.co.uk/news-clairecarter.php>

Chandler, D. (1998). *Notes On "The Gaze"*.

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/documents/gaze/gaze.html> ,

accessed 29th June 2011

Chiang, C. (2004). *The Cultural Production of 'Culture': The Spatial Metaphors in Contemporary Anthropological Discourse*, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Hilton San Francisco & Renaissance Parc 55 Hotel, San Francisco, CA, Online <.PDF>. 2009-05-26 from http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p108862_index.html

Cloke, P., Crang, P., Goodwin, M. (2005). *Introducing Human Geographies*.

London: Hodder Arnolds.

Colchester, C. (1991). *The New Textiles, Trends+Traditions*. London:

Thames and Hudson Ltd.

Colins, J. (2007). *Sculpture Today*. New York: Phaidon Press

Constantine, M., Reuter, L. (1997). *Whole Cloth*. New York: the Monacelli Press.

Darian-Smith, K., Gunner, L., Nuttall, S. (2005). *Text Theory, Space. Land,*

literature and history in South Africa and Australia. New York: Routledge.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1986). *Kafka, Toward a Minor Literature*.

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Ettinger, B. L (2006). *Matrixial Trans-subjectivity* in Theory Culture Society.

Sage. <http://tcs.sagepub.com/content/23/2-3/218> (accessed- 22 march 2013)

Foucault, M. (1967). *Of Other Spaces. The French*

Journal Architecture/Movement/Continuite October, 1984,

[http://tadubois.com/volume twohomepage/foucault. Pdf](http://tadubois.com/volume/twohomepage/foucault.Pdf), accessed sept. 2009

Garcia, M. (2006). *Architextiles. Architectural Design.*

November/December 2006: Wiley Academy. Available at: <http://library.nu/>,

Ginsburg, M. (1991). *The Illustrated History of Textiles*, New York, Portland House.

Green, D (2006). *Metonymy in Contemporary Art: A New Paradigm.*

Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Haag, J. (2003). *Gallery den Haag: Green Pillow.*

<http://janhaag.com/NP03green.html>. Accessed, May 2011

Hubbard, P. in Atkinson, D. Jackson, P. Sibley, D. and Washbourne, N. (2005).

Cultural Geography Critical Dictionary of Key Concepts, New york: I.B.Tauris
& Co Ltd.

Heywood, I. and Sandywell, B. (2005). *Interpreting Visual Culture: Explorations*

in the Hermeneutics of the Visual, Taylor & Francis e-Library. Available at:

<http://library.nu/> (Accessed: 17 October 2011)

Homer, S. (2005). *Jacques Lacan*. London and New York: Routledge,

tailor and Francis Group.

Hyunsun, T. (2000). *Kim Sooja: A Needle*

Woman, <http://www.kimsooja.com/texts/tae.html>, (accessed: 19th March, 2013)

Kaps,P. (2006). *Kimsooja - A One-Word Name Is An Anarchist's Name*,

<http://www.kimsooja.com/texts/kaps.html>. (Accessed: 19th march, 2013)

- Kern, S. (2001), *The Culture of Time and Space 1880-1918*,
Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Layton, R. (1991), *The Anthropology of Art*, United Kingdom:
Cambridge University Press.
- Mackenzie, C and Stoljar, N. (2000). *Relational Autonomy: Feminist Perspectives
on Autonomy, Agency, and the Social Self*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mackenzie, J. (2005). *The fabric of Art: Investigating the Relationships of
Power between Fabric and Fine Art through Fank Stella's Black Paintings
(1958-1960)* [http://www4.gu.edu.au:8080/adt-root/uploads/approved/adt-
QGU20060802.144424/public/02Main.pdf](http://www4.gu.edu.au:8080/adt-root/uploads/approved/adt-QGU20060802.144424/public/02Main.pdf) .
- Major, S. (2009). *Shawn Major Works*. [Exhibition Catalogue], Washington DC:
Irvine Contemporary
- Mansfield, N. (2000). *Subjectivity: Theories of the Self from Freud to
Haraway*, Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- McAfee, N. (2004). *Julia Kristeva*. London and New York: Routledge.
tailor and Francis Group.
- McCarty, U. (1998). *A Master's Thesis: By Ursula McCarty in Surface Design
Journal*, 16 (3), p.22. Oakland, CA, Surface Design Association, Inc.
- Merrill, S. B. (2007), *Weaving* (Excerpts from Chapter 5 of *ZATI The Art of
Weaving a Life*), <http://www.weavingalife.com/weaving.php>

accessed 14 April 2011)

- Nimkulrat, N. (2007). *The role of documentation in Practice-led research*,
Journal of Research Practice, 3(1), Article M6. Retrieved June 2009, from
<http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/article/view/58/83>
- Peterson, T. G. (1980). *Integrating art and Life*, in *Miriam Schapiro: A Retrospective* (Excerpts from interviews with Miriam Schapiro, 1953-1980, interview by Paula Bradley and Ruth A. Appelhof). Retrieved June 2009, from
http://www.uncpress.unc.edu/pdfs/samplechapters/9780807831199_Halper_Choosing_Ch1.pdf
- Pile, S. and Thrift, N. (2005), *Mapping The Subject; Geographies of Cultural Transformation*. London and New York: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group (e-library)
- Rogoff, I. (2000). *Terra Infirma Geography's Visual Culture*, London: Routledge (Taylor and Francis Group)
- Rose, G. (2005). *Visual Methodologies, An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Ruckman, J. M., (1998), "An Analytical Look at Bomborisi Art". African Diaspora ISPs. Paper 20.
http://digitalcollections.sit.edu/african_diaspora_isp/20
- Schneider and Weiner A B (1986), *Cloth and the Organization of Human Experience*, *Current Anthropology*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Apr., 1986, p.178-184), The University of Chicago Press on behalf of Wenner-Gren Foundation for

Anthropological Research Stable URL:

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2742984> Accessed: 07/10/2010 13:17.

Stabile, T. (1998). *Threads of the Imagination: How Africa's kente cloth wraps around the world*, Humanities, July/August 1998, 19 (4),

<http://www.neh.gov/news/humanities/1998-07/kente.html> accessed 17th dec 2008

Tidd U (2004), *Simone De Beauvoir*. London and New York: Routledge (Taylor and Francis e-library).

Trouton, L. D., (2007). *The Linen Memorial: State and Sectarian Violence in Northern Ireland, 1966–present*, Humanities Research Vol XIV. No. 2.

Tuan Yi-Fu (1977), *Space and Place, the Perspective of Experience*, Minneapolis, London, University of Minnesota Press.

Vidler, A. (2000). *Warped Space: Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture* Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England: The MIT Press.

Werlen, B. (1993). *Society Action and Space: An alternative human geography*, London: Routledge, (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2003).

Velibeyoglu, K. (1999) .*Post-Structuralism and Foucault*. <http://www.angelfire.com/ar/corei/foucault.html>

Zupnick, I. L. (1959). *Concept of Space and Spatial Organization in Art*. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 18 (2), 215-221. Blackwell Publishing on behalf of The American Society for Aesthetics

KNUST

