

**IMAGERY OF SISSALA CLAN TOTEMS AS A RESOURCE FOR THE  
TUMU PARAMOUNTCY TEXTILE REGALIA**

KNUST

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work towards Master of Fine Arts (Textile Design) 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.

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis report is dedicated to my beloved son, Khalifah Chieyuka Gbene. May Allah richly bless him!

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## ABSTRACT

In many cultures, chiefs are regarded as the custodians of cultural values, beliefs and practices. Their unique position as intermediaries between ancestral spirits and the people they represent, makes them sacred figures and their regalia sacred objects with symbolic significance. These objects are often a representation of an animal/bird or an incident of past history of the traditional area. Tumu traditional area in the Upper West Region is home to a variety of such animals and birds which serve as totems to their clans, yet the regalia of their paramountcy skin have little or no symbolic significance and are nonrepresentative of them (Sissalas). Most Sissala youth are also fast losing sight of the significance of their clan totems that unite and remind them of their ancestry. The study therefore sought to explore Sissala clan totems for design and production of symbolic textile regalia for the Tumu Paramountcy. The ethnographic action research through studio-based paradigm adopting the Universal Design Model by Zeidman (2003) was employed to study, identify, sketch and develop concept images of Sissala clan totems. Seven (7) unique textile regalia were designed and produced which reflect the traditional setting of Tumu paramountcy. The results of the study were discussed and analysed. The study revealed that Sissala clan totems have an endearing bond of unity among the various clans. The findings of the study largely confirmed that clan totems are a great source of inspiration for idea development and designs to artists and craftsmen. The study recommended that the artefacts should neither be displayed in direct sunlight nor washed with soap or detergents-they can simply be cleaned with damp cotton cloth if they are dirty. The new symbolic textile regalia could be used as a source of inspiration for future studies. Other researchers should also conduct further studies in the remaining Sissala clans to discover more totems for textile designing and production of artefacts.

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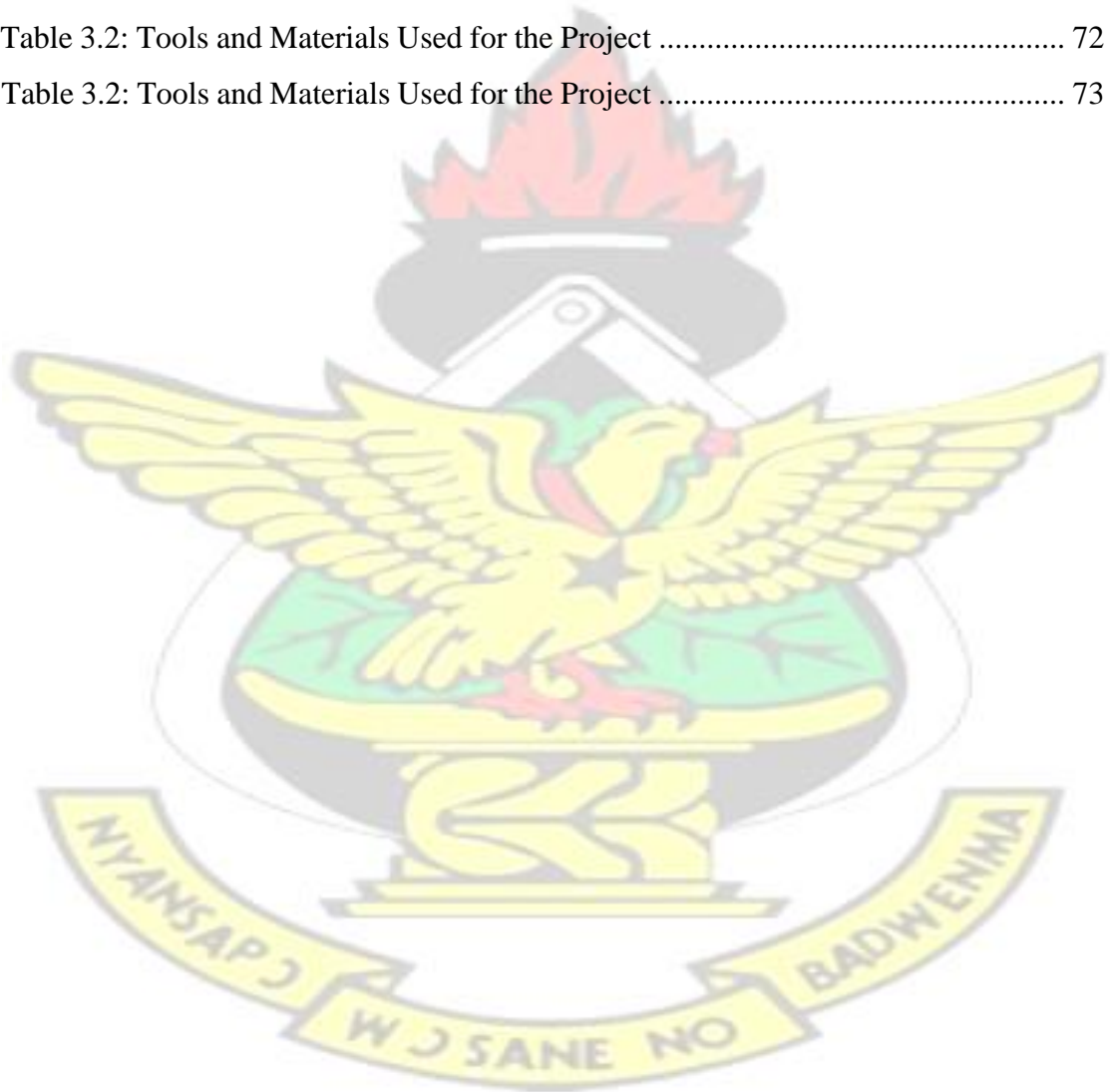
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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

The study sought to explore Sissala clan totems as a resource for the design and production of symbolic textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy of the Sissala East Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Almost every traditional area in Ghana has a chief who is viewed as the custodian of culture, heritage and pride. Odotei and Awedoba (2006) note that chieftaincy in Ghana is for all intents and purposes, an important institution on which, efforts towards social, economic and political development of the country are firmly anchored. Article 270 (1) of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana states that “the institution of chieftaincy, together with its traditional councils as established by customary law and usage, is hereby guaranteed.” Article 277 of the same constitution defines a chief as a person who, hailing from appropriate family and lineage, has been validly nominated, selected or elected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage.

In Ghana, chiefs provide leadership and serve as an embodiment of culture and various expectations are required of them. For example, in the past, an important role of a chief was to lead his people to war, protect and extend his jurisdiction. In contrast, the nature of warfare for the chief in contemporary times has changed drastically. In this millennium, the enemy is now poverty, hunger, ignorance, disease, illiteracy, injustice, greed and corruption among others. The level of success to which the modern Ghanaian chief tackles such common enemies would be the true measure of his leadership qualities.

Gyekye (1996) and Opoku (1978) opine that the chief doubles as the political and religious head, while Adu-Agyem (2000) as cited in Marfo (2007) describes the chief as a walking gallery. Adu-Agyem justifies the accolade that, the chief adorns himself with spectacular regalia and use other paraphernalia that serve symbolic, educational and aesthetic purposes. According to Ross (2002) if everything is set and done, the chief assumes responsibility for the administration of the state and everything therein. He is given the antennary of all the regalia and he is charged with the responsibility of not only taking care of them but also preserve and add to the number. For this and other reasons, chiefs have made and or procured numerous and varied regalia and other symbolic objects for their thrones.

There are two major classifications of regalia in Ghana; stool regalia and skin regalia. Stool regalia is associated with chiefs in the southern part of Ghana, while skin regalia is identified with the northern part of the country. Regalia give reality to the values and philosophies which the people believe to be an explanation of life upon earth and the hereafter. For this and many other reasons, regalia have received a wide range of interest in academia. This can be seen in scholarly works such as Marfo Solomon (2007), ‘Educational Value of Boaman Stool Regalia’, Osei-Bonsu Matilda (2010), Regalia of the Dwaben State of Asante: Relevance to Art Education’ and Ayesu Solomon Marfo (2015), ‘Empirical Study of Akuapem Odwira Festival and Traditional State Symbols: A Means for Design and Production of Textile Regalia for Akuapem Paramount Chief’ and Kumatia Amivi Kafui (2018), ‘The Symbolic Meaning of Clothing Regalia of Chiefs in Anlo State of the Volta Region of Ghana’.

All the aforementioned scholarly works focus on stool regalia, but the skin regalia of the northern part of Ghana has been left at the backburner in academic works. There is need, therefore, for such a gap to be filled.

Tumu paramountcy skin which is located in the Tumu *Kuoro*'s palace in Tumu, the Municipal capital of Sissala East of the Upper West Region, like any other traditional area in the northern part of Ghana, has its own distinct textile regalia for their chiefs. Unfortunately, such regalia are disconnected or non-representative of the Sissala people. The regalia are usually procured from the open market in Tamale, Northern Region and Bolgatanga, Upper East Region (nerve centres of traditional crafts in northern Ghana). The craftsmen pay very little or no attention to the symbolic meanings of these regalia and so are their clients. The regalia are therefore used for their aesthetic and functional purposes; see Plate 1.1 of the Tumu *kuoro* sitting in state on his regalia.



Plate 1.1: Tumu *Kuoro* Sitting in State During his Enskinment  
(Source: Sissala Heritage Foundation, 2009)

The challenge with this open market procurement of textile regalia is that, the design concepts do not usually address the values and traditions of specific traditional areas. This therefore does not speak well of the traditional area, especially considering the fact that the Sissala area is comprised of several clans with interesting totems of unique symbolic significance that remind them of their ancestry. Awedoba (2009) posits that in northern Ghana, the symbolic significance of the skin varies from community to community. Kleist (2011) argues that chieftaincy should not be regarded as a static phenomenon because the institution has a long and dynamic

history in Ghana with 'evolutionary' tenacity and contradictions, but not refusal of change. For this reason, in 2019 during the annual *Paari Gbielle* (festival of harvest) of the chiefs and people of Sissala, the Tumu skin witnessed some sort of modification in which the skin was placed on ten-inches high stage for the Tumu *kuoro* to sit on in state as shown in Plate 1.2.



Plate 1.2: Tumu Kuoro's Skin Placed on Stage During *Paari Gbielle* Festival  
(Source: Field Survey, 2019)

Then again, at the centenary durbar of the Tumu chiefdom on 01/02/2020, the Tumu *Kuoro* sat in state on a newly designed leather skin. In a conversation with Bayugo Seidu, senior linguist to Tumu *Kuoro* (personal communication, 01/02/2020), it was revealed that the new regalia Tumu *kuoro* used for the occasion was a donation to him by his personal friend, Duncan Nsor (then Director of Ghana Education Service of Upper West Region) as a token of his appreciation of their lasting friendship and also to mark the centenary anniversary. So, Tumu *Kuoro* instructed that they use it (the donated skin) for the durbar. As to its symbolism especially for such an august occasion, he said very little premium was placed on that.



Plate 1.3: Tumu *Kuoro* Sitting in State on Donated Regalia

(Source: Tumu *Kuoro*'s Palace, 2020)

From the foregone discussions, it can be seen that there are conscious efforts at elevating and remodifying the Tumu paramountcy skin for durbars and other ceremonial occasions where the Tumu *Kuoro* sits in state. Unfortunately, such new developments and modifications of the skin, though aesthetically pleasing, are devoid of the symbolism of the skin and therefore nonrepresentative of the Sissala, because they bear no Sissala values and do not symbolize anything Sissala.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Chieftaincy regalia have functional and symbolic purposes with several philosophical and socio-cultural values. Regalia are used by royalty to identify, symbolize, and accentuate the status, authority and importance of traditional rulers Marfo (2007). Awedoba (2009) contends that the skins and their regalia have no critical ritual and symbolic role for the chieftaincy cultures of all communities in the northern part of Ghana. That is precisely the case of the Tumu paramountcy skin in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

Like other skin regalia in northern Ghana, the Tumu paramountcy skin regalia are procured from the open market in Bolgatanga, Upper East Region and Tamale,

Northern Region for the ceremonial use of their paramount chief. Although these regalia are used for their intended purposes, they carry questionable symbolisms as they have very little or no representation of the Sissala people. Meanwhile the Sissalas are grouped into clans with very unique and interesting animals and birds as their totems which do not only represent them but also unify and remind them of their ancestry. Since time immemorial, the totems have served as sacred rallying factor of unity among the Sissala clans.

Oral tradition has it that in the past, if a Sissala man saw his dead animal or bird totem he was required to pay his last respect to it and bury it. It is also said that the Sissalas used to swear by their totems. That is how important and sacred the totems were to Sissalas. Unfortunately, the younger generation is losing sight of this important aspect of Sissala cultural identity and rallying force of unity due to the advent of Islamic and Christian religion and modernity. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to make imagery of Sissala clan totems and incorporate them in the design and production of distinct textile regalia that reflect the traditional setting the Tumu paramountcy of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The study specifically sought to:

1. Identify and document Sissala clan totems.
2. Identify and document textile regalia of Tumu paramountcy skin.
3. Use Sissala clan totems to design and produce textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin.

#### 1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the Sissala clan totems in the Tumu traditional area?
2. What are the textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy skin?
3. What appropriate tools, materials and techniques can be used to design and produce textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin?

#### 1.5 Delimitation

Geographically, the study is focused on Tumu and its environs that constitute the Tumu Paramountcy in the Sissala East Municipality of Upper West Region. The content of the study is limited to imagery of the Sissala clan totems, designing Sissala clan totems with Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop and CorelDRAW. The content also includes screen printing on leather, stitching, and construction of textile regalia.

#### 1.6 Significance of the Study

The study;

1. produced symbolic artefacts for the use of Tumu *kuoro*.
2. used Sissala clan totems which helps promote unity among the various clans of the Tumu traditional area for socio-economic development.
3. promotes the cultural identity of the Sissala people and socioeconomically promotes tourism in the country.
4. forms the basis for the development of unique Sissala symbols.
5. serves as a source of inspiration for textile designers and craftsmen.

#### 1.7 Definitions of Terms

Terms used in the study are defined as follows:

**Clan:** a group of people who descended from a common ancestor.

**Chamgbei:** Sissala name for frog which serves as totem of the *Chamgbeiviaraa* Clan.

**Gungro:** Sissala name for wolf in Sissala which serves as the totem of the *Gungro* Clan.

**Hene:** Sissala name for red pot, which serves as the totem of the *Henviaraa* Clan.

**Kpei:** Sissala name for leopard, which serves as the totem of the *Kpeiviaraa* Clan.

**Korong:** Sissala name for a special outdoor raised platform built with bricks.

**Kuoro:** chieftaincy title of the Sissalas.

**Naasin Kunpungu:** Sissala name for foot rest, a support made of textiles on which the chief rests his feet.

**Kunpungu kpasah:** Sissala name for bottom rest which is put on a skin to soften the surface.

**Magazia/Hakuoro:** this means queen mother in Sissali.

**Paari Gbielle:** festival of harvest of the Sissalas.

**Regalia:** ceremonial, symbolic objects and clothing used and worn by royalty or other holders of high office on formal occasions.

**Skin:** throne of a chief in northern Ghana.

**Skin regalia:** varied forms of traditional clothes, ornamentations, insignia and other paraphernalia collectively owned and used to identify the status and authority of a traditional ruler in northern Ghana.

**Totems:** emblems consisting of objects, animals or plants that serve as symbols of a family or a clan and often as a reminder of their ancestry.

**Tou zaafi:** a staple food made of corn or millet flour in the northern part of Ghana which is used for adhesive bonding in making native boots.

**Nyiwa:** Sissala name for crocodile, which serves as the totem of the *Nyiwaviaraa* Clan.

## **1.8 Abbreviations**

The following abbreviations are explained as used in the text:

**CIKOD:** Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development

**CEPS:** Customs Excise and Preventive Services

**NGO:** Non-Governmental Organisation

**KANCO:** Kanton College

**KANSEC:** Kanton Secondary School

**PRAAD:** Public Records and Archives Administration Department

**SHF:** Sissala Heritage Foundation

**TTC:** Tumu Traditional Council

## **1.9 Organization of the Rest of the Text**

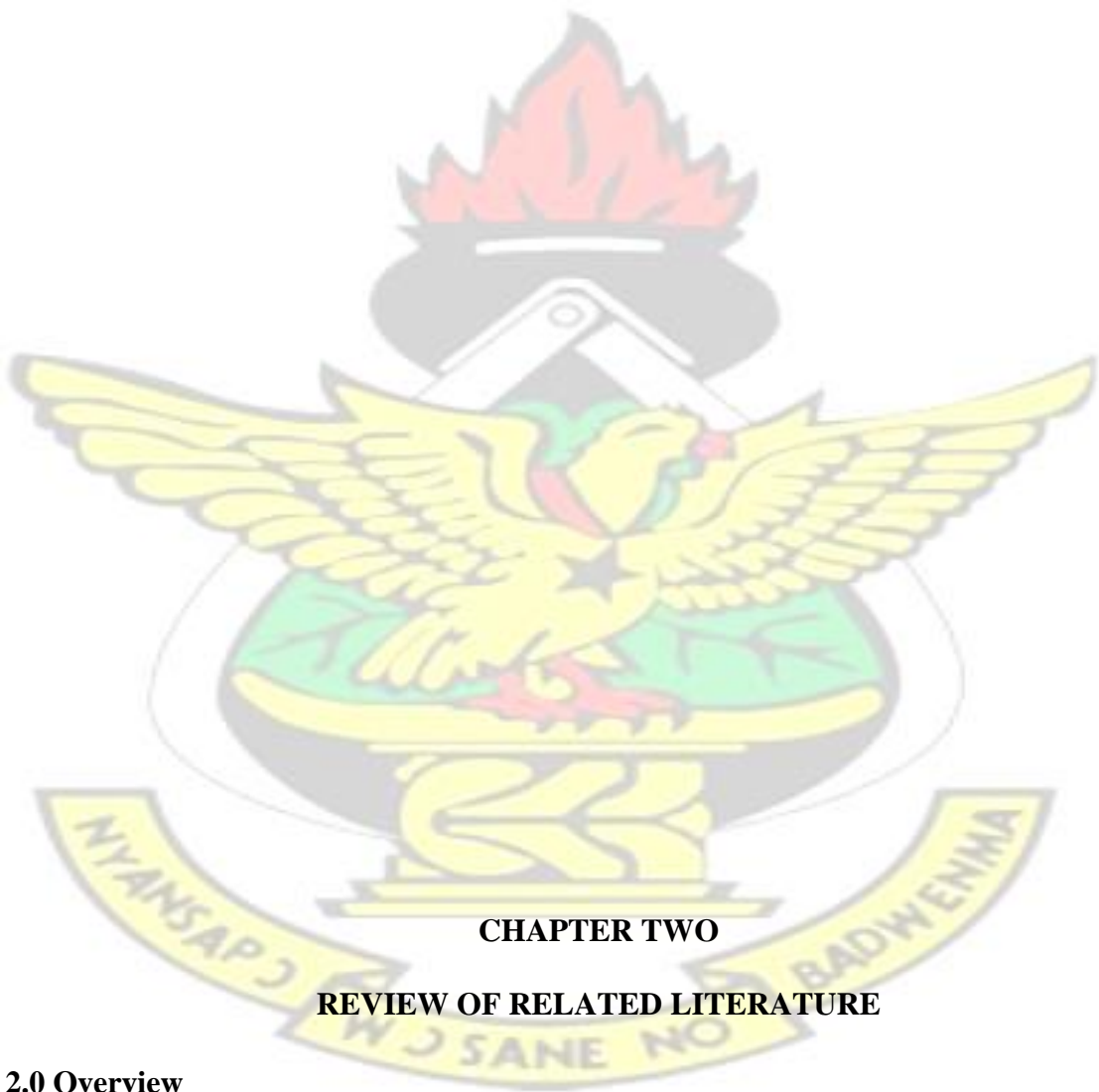
Chapter Two reviews literature related to the study. Areas considered for the review include: An overview of Chieftaincy Institution in Ghana, Chieftaincy Regalia,

Ethnographic Account of the Sissalas, Sissala Clans, Overview of Totems, Textile Design and Palace Art.

Chapter Three outlines and discusses the methodology which involves research design based on ethnographic action research and adopts Universal Design Methodology (UDM) model to effectively execute the project. It also entails the practical activities carried out in the study.

Chapter Four contains the discussions and analysis of the Sissala clan totems. It also appreciates the outcome of the seven (7) textile regalia produced with concept images generated from Sissala clan totems and their respective uses, care and maintenance. The Fifth Chapter covers the Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations for the research.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Overview

This chapter reviews empirical and theoretical underpinnings relating to the study so as to acquaint the researcher with information related to the phenomenon under study.

Conceptual framework was developed from the reviews which were done under the following thematic areas:

1. Empirical Review
2. An Overview of Chieftaincy Institution in Ghana
3. Chieftaincy Regalia
4. Ethnographic Account of the Sissala People
5. Overview of Totems
6. Sissala Clan Totems
7. Textile Design
8. Palace Art
9. Theoretical Framework Underlining the Study
10. Conceptual Framework

### **2.1 Empirical Review**

Pertinent literature relating to the study was comprehensively reviewed under the following thematic areas:

### **2.2 Overview of the Chieftaincy Institution in Ghana**

Chieftaincy is one of the few resilient institutions that has stood the test of time regardless of the general attitude of the populace towards chiefs in recent times.

Chieftaincy has been the bedrock of Ghana's culture and traditional rulers have played and continue to play immense roles in the country's administrative structure (OwusuMensah, 2014). According to Nweke (2012), chieftaincy institution is an indigenous political arrangement by which leaders with good moral standings are selected and installed in line with the provisions of their native customs and laws.

According to the Centre for Indigenous Knowledge and Organizational Development (CIKOD), a local non-governmental organization that focuses on the development of

indigenous institutions in Ghana, as cited in (Owusu-Mensah, 2014), 80% of Ghanaians owe allegiance to one chief or another. For this reason, the people consider chieftaincy as the repository of the history and tradition of Ghana; and the custodian of indigenous traditions, customs and usage. Furthermore, the institution is considered as the bond between the dead, the living and the yet unborn.

The Chieftaincy Act, 2008 Act 759, defines a chief as “a person who hailing from appropriate family and lineage, has been validly nominated, elected or selected and enstooled, enskinned or installed as a chief or queen mother in accordance with the relevant customary law and usage”. The Act further sets a minimum qualification for a chief; the candidate must be a person who has never been convicted of high treason, treason, and high crime or for an offence dealing with the security of the State, fraud, dishonesty or moral turpitude. In addition, section 58 of the Act stipulates a hierarchical structure of chiefs recognized in the nation as:

- Paramount chiefs
- Divisional chiefs
- Sub-divisional chiefs
- Other chiefs reorganised by the national house

Any person therefore holding up himself as a chief must belong to one of the aforementioned categories by the Act to ensure that appropriate privileges and responsibilities are accorded him.

### **2.2.1 The Role of Chiefs in the Development of Ghana**

In principle, local development is the responsibility of various Ghanaian state institutions as well as of the local district assemblies. However, under pressure from neo-liberalism, economic crisis, and lack of financial and human resources, these institutions often cannot offer the necessary resources, meaning that basic facilities frequently are insufficient Mohan (2008) as cited in Kleist (2011). This situation

necessitates involvement of so-called non-state actors-including traditional authorities in local development. Indeed, the importance of traditional rulers such as kings, paramount chiefs, divisional chiefs and customary law to Ghanaian society is reflected in the Constitution which provides for a National House of Chiefs from which regional representatives are elected as members of the Council of State. Boateng (1996) holds the view that the immense role chieftaincy has played and continues to play in Ghana, makes the institution not only desirable but essential as a stabilising force in the society. Osman (2006) asserts that the role of traditional rulers in the effective management of our human and natural resources has long been acknowledged in Africa. His assertion holds water because there is overwhelming evidence of chiefs and queen-mothers forming the bedrock of societal organization in recent times across the globe.

Arhin and Pavanello (2006) contend that development may be seen in two ways. It may mean the provision of facilities for modern living, such as health, education, water and electricity. In that regard, development-minded chiefs usually mobilise their people for communal labour, or pay levies for the execution of projects.

They also lobby the central and local government agencies, as well as the increasing number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for the provision of the instruments for securing the means of modern living. In addition, Arhin and Pavanello point out that the more enterprising aspect of these chiefs is that they try to establish a more radical instrument of development, which is to provide the resources for income generation, invest their personal resources, or promote investments from Ghanaian or foreign companies or development agencies.

Odotei and Awedoba (2006) are of the view that chiefs are often charged with the management and preservation of communal resources, and this makes chieftaincy a developmental agency. Addo-Dankwa (2004) supports the position that, chiefs have

served the nation in many respects, and will continue to do so. The institution of chieftaincy will continue to provide crucial social services to ensure the needed stability in the society. Boulton (2016) sees the paramount chief as the symbol of unity among his people and unites the various segments of the traditional area. The people see the chief as the custodian of the customs and traditions of the people. Chiefs are also very important in facilitating the provision of social infrastructural projects and ensuring law and order in their communities. Such was the power and prestige of chiefs that under colonialism the British administration incorporated them into colonial governance.

It can be deduced from the above discussions, that the institution of chieftaincy is of great importance to local government in Ghana, particularly, in the area of socio-economic development. In the study area (Tumu traditional area), the Tumu *kuoro* has personally led the charge in combating the felling of rosewoods. A fight that has contributed immensely in the protection of the vegetation of the municipality. The chieftaincy institution has therefore proved beyond doubt that it is not just an embodiment of Ghana's rich culture but also a catalyst of change and development which must be maintained and improved upon.

### **2.3 Chieftaincy Regalia**

Chieftaincy regalia are made up of some significant artworks that portray the customs and values of a people and thus reveal their history and identity. Houghton (2009) as cited in Marfo (2015) defines regalia as emblems and symbols of royalty, such as the crown, sceptres, and magnificent attire or finery which serve as distinguishing symbols of a rank, office, order, or society. Labi (2006) and Kyeremanten (1964) agree that regalia are an array of historically and culturally weighty art works that fall within traditional norms and artistic production and used in adorning the chief or

royals. The concept is not different from Ross (2002) who sees regalia as a representation of a human being, an animal, or an incident of past history of the state. Andoh (2004), Ross (2002) and Kyerematen (1994) state some examples of the chieftaincy regalia as; sandals, stools, drums, swords, umbrellas, jewels, flywhisks, headband, footrest, amulets, talismans, neckwear, linguist staff, cloths and headgear among others.

From the deliberations above, it can be deduced that regalia on kings, chiefs and queen mothers serve as a mirror to the society. They are cherished and held in high esteem as custodians of important historical collection of art works, which have been inherited, acquired and kept as property of the stool or skin. It is a known fact that traditional priests also have their regalia which include objects such as amulets, talisman, anklets and charms which may appear similar to the ordinary observer, but far from that in reality.

In the northern part of Ghana, the most costly, complex and excellent smocks were and are of course worn by the kings and senior chiefs. Actually, each smock serves to communicate a distinctive message and the subtleties of its significance are widely understood by the traditionally sophisticated in the society.

### **2.3.1 Acquisition and Mergers of Chieftaincy Regalia**

There are numerous and varied ways of acquiring chieftaincy regalia. Some examples include; war, adaptation or purchase as trade (Labi, 2006). Some regalia are inherited from early chiefs and leaders. Oral tradition has it that in the past, victors of wars sometimes captured the regalia of the defeated, which was believed to increase their power. In contemporary times, the variety of methods used in acquiring regalia makes it dynamic. In the words of Labi (2006), restructuring of traditions in recent times brought about copying and adaptation of regalia of other communities. In recent

times, flexibility in adapting to other cultures accounts for variety of regalia in the chieftaincy institution.

### **2.3.2 Significance of Textile Regalia**

In the chieftaincy institution, regalia are as important as the chief because they are not just ordinary artworks and aesthetic expressions; they also provide evidence of early history, trade, religion, belief and socio-political organisation of a polity (Kyerematen, 1964). They portray the achievements, skills and values of the people and symbolise unity of purpose and thus giving chieftaincy its legitimacy and authority. During the installation of a chief, it is the rightful usage of some specific regalia and some roles that makes one become a chief. Labi (2006) posits that the significance of inherited artefacts of great leaders have special meaning to the wearer, the audience or both, and can transform a person from one state to the other. He cites leaning on the ‘piesie’ sword, the wearing of the big smock and the wearing of Osei Tutu sandals as important activities during the installation of an Asantehene that connects him to his founding fathers and thus, elevates him from his ordinary state to the high office of an Asantehene.

In effect, it can be concluded that regalia cannot be separated from chieftaincy, lest, chieftaincy loses its essence. This is so because regalia distinguishes the wearer from all other people especially among Sissalas where chiefs are held in high esteem.

### **2.4 Ethnographic Account of Sissala People**

According to Rattary (1932), Sissala is a corrupted version of “Isala” originally bestowed upon them by their neighbours. Oral history has it that the Sissala people are said to have originated from different tribes and clans in the Northern part of Ghana and Southern Burkina Faso to settle in their area today. It is believed that they

are mostly from Gonjaland, the three Mole-Dagbani people, namely the Mossi, Mamprusi and Dagomba.

Kwekudee (2013) has it that, Sisaalas are culturally inclined cluster of Gurspeaking people that form a subset of the larger Gurune ethnic group residing in the Upper West Region and Southern Burkina Faso. The Sisaala people are among the original people of the Northern Ghana (Sissala Heritage Foundation, 2013). Other tribes came to join later who were adopted and form part of the larger Sisaala tribe today.

### 2.4.1 Geographical Setting of Sissala

The Sissala are located in one municipality and four districts; Sissala East, Sissala West, Wa East, Lambussie and Daffiama Bussie Issa respectively (Population and Housing Census, 2010). However, according to the Sissala Heritage Foudation (2013), about 20% of the Sissala have migrated to the Southern Ghana in search of “non-existent greener pastures”. Figure 2.1 is a map of Sissala East District (now Sissala East Municipality).

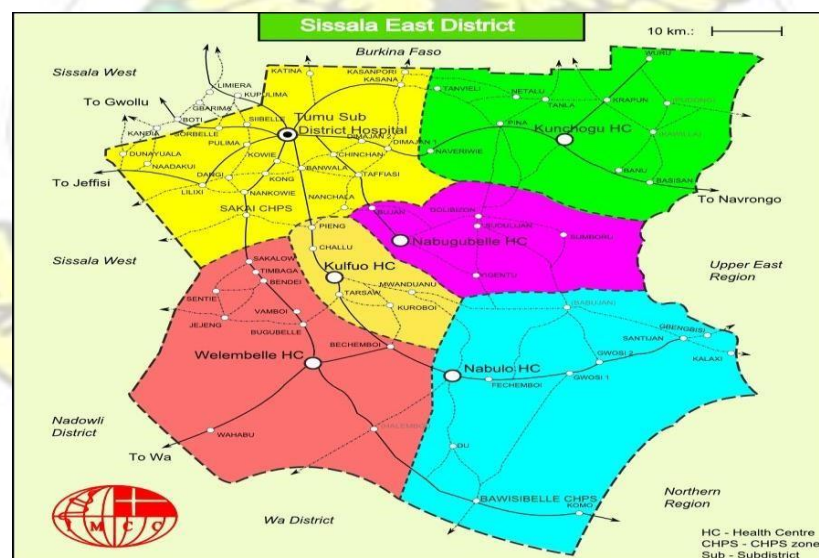


Figure 2.1: Map of Sissala East Municipality  
(Source: Sissala East Municipal Assembly, 2019)

The Sissala West District has Gwollu as its capital. It was carved out of the

Sissala East District in 2004 to deepen decentralisation. It is located in the North Western part of Ghana. It lies approximately between Longitude 2°13' W to 2°36'W and Latitude 10°00'N 11°00' N. It shares boundaries with the Jirapa Lambussie District to the West, Sissala East District (now elevated to the status of a municipality in 2018) to the East and Burkina Faso to the North and Wa East District to the South.

The Sissala East Municipality is located in the North-Eastern part of the Upper West region of Ghana. It falls between Longitudes 1°30'W and Latitude 10°00'N and 11°00'N (Kwekudee, 2013). The municipality has a total land size of 4,744 square kilometres, representing 26% of the total landmass of the region. It shares boundary on the East with Kassena Nankana and Builsa Districts, to the South East with West Mamprusi District, South West with Wa East and Nadowli Districts, West by Sissala West District and North with Burkina Faso, which facilitates cross border socioeconomic activities. However, this has its own implications for health and crime wave for the locals.

According to the Sissala East Municipal Strategic Plan (2019), Sissala East, like the rest of northern Ghana, falls within the broad vegetation zone of the Guinea Savannah woodlands that stretch from the north to the south-eastern corner of Ghana. The natural vegetation is generally grassland with scattered trees such as the baobab, dawadawa, shea tree and kapok. These trees are drought resistant by their ability to shed their leaves in the dry season and to store water against the drought. The climate of the area is marked by a dry and wet season. The dry season lasts from about October to April. Characteristic of this season is the hot, burning sun and the dry, lip cracking and sand carrying harmattan winds. The wet season lasts for about half of the year; April to October is usually characterised by violent thunderstorms that often cause great destruction to buildings.

The season is marked by a general green ground coverage as plants and grass begin to grow. It is the belief of some elders that the vegetation as described has resulted from the reduction of a grassland due to human habitation. It affords room and food for elephants, hippopotamus, deer, buffalos and that spoors of lions are frequently noticed. It is common even in recent times to see elephants occasionally traversing the area. It is significant to note that the vegetation and climatic conditions control the economic and social lives of the inhabitants as evident the stories surrounding their totems as recounted by clan heads in Chapter four of the study.

According to Kwekudee (2013), tourism potentials in the Sissala East Municipality include; Kasena Slave Market at Kasena, Wotuomo Cave between Dangi and Lilixia, Hunter's Footprints at Dolibizon, Mysterious Rocks at Pieng, Mysterious River at Nmanduanu, Bone setters at Wuru, Kwapun and Banu, Historical site at Santijan and the Whiteman's Grave at Tumu.

#### **2.4.2 Economic Activities of Sissala People**

Kwekudee (2013) posits that the Sissala economy is based on agriculture and livestock keeping. The Sissala area is endowed with fertile arable land, hence farming is the predominant economic activity of the people (Sissala East Municipal Strategic Plan, 2019). Arable crops such as maize, groundnuts, beans and yams are produced for household consumption and for sale. Recently maize production has significantly increased with many farmers producing for cash purposes other than for just consumption. The vegetation of the Sissala environment also promotes animal rearing as another key component of the economy of the Sissala.

Most families and individuals keep mainly cattle and sheep and depend on them in times of economic needs. Leather production is therefore part of the culture of Sissalas with sheep dominating. Families depend on cattle sales to pay school fees of

wards and settlement of health costs. Women mainly engage in shea nut harvesting which is processed and either sold out or further processed into shea butter. Sissala East Municipal Strategic Plan (2019) listed other minor economic activities in the municipality to include; petty trading, catering, masonry and carpentry. To facilitate economic activities in the municipality, there is weekly market in Tumu which draws traders from across the Upper West Region. Patrons from nearby communities bring in farm produce to sell to merchants who come from other parts of the region to purchase. The hospitality industry has expanded over the last decade in Tumu with numerous guest houses and hotels springing up to accommodate the increasing influx of people. However, the persistent bad nature of the roads from Tumu to Wa (the regional capital and Bolgatanga) remains a major obstruction to economic activities in Tumu and the entire Sissala area.

#### **2.4.3 Social Organization and Administration of Sissala People**

Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020) agrees with Awendoba (2009) that the Upper West Region and the Sissala traditional area for that matter, did not have an established chieftaincy institution amongst most of the groups until the advent of colonialism in the early 1900s. Political authority did not extend beyond the village or clan. It resided in the hands of the *Jantiina* or *Venetiina* (the landlord or chief priest of the community) who was the supreme and spiritual leader. The Sissalas practise a highly patrilineal system of inheritance and leadership within which flow of authority is established (Tumu Kuoro Palace, 2020). The Sissala enclave is composed of families and clans which are led by family and clan heads (*Dia Nihiang*). The *Dia Nihiang* is usually the elderly person amongst the category of "fathers" within that family or clan. This implies that there may be cases where the head of family or clan may not necessarily be oldest person alive. Even when the oldest member is in the

category of "sons" he cannot assume the role of the head of family. The role automatically goes to the oldest amongst those in the "fathers" category.

Land is the commonest family resource administered by the heads of the various families (*Dia Nihiang/Jantiina*) in trust of their members. According to Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020), chieftaincy was introduced in the Sissala area during the reign of Mimaka Wogorei as the *Jantiina*. Oral tradition has it that, upon the arrival of the colonial government in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Tumu community was thrown into fear. The Whiteman requested to know the leader of the community and Mimaka Wogorei who was then the *Jantiina* and very old, was presented. The singular brave act meant that he had put his head on the line for possible/anticipated capture. Indeed, the entire community was in some kind of fear, but Wogorei had to rise to the occasion as leader. Contrary to this, the colonial rulers who were on the mission to institute traditional governance systems (chiefdoms) across the northern territories as had already been practised by the Akans for a very long time, conferred on him a chieftaincy title. The idea was to entrench and perpetuate their interest in the Gold Coast. However, Wogorei never activated the title of chief until his son, Wogorei Kanton became chief and was actually sealed with the King's Medal for African Chiefs (KMC) and was given responsibility for the rest of the then Sissala Kingdom. Today, Tumu *Kuoro* is the paramount chief and president of the Tumu Traditional Council and symbolises the traditional and cultural heritage of the traditional area. He works with his divisional chiefs to maintain peace and development in the Tumu paramountcy. Like any other chief in Ghana, the Tumu *Kuoro* remains the face of the Tumu paramountcy to the external world. He uses his authority and weight to woo development partners into the community.

The women front is led by a women's leader known as the *Magazia/Hakuoro* (Queen mother) who mobilises the women for community activities and also help to solve

peculiar issues concerning women. The *Magazia/Hakuoro* is a key liaison between the women and the male leadership of the community. She also advises the chief on pertinent issues of development and accompany the chief during public events.

According to Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020), the youth front is also led by the *Hamiising Kuoro* (Youth Chief) who directly mobilises the youth in support of community development issues. He has the mandate to resolve issues among the youth when presented to him and pass on if he fails to resolve same to the Tumu *kuoro*. The *Hamiising kuoro* works to discourage the youth from all forms of violent activities and social vices. The *Hamiising kuoro* is also expected to be the link between the youth and the elders and the Tumu *Kuoro*. He mobilizes the youth for communal activities and advises the Tumu *Kuoro* on matters concerning young people.

Sissala Heritage Foundation (2013) states that the success and development of the Tumu traditional area is anchored on unity. Unity amongst the Sissala is not just based on a mere tolerance of religious, political, dialect and social differences. It is a far more complex unity on the basis of an appreciation that differences enrich human interactions (unity without uniformity and diversity without fragmentation). The Sissali language for example is divided into several dialects which is a key source of diversity of the Sissala. He added further that the Sissali dialectical difference is an issue of diversity and a great source of respect because in the Sissala traditional set up, it is said “*Jan vene bi tan vene ka hia*” (no community is important or superior to the other). The Sissalas also live in different communities in different geographical areas with varied natural resources which influence their behaviour, attitude and practices that make them different from each other and which also reinforces the diversity among the Sissalas even in the same traditional area. Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020) states the established traditional order of Tumu paramountcy as sub-chiefs, divisional chiefs and the paramount chief. The sub-chiefs include chiefs

of; Dimajan, Bakwala, Dangi, Nankpawie, Lilixsi, Sakallo, Bandei, Gyijen, and Sentie. The divisions are headed by chiefs of;

1. Sakai Division
2. Bujan Division
3. Challu Division
4. Pieng Division
5. Dasima Division
6. Kong Division
7. Taffiasi Division
8. Chinchang Division
9. Santijan Division
10. Kwapun Division

#### **2.4.4 Tumu Paramountcy Skin**

Traditionally, the Tumu *Kuoro* like other chiefs in northern Ghana, sits on stock of skins as his throne. Lund (2003) espouses that skin is the symbol of chiefly authority in northern Ghana, equivalent to the stool in the south. Awedoba (2009) contends that skins have no critical ritual and symbolic role for the chieftaincy cultures of all communities. The significance of the skin varies from community to community. This assertion can be seen in the changes/transformations the Tumu *kuoro*'s skin has undergone such as the building of two metal stage metal platforms for ceremonial occasions. The replacement of cow hides with antelope skins in the composition of the accoutrements of Tumu *kuoro* is yet another change to the skin without any ritual implications.

Currently, the Tumu Paramountcy Skin is represented with the hides of lion and tiger and has the appellation as ‘‘Bikobi’’ which means ‘Dare me not’ (Tumu Kuoro Palace, 2020). See Plate 2.1 Both the lion skin and the appellation according to the Tumu

Traditional Council, are to portray the overwhelming powers and influence of the Tumu *Kuoro*.

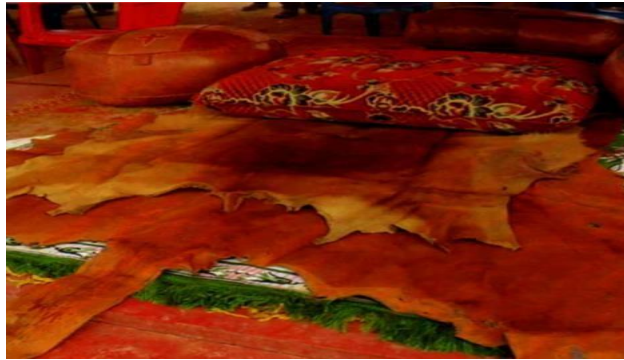


Plate 2.1: Tumu Paramountcy Skin  
(Source: Tumu Kuoro Palace, 2019)

The Tumu Paramountcy Skin is patrilineal and non-rotatory, which means that it is occupied by only descendants of Kantonjan of the Bali-ngaana family of Tumu. Awedoba (2009) posits that even though Tumu currently has no active and overt chieftaincy conflict, there are possible signs and uneasiness. He attributes this to a growing feeling that some local people are fed up and bored with one lineage's dominance of the chieftaincy field in Tumu, hence a crave for change. But Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020) disagrees and asserts that the Tumu *kuoro*'s skin is a single gate and non-reactionary since the introduction of chieftaincy in the Sissala area in the early 1900s. Since its inception of the Tumu skin in 1918, the skin has had six occupants.

They are listed chronologically as;

1. Mimaka Wogorei I 19<sup>th</sup> Century
2. Kuoro Wogorei Kanton II 1918– 1951
3. Kuoro Luri Kanton III 1951 – 1973
4. Kuoro Alhaji Yakubu Luriwie Kanton IV 1974 – 2001
5. Kuoro Gilbert Badzoe Kanton V 2001 – 2009

#### 2.4.4.1 Mimaka Wogorei I

As stated earlier, the concept of chieftaincy was introduced in the Sissala area during the reign of Mimaka Wogorei as the *Jantiina* (landlord/Chief Priest of Tumu). Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020) recounts that the colonial administration conferred on Mimaka Wogorei, chieftaincy title as the chief of Sissala in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. But because he (Mimaka Wogorei) was old and fragile, he never activated that title until his son, Wogorei Kanton was enskinned in accordance with the customs and tradition of the Sissala people in 1918. He was actually the first Sissala chief to be sealed with the King's Medal for African Chiefs (KMC) by the colonial government.

#### 2.4.4.2 Kuoro Wogorei Kanton II

According to Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020), Kuoro Wogorei Kanton II is believed to have been born around the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and brought up in line with typical Sissala customs and traditions (Centenary Anniversary lecture of Tumu Chiefdom, February 2020). He started his early life as a shepherd and later on went into farming and was a celebrated hunter. In 1918, Wogorei Kanton ascended the throne as Tumu *Kuoro* with the skin name *Kuoro Wogorei Kanton II*. See Plate 2.2 for his photograph.



Plate 2.2: Photograph of Kuoro Wogorei Kanton II

(Source: Tumu Kuoro's Palace, 2020)

Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020) adds further that, *Kuoro Wogrei Kanton* was elected head chief of Sissalas at the Kunchogu convention of 1924 which was organised by the colonial government to elect "a first among equals" of Sissala divisional chiefs. In the new position, Kanton worked hard to unite the then weak divisions of Sissalas into one strong Sissala state. He was also made the *Jantiina* of Tumu when Benado Yaljia died. However, he appointed Siguol Bayan to act in his stead.

To give practical meaning to the adage "two heads are better than one", *Kuoro Wogorei Kanton II* used to invite two divisional chiefs from time to time to assist him adjudicate cases. He did not go to school himself, but he showed great interest in education in many ways. He was personally involved in encouraging Sissala children to be schooled in Tamale and Lawra as there was no school in the Sissala area. The first Secondary School in the Sissala area was named after him; Kanton Secondary School. Plate 2.3 is a statute of *Kuoro Wogorei Kanton* at Kanton Senior High School in Tumu.



Plate 2.3: Statute of *Kuoro Wogorei Kanton* at Kanton Senior High School

(Source: Tumu Kuoro's Palace, 2020)

Kanton II died on Monday 29th January 1951 at his palace in Tumu. 29th January each year is observed by the people of Tumu as a Remembrance Day.

#### 2.4.4.3. Kuoro Luri Kanton III

Kuoro Luri Kanton was the eldest son of Wogorei Kanton. He was born in 1909 (Tumu Kuoro Palace, 2020). Like his father, he was a farmer and also a hunter. In the early 1930s, he went to Tamale and learnt to be a driver. His father bought him a vehicle and he was based in Tamale as a driver cum transport owner. He left Tamale and came home when he realized that he should be around his aging father. At home, he became a ward foreman and paymaster for the construction of Tumu-Lawra road.

Luri was enskinned Tumu *Kuoro* in 1951. He was elevated to the position of Paramount Chief of Sissala in 1958 and was subsequently elected 1st vice President of the Northern Region House of Chiefs. He was an advocate for the creation of the Upper Region and was elected 1st President of the Upper Region House of Chiefs for two consecutive times. Plate 2.4 is a photograph of Kuoro Luri Kanton III in full chieftaincy regalia.

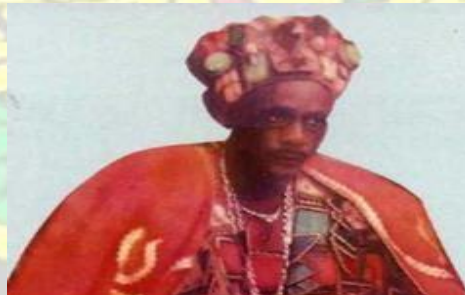


Plate 2.4: Photograph of Kuoro Luri Kanton III

(Source: Tumu Kuoro's Palace, 2020)

Luri Kanton III was one of the two-member delegation of Ghanaian eminent Chiefs sent on a good will visit to Cairo-Egypt as part of the arrangement for Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister of Ghana to marry Madam Fathia of Egypt. Soon after the 24th February, 1966 coup that toppled the Nkrumah regime, the Sissala Traditional area was turned into a confederate state with the Presidency rotating among the then five divisional chiefs annually. The Tumu Kuoro's paramountcy state

was however regained among others during the Acheampong regime. He reigned from 1951 to 1973.

#### **2.4.4.4 Kuoro Alhaji Yakubu Luriwie Kanton IV**

Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020) has it that Kuoro Alhaji Yakubu Luriwie Kanton IV another son of Wogorei Kanton II was born in 1914. He had no formal education and took to hunting. Due to his talent, his father bought him a locally manufactured gun at an early age of about thirteen (13) years. When his father realized his startling hunting skills, he chose him and another member of the family, Puso Jua to stop farming and do full time hunting to supply the royal household with bush meat and for sale. The hunting prowess of the two is well known across the Sissala communities. Senior citizens of Tumu still cherish happy memories of the days when bush meat was brought by those young hunters. Anytime they returned from the bush many families were relieved as they were assured of a good meal of meat especially during the lean season.

Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020) states further that Luriwie was recruited into the Tsetse Control Department (which was later transformed into Wildlife Department). Luriwie was a pioneer game scout and was instrumental in the survey and demarcation of the Mole National Park in the Northern Region (now Savannah Region), and later the Gbele Game Reserve in the Sissala East Municipality of the Upper West Region. Luriwie rose to the rank of a senior game scout at the Mole National park. See Plate 2.5 for photograph of Kuoro Luriwie Kanton IV in ceremonial Tumu skin regalia.



Plate 2.5: Photograph of Kuoro Luriwie Yakubu Kanton IV

(Source: Tumu Kuoro's Palace, 2020)

Following the demise of his elder brother, Luri Kanton in 1973, Luriwie Kanton was enskinned Tumu *Kuoro* on 4th of March, 1974 (Tumu Kuoro Palace, 2020). In accordance with the customs and traditions of Tumu he was also ordained the *venetiina* (chief priest) of Tumu on the 7<sup>th</sup> March, 1993 because he was the oldest surviving son of the Balingaana family after the death of Yalgia Babugu of Niafajan (a section of Tumu). However, he relinquished that role to one of his grandsons, Adama Bajor of Dalaajan (a section of Tumu) to act as his proxy when sacrifices were to be performed because of his position as the Tumu *Kuoro*. As a Muslim, *Kuoro* Luriwie Kanton went on a pilgrimage to Mecca in 1980 to perform Hajj. Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020) states further that during reign of Kuoro Alhaji Yakubu Luriwie Kanton IV, *Pari Gbielle* (festival of harvest which he celebrated within his traditional area) was instituted. He is also remembered as one who encouraged and maintained Sissala cultural values. He was a life patron of the Sissala Union. Luriwie Kanton IV advocated for the creation of the Upper West Region and was elected 1st vice president of the Regional House of Chiefs on two consecutive times of the young region. He died in January, 2001.

**2.4.4.5. Kuoro Gilbert Badzoe Kanton V**

According to Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020), Kuoro Gilbert Badzoe Kanton V (affectionately called G.B. Kanton) another son of Wogorei Kanton II, the first literate Tumu *Kuoro* of the Kanton Dynasty was born in 1931. He attended Lawra primary boarding school from 1939 to 1943 and then proceeded to Tamale Government Middle School 1944-1947 and came out with a standard seven certificate. He did a

year's pupil teaching in the Tumu primary boarding school in 1948 and a certificate "B" teacher training from 1949-1950.

After his training, he never went back to teaching. He went into local government as a treasurer of the Tumu District Council from 1950. He proceeded to the local government school in Accra and came out with a London certificate for local government workers. He was promoted clerk to Tumu District Council from 1958-1961. G.B. Kanton was the District Census Officer for Ghana 1960 population census and also the 1961 industrial census. He became the treasurer/clerk of the Upper Region

House of Chiefs from 1961-1964 when he returned to Tumu as the bursar of Kanton Training College from 1964 to 1969.

G.B. Kanton became the Managing Director for Sambali Limited; a distributor for British America Tobacco Company and was stationed in Wa, Bolga and

Tamale until he was enskinned Tumu *Kuoro* on the 28th of May, 2001 (Tumu Kuro Palace, 2020). He was called to eternity in the early hours of 17<sup>th</sup> February, 2009. Plate 2.6 is a photograph of *Kuoro* Gilbert Badzoe Kanton V in ceremonial Tumu skin regalia.



Plate 2.6: Photograph of Kuoro Gilbert Badzoe Kanton V

(Source: Tumu Kuoro's Palace, 2020)

#### **2.4.4.6. Kuoro Richard Babini Kanton VI**

Babini Kanton attended primary school at the Tumu United Primary School in 1962 and proceeded to the Tumu Middle day school (Tumu Kuoro Palace, 2020). He was admitted to Nandom Secondary school for two years and completed his secondary school education at the Kanton Secondary school. He was among the first batch of students when the Kanton College (KANCO) was transformed to Kanton Secondary School (Kanasec). Having completed secondary school, he joined the Customs Excise and Preventive Services (CEPS) Training School and passed out in 1981.

According to Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020), Babini Kanton was enskinned as the 6th Tumu *Kuoro* on the 1st of August 2009 after the death of his elder brother. Babini Kanton became the vice president of the Upper West Regional House of Chiefs from 2012 to 2016 and later became the president from 2016 to date. In 2017 he was elected as one of the Upper West representatives to the Council of State a position he holds up to date. His Excellency President Nana Akuffo Addo appointed him to the Ghana AIDS commission. Again, he was appointed by the president as a member of the committee responsible for the endowment fund of the Major Mahama Memorial Trust fund following the gruesome killing of the young military officer in Den-kyiraObuasi in the Central Region of Ghana by a mob of citizens. Plate 2.7 is a photograph of Kuoro Richard Babini Kanton VI.



Plate 2.7: Photograph of Kuoro Richard Babini Kanton VI

(Source: Tumu Kuoro's Palace, 2020)

Immediately after his enskinment as Tumu *Kuoro* in 2009, he worked with his divisional and sub-chiefs in the Tumu paramountcy to revive and strengthen the *Paari Gbielle* festival which had not been celebrated for a very long time. Under his reign, 10 successful festivals were held with the 2019 edition graced by the president of Ghana, Nana Akuffo Addo (the first time any president has attended the festival).

#### **2.4.5 The Festivals of Sissalas**

There are two (2) festivals on the Sissala calendar. They are: *Paari Gbielle* and *Jinbanti* festivals.

##### **2.4.5.1 *Paari Gbielle* Festival**

*Paari Gbielle* is the biggest festival of the Sissala of the Upper West Region. According to Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020), *Paari Gbielle* was instituted by Kuoro Kanton Luriwie III, Paramount Chief of the then Sissala Traditional Area in 1965, to thank the gods for the year's bumper harvest and to unite the Sissala for a common purpose. The festival, however was short-lived following proposals from other Sissala paramount chiefs that the celebration of the festival should rotate among the paramountcies in the Sissala District (now Sissala East Municipality). It was, celebrated in Walembelle (second largest Sissala community apart from Tumu). This however marked the collapse of the festival.

The festival was however revived under the instrumentality of *Kuoro* Richard Babini Kanton IV, paramount chief of the Tumu traditional area in 2009 and it has since been celebrated annually. Today, the *Paari Gbielle* festival is celebrated by the chiefs and people of the Tumu traditional area as a thanksgiving to the gods and ancestors for a bumper harvest, and as an occasion to offer prayers for good health and prosperity for

all (Modey, 2019). The festival is also used to foster unity through forgiveness and reconciliation of feuding factions in the Tumu traditional area. Also, it is used a vehicle for annual stocktaking event for all occupational endeavours especially farming, it is used to mobilize both human and material resources of the traditional area for job and wealth creation.

According to Sissala Heritage Foundation (2013), *Paari Gbielle* festival also serves as an annual re-affirmation of allegiance by all chiefs and their subjects in the Tumu skin. Invitation to the celebration of the festival is usually extended to all and sundry in Ghana and beyond. Tourists, academicians, and photojournalists among others are usually in attendance. In 2019, the special guest of honour was His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana.

The also serves as an occasion for the chiefs and the Sissala people to showcase their rich culture, as usually depicted in their costumes, musical renditions and dances. The Tumu *Kuoro* usually sits in state in his *geriwarikin* (fortified smock dress), divisional and sub-chiefs in their best smocks and hunters (mainly men) dressed in their hunting gear. The hunters usually sketched how they tracked and captured prey in the field, amid music and dance, to the admiration of the audience.



Pate 2.8: Sissala War Dance During *Paari Gbielle* Festival  
(Source: Tumu Kuoro Palace, 2019)

Sucking of fresh blood out of live animals and chewing fresh meat are usually spectacles to behold during the annual *Paari Gbielle* festival. This rare display of culture is usually one of the key factors that attracts people from all walks of life to the annual festival. The proceeds from every annual celebration are usually used for the development of the traditional area.

#### **2.4.5.2 *Jinbanti* Festival (Fire Festival)**

There is no gainsaying the fact that Christianity and Islam have exerted a strong influence on the traditions and customs of the Sissala. That notwithstanding, the Sissala people still retain many of their pre-Christianity and Islamic beliefs and practices (Tumu Kuoro Palace, 2020). The Sissala honour their ancestors with a festival called *Jinbanti*, which means “fire festival”. Oral tradition has it that, the festival is thought to purify the people from satanic influences and juju and, weapons of war were cleansed in the process. In recent times, *Jinbanti* is celebrated among the minority Sissala traditional believers in May.

The celebration begins with a great feast and culminates when the people gather together with lighted fibrewoods near refuse dump outside the community (Sissala Heritage Foundation, 2013). There, they recite the names of their ancestors and throw their fibrewoods into the refuse dump. It can be deduced from the above that Sissala festivals are anchor grounds that rally the Sissala together to promote the Sissala cultural values. They serve as vital key links to their educational, aesthetic, inspirational and economic legacies -all of which make the Sissala, Sissala.

### **2.5 Overview of Totems**

The term ‘totem’ comes from a North American Indian language that refers

to vegetables or animals which are revered by individuals, particularly group of people or an ethnic group as sacred (Diawuo and Issifu, 2015). Totems are considered as emblems consisting of an objects, animals or plants that serve as the symbol of a family or clan and often as a reminder of its ancestry. They are therefore accorded respect, and believed to have a sacred connection with a human group. According to Dagba et al. (2013), totem is an animal, a plant or object believed to be ancestrally related to a tribe, clan, family or group of people as a spirit. There are ideological, emotional, reverential, and genealogical relationships of social groups or specific persons with animals or natural objects, the so-called totems. For instance, people generally view a totem as a companion, relative, protector, progenitor, or helper, and ascribe to it superhuman powers and abilities, and offer it some combination of respect, veneration, awe and fear. Most cultures use special names and emblems to refer to the totem, and those it sponsors engage in partial identification with the totem or symbolic assimilation to it. There is usually a prohibition or taboo against killing, eating, or touching the totem.

Katsande (2015) posits that in the past, African chiefs decorated their stools and other court items with their personal totems, or with those of the tribe or of the clans making up the larger community. Every member of the community was duty bound to protect and defend the totem. This obligation ranged from not harming that animal or plant, to actively feeding, rescuing or caring for it as needed. Legend has it that men rose to fame for rescuing their totems. This is still the norm in some African societies, where totems are treasured and preserved for the community's good. Marfo (2015) holds the view that, totem is usually an animal or other natural figure that spiritually represents a group of related people such as a clan. He adds that the purpose of the family totem is for identification, adding that the totems are proverbial symbols which carry a hidden message, doctrine or powers of a king or the traditional area.

It can be inferred from the discussions above that totem could be an object, animal, plant, or other natural phenomenon revered as a symbol of a clan, lineage or family. It is usually regarded as a symbolic emblem and therefore treated with respect and reserved for religious icons.

## 2.6 Sissala Clan Totems

Sissala enclave is composed of families and clans which are led by “*Dia Nihiang*” (family and clan head). Rattary (1932) states that Sissalas are identified by their clans in two ways; *ben nwehe* (what they swear) or *ben vea* (what they consider as taboo). The latter takes precedence over the former and so when coupled with the name of the totem, gives the clan its name. Sissalas relate in the clan and lineage system. The clan is the wider division of the society and is composed of lineages. Each clan is a composition of related members who trace their ancestry to the original founder (Tumu Kuoro Parlace, 2020).

Sissala clans are exogamous, totemic and patrilineal Rattray (1932). It is there incest (abomination) for clan members to marry among themselves; lest, they sin against the gods. This is because they hail from the same lineage and are one and the same. Totems therefore serve as an important binding force that unites members of a particular clan. According to Sissala Heritage Foundation (2013), totems are usually acquired by the Sissalas; when it is alleged that at one time or the other, an ancestor swore against it and that his descendants would never have to kill or eat what is regarded as the totem. They have a totem which they all revere and inherit along the father’s line Sometimes, people realise their relation by finding out if they share the same totem Tumu Kuoro Palace (2020).

Sissala Heritage Foundation (2013), establishes that Sissala clans are

identified with totems, which are symbols of animals, birds and plants or objects which are accorded with respect, and believed to have a sacred connection with a human group. They therefore refrain from mistreating or harming their totems neither do they eat them, though some may do so out of ignorance. Rattray (1932) identifies Sissala clan totems as presented in Table 2.1.

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Table 2.1: Sissala Clan Totems

| No. | Clan Totem in Sissali | Clan Totem in English | Settlement(s)  |
|-----|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 1.  | <i>Gangan</i>         | Crow                  | Tumu, Yigantu  |
| 2.  | <i>Gama</i>           | Crown-bird            | Gwollu, Sorbelle,<br>Kupulima, Nyimati,<br>Kwala, Kandia,<br>Gorma                     |
| 3   | <i>Hene</i>           | Red Pot               | Sakai, Kong,<br>Nankpawie,<br>Bakuala, Lilixia,<br>Dangi, Goosie,<br>Santie, Badiseboi |

|    |                 |           |   |
|----|-----------------|-----------|---|
| 4. | <i>Sam</i>      | Porcupine | Kulfuo,<br>Walembelle,<br>Bugubelle, Tasor,<br>Gyawia,            |
| 5. | <i>Piesu</i>    | Sheep     | Gyigyen, Santie,  |
| 6. | <i>Natebe</i>   | Slipper   | Sakalo, Bandei,<br>Boti, Linwerea,<br>Jeffessi (some<br>sections) |
| 7. | <i>Changbei</i> | Frog      | Challu  |
| 8. | <i>Nyiwa</i>    | Crocodile | Lipilime, Gyawia,<br>Nymati, Kasana,<br>Gwollu (some<br>sections) |
| 9. | <i>Gunguro</i>  | Wolf      | Dolbezan  |

Source: Rattray (1932)

## 2.7 Textile Design

According to Tortora and Merkel (2007), textile design is an arrangement of form or colours, or cloth, to be implemented as ornamentation in or on various textile materials. They explained further that designs or patterns can be woven or knitted into the structure of a fabric. This may form a surface decoration; or a blend of colours that may brighten or improve the design or pattern. According to Mensah (2007), textile design is the process of creating designs for knitted, woven or printed fabrics. He opines that textile designing involves producing patterns for cloth used in clothing, household textiles (such as towels) and decorative textiles such as carpets. It is a creative field that bridges fashion design, carpet manufacturing and any other cloth-related field.

Sackey (2002) postulates that textile design is a small part of a wider term known as designing which is the process of creating a design. Design is the planned arrangement

of the various parts that make up an object, a setting or a picture. Design is an expression of the mind which has been interpreted through a process of planning. This process involves the continuous organisation of accepted elements and principles that may be original innovative and constructive, with the ability to satisfy man's utilitarian and aesthetic needs.

From the review above, it can be deduced that textile design is a process of decorating any form of textile material with designs made from the elements and principles of design. The designs are sometimes made on the surface or forms part of the structure of the textile material. The study draws on the elements and principle of design to create images from Sissala clan totems as a valuable resource of textile regalia with active involvement of the end user (*Tumu kuoro*) and the Sissalas throughout the processes.

## **2.8 Palace Art in Ghana**

Adu-Agyem (1998) notes that palaces in Ghana have been a major custodian of art works. Fosu (1994) agrees that an artist selected to make an art work for the chief, is expected to pay particular attention to the highest level of artistic standard for the designing and the decoration of the selected object. The reason is that the aesthetic, appreciation for the work is critically judged by the communicative messages in the physical form. This is achieved by a harmonious blending of design patterns and colours. Any deviation from such laid down convention of thematic design is not easily tolerated.

Adu-Agyem mentions further that, art works in various palaces are collections of unique items of good craftsmanship. These were made by the most skilful craftsmen in the community who are well vested in traditions and customs of the land and they make use of symbolic materials of high value. An artefact suffers rejection if it is not well executed because of the high standards at the palaces.

Adu-Agyem concludes that, almost all art forms in the palaces of Ghana, whether produced for utilization purposes, personal ornamentation or for state regalia, are subjected to deliberate or meticulous decorations to communicate, to please and to stimulate aesthetically. They display excellent designs and motifs of sheer aesthetic delight. Many of such regalia such as palanquin, jewellery, stools, swords and drums have been made to carry particular messages.

From the deliberations above, researcher sought to execute symbolic textile regalia for the Tumu Paramountcy skin with precision and a knack for excellence because of the high-profile end user Tumu *kuoro*, president of Upper West Regional House of Chiefs and Member of the Council of State.

## **2.9 Theoretical Framework Underlining the Study**

Described as the ‘blueprint’ or guide for a research (Grant and Osanloo, 2014), theoretical framework is based on an existing theory in a field of inquiry that is related and/or reflects the hypothesis or research questions of a study. This means that, the theoretical framework serves as the foundation upon which a research is constructed. Brondizio et al. (2014) agree that the theoretical framework is the specific theory or theories about aspects of human endeavour that can be useful to the study of events. The theoretical framework provides the structure in showing how a researcher defines his/her study philosophically, epistemologically, methodology and analytically (Grant and Osanloo, 2014). In respect of the purpose of the study, two theories guided the study; the symbolic interactionism and cultural perspective of clothing from a semiotic view point.

### **2.9.1 Symbolic Interactionism Theory**

Symbolic interaction was developed in the middle of the twentieth century from a sociological view point and it remains influential in many disciplines. This theory claims that facts are based on and directed by symbols. Symbolic interaction, as noted by Aksana et al. (2009), examines the meanings emerging from the reciprocal interaction of individuals in social environment with other individuals and focuses on the question of “which symbols and meanings emerge from the interaction between people?”. Thus, the foundation of this theory is meanings. Schenk and Holman (1980) state that symbolic interaction is a dynamic theory because according to this theory objects feature meanings within themselves and individuals formulate their activities in the direction of their evaluation of themselves and also people and objects around them. Thus, it is the social actors that attribute meaning to objects according to this perspective.

The most important theorist of symbolic school is George Herbert Mead. Mead is a pragmatist and anti-dualist philosopher. He holds the view that mind and ego are products of society. Mead assumes that symbols develop mind and they are used as means for thinking and communication (Ashworth, 2000). Mead focused on how people interact in their daily lives by means of symbolic interaction and how they create order and meaning (Korgen and White, 2008). Blumer, who is a student of Mead, is the first one to use symbolic interaction term. For that reason, he is also named as the founder of symbolic interaction.

### **2.9.2 Principles of Symbolic Interactionism**

Blumer (1969) outlines three core principles of the Symbolic Interactionism Theory; meaning, language and thought.

**Meaning:** the first principle of symbolic interaction theory recognises the principle of meaning as the centre of human behaviour. Meaning has it that humans act and behave towards other people and things according to the significances they have given to them. It is the human consciousness about their environment that leads to the possibility of meaning. The things extricated from the environment are interpreted by the individual as meaningful symbols and are used in action. Blumer (1969) avers that humans form meaning in two ways; meaning is something attributed to objects, events, phenomenon, etc. and meaning is a physical attachment imposed on events and objects by human. Blumer believes that meaning is a condition that emerges as a result of the interaction of group members and not an intrinsic feature of the object (Tezcan, 2005). Therefore, meaning is created as a result of the interaction between people which allows people to produce some facts forming the sensory world. Thus, fact consists of the interpretation of various definitions. According to Berg (2000) it is not important whether interpretations are accurate or not but facts are based on personal perceptions which changes in time.

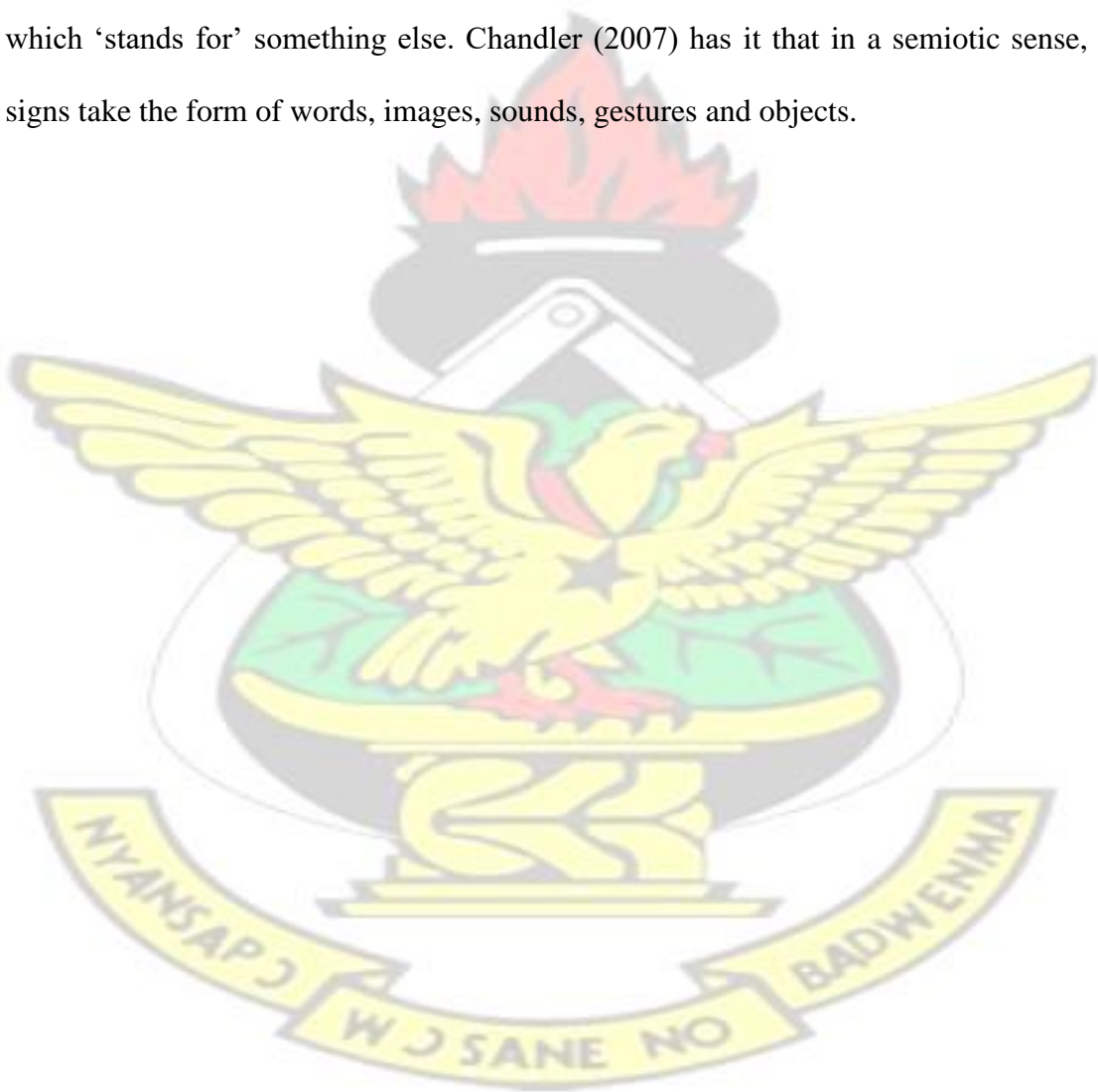
**Language:** The second core principle gives humans a means by which to negotiate meaning through symbols and interactions that are comprehensible to the mind and which helps in formulating assumptions (Carter and Fuller, 2015). Symbols form the basis of communication and it is symbols that differentiate social relations of humans from the level of communication of animals. In other words, symbols are indispensable elements for the formation of any kind of communication acts. Blumer explained that, people interact with each other by interpreting or defining each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their responses are not made directly to the actions of one another but instead it is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Hence, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols and signification, by interpretation or by ascertaining the meaning of one

another's actions. This mediation is equivalent to inserting a process of interpretation between stimulus and response in the case of human behaviour. A symbol may be regarded as a stimulus with a learned meaning and value (Redmond, 2015). The person's response to the stimulus is in terms of this meaning and is generally not isomorphic with its effect upon the person's physical sense organs. This implies that the source of meaning is not intrinsic to the thing that holds it, neither is it a congregation of psychological elements in the person. Instead, meaning arises as a process of interaction between individuals.

**Thought:** The third core principle of symbolic interactionism is thought, which implies the interpretations that are assigned to the symbols. These meanings are handled in and modified through an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters (Flint, 2006). The foundation of thought is language and thought is a mental conversation about the meanings, names and symbols that requires different points of view. The thought includes the imagination which has the power to provide an idea even about an unknown thing based on known knowledge. The symbolic interaction believes that through interaction with others, the individual understands the common meaning associated with the symbols but may modify and change. The same symbol may have different meanings in different settings, for different individuals depending on how the individual interprets the setting. Blumer (1969) also notes how the meanings are as a result of dialogue with oneself. That is, when responding in a particular way to a symbol, the individual notes the symbol and however quickly or unconsciously, develops a particular response. This stage of interpretation between stimulus and response involves some dialogue with oneself, considering what was meant by the symbol, what one wants to portray in a response, how the other person will understand and interpret the response, and what is the most appropriate response in the circumstance.

### 2.9.3 Cultural Theory

The cultural theory used in the field of Clothing and Textiles is interdisciplinary, it therefore draws from theories and concepts from a variety of disciplines. Cultural theory in this context as noted by Kaiser (1997), comes from a semiotic point of perspective. Semiotics is the study of meaning making, sign process (semiosis) and meaningful communication (Danesi, 2004). Semiotics involves the study not only of what is referred to as 'signs' in everyday speech, but of anything which 'stands for' something else. Chandler (2007) has it that in a semiotic sense, signs take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects.



## 2.9

### .4 The Saussurean Model

Saussure defined a sign as being composed of a 'signifier' (sound, object, image, gestures or the like) and a 'signified' (concept). According to Chandler (2007), sign is the whole that results from the association of the signifier with the signified. The signifier which in language is a set of speech sounds or marks on a page and the signified is the concept or the idea behind the sign.

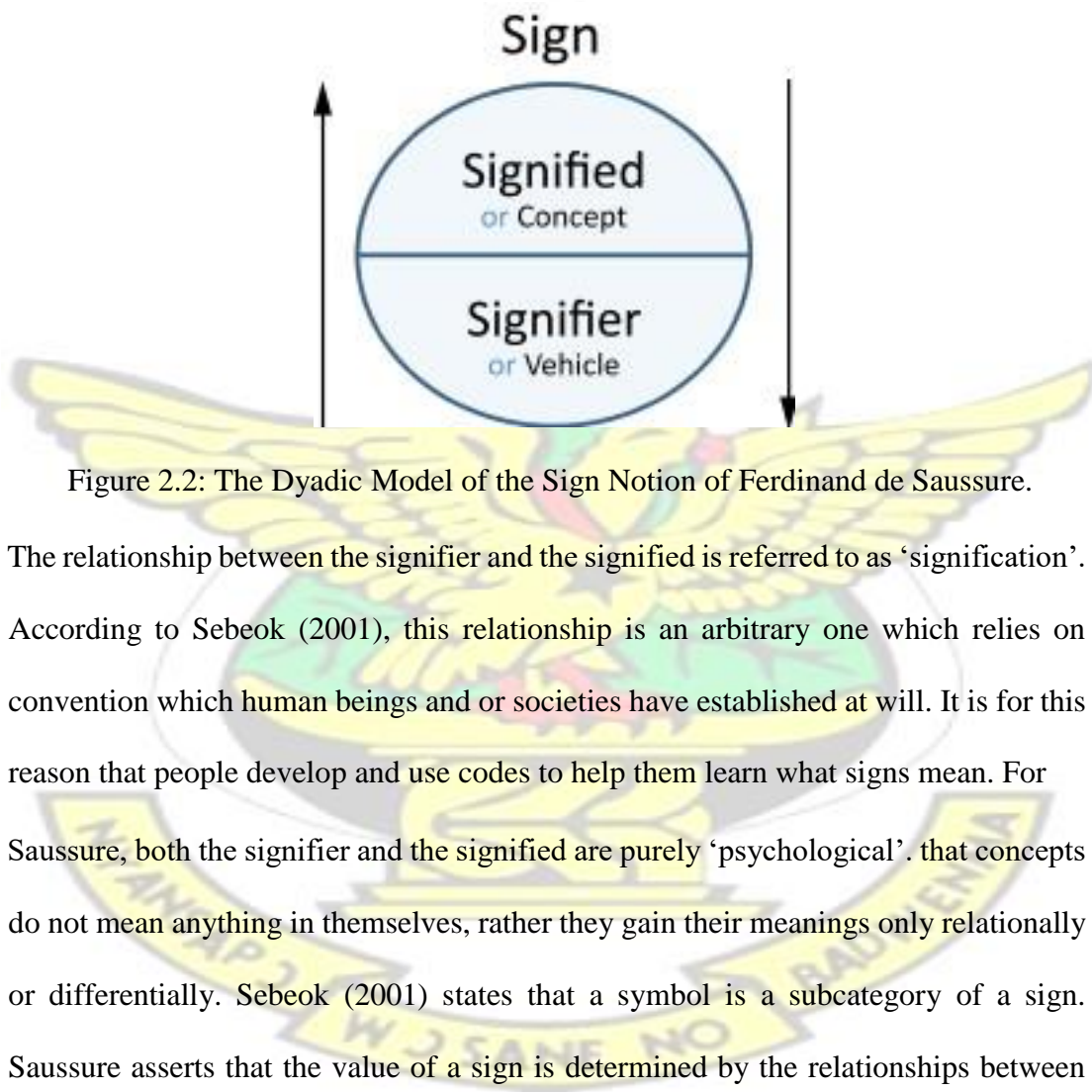


Figure 2.2: The Dyadic Model of the Sign Notion of Ferdinand de Saussure.

The relationship between the signifier and the signified is referred to as 'signification'. According to Sebeok (2001), this relationship is an arbitrary one which relies on convention which human beings and or societies have established at will. It is for this reason that people develop and use codes to help them learn what signs mean. For Saussure, both the signifier and the signified are purely 'psychological'. that concepts do not mean anything in themselves, rather they gain their meanings only relationally or differentially. Sebeok (2001) states that a symbol is a subcategory of a sign. Saussure asserts that the value of a sign is determined by the relationships between the sign and other signs within the system as a whole.

## 2.9

### **.5 Cultural Theory in Clothing and Textiles Context**

It has become evident that almost anything can develop cultural significance as it comes to be regarded as meaningful, whether by design or by serendipity (Kaiser, (1997). People of all cultures modify their appearances in some way, yet the symbolic systems and codes used to decipher and interpret clothing are likely to vary. In cultural studies, culture is regarded as a kind of 'structure of feeling' (Morreale and Marshall, 2005). It is a context within which people experience and evaluate their lives. Evaluation is done using symbolic meanings and codes. Therefore, the social psychology of clothing and textiles must consider meaning not only within social contexts, but also within a larger cultural context. Kaiser (1997) has it that the essence of culture from a semiotic perspective focussing on how meaning is produced, lies in the interplay between a kind of 'historical' memory (the history of meaning) and social resistance to this memory.

Kumatia (2018) notes that whenever individuals share a typical culture, they're seemingly to be exposed to a network of tangible products. The buying, merchandising and using of garments all contribute to content or the event of meaning related to cultural objects. It is therefore not simply the product that ends up in the method of signification, but also the means people relate to those products and what they do with them. The fundamental idea behind cultural perspective derived from semiotics is that, the perceiver of a cultural message is a vital part of the process of signification (Barthes, 2013). The perceiver is able to make inferences of cultural products based on their own beliefs and how they relate to the cultural products.

## 2.9

### **.6 Assumptions of Cultural Theory**

Cultural theory assumption explains that certain appearances or material artefacts come to represent shared values within a culture. These shared values are often linked to cultural belief systems. Cultural forms are therefore very important angles of culture with theoretical thoughts that are imbued within the culture. According to Hitlin and Piliavin (2004), these forms often refer to social relation that is, how people relate to one another on the basis of such qualities as gender, social class, age and ethnicity. Some meanings of clothing and appearance symbols are provided and transmitted by culture and we interact with one another within this context of cultural meaning. These oppositions and contrasts might include, youth verses age, masculinity verses femininity, androgynous verses singularity, inclusiveness verses exclusiveness, work verses play, domesticity verses worldliness, revelation verses concealment, licence verses restraint, and conformity verses rebellion (Owyong, 2009). According to Kaiser (2012), cultural messages of this sort form the basis of the construction and transformation of cultural knowledge. These messages are like ideas yet they are expressed through such tangible cultural objects as clothing. Ideological messages deal with more than meaning, they deal with values by defining who or what is more worthwhile. These cultural messages are created through the process of presentation. This process may involve selecting, presenting, structuring and shaping elements of reality by either reinforcing the status quo or creating new meanings. People have the potential to transform their own realities by manipulating the objects in their cultural worlds. Culture provides clothes and other tools or objects such as adornments used for appearance management. It also provides

## 2.9

images and ideas. However, individuals may use these objects, images and ideas in imaginative ways. Even when one's repertoire of these objects is limited and some of

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these limitations are based on culture that the individual may reorganise them, find new ways of combining them, juxtapose elements or images that are not often seen together or try out looks in new context. In this way, cultural conventions may be applied in new ways or may be broken or bent.

A cultural approach, drawing from semiotics provides a framework for interpreting cultural stories, images, dreams and fantasies that allow people a means for escape or for making sense of who they are and what they are doing (Kaiser, 2012). Abstract cultural forms may be compared and contrasted with the more specific and concrete clothing styles in everyday life. Although cultural representations of social life may be shared by the public, they are often experienced in private contexts and the experience of being exposed to cultural representations actually become part of everyday life as people interpret cultural appearances.

Cultural representations also may provide some ideas for personal appearance management. People use codes to decipher the meanings of cultural representations of social life. A semiotic approach to cultural representations entails delving into the cultural meanings that lie beneath the surface of messages. This approach also assumes that the world is coded and that meaning abounds in everyday cultural objects as well as in abstract cultural representations. Mikerina (2016) has it that a code is a system of rules of combination and transformation of its elements, and these rules are conventional and culturally established.

Cultural theory from a semiotic approach in relation to the textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy is viewed in terms of their cultural beliefs and practices. The chiefs and people of the Tumu traditional area evaluate their lives using symbolic meanings and codes which stem from their beliefs system. The textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy skin chiefs become the signifier and the symbolic meaning given to the signifier becomes the signified. The relationship that exists between the signifier

and the signified is the signification and this is based on the cultural beliefs, customs and practices that the Sissala people have established from generations to generations. The perceivers (Sissala people) are important part of the relationship that exists between the textile regalia (signifier) of the Sissala people and the symbolic meanings (signified).

## **2.10 Conceptual Framework**

Camp (2001) defines conceptual framework as a structure that the researcher believes can best make a case for the natural progression of the phenomenon to be studied. It is the researcher's explanation of how the research problem would be explored. Conceptual framework presents an integrated way of looking at a problem under study (Liehr and Smith, 1999). Grant and Osanloo (2014) notes that it is arranged in a logical structure to aid provide a picture or visual display of how ideas in a study relate to one another.

Achieving the objective of making imagery of Sissala clan totems and incorporating them in the design and production of distinct textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy requires a careful structuring of ideas and events, reflecting on modules and works of others. The conceptual framework of this study (Figure 2.2) was carefully developed from the three-stage Universal Design Model by Zeidman, (2003) based on the ideologies derived from the literature.

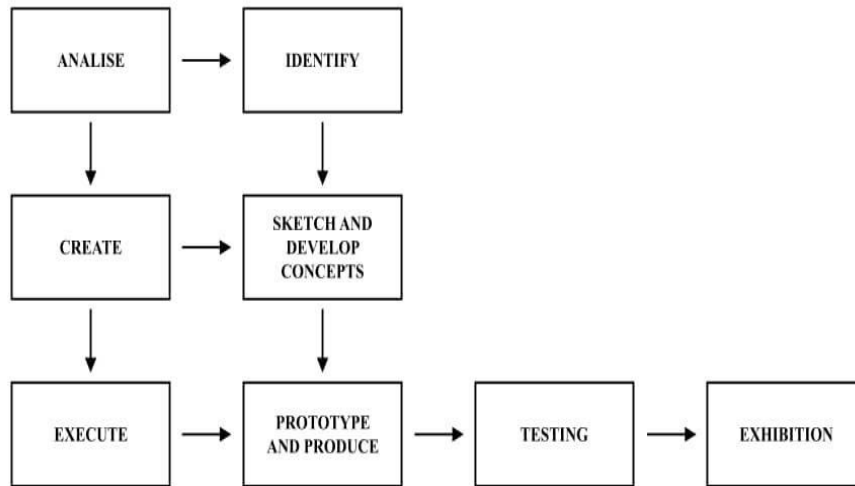


Figure 2.3: Conceptual Framework

Developed from Universal Design Model by Zeidman (2003)

The five-stage model (identify, sketch and develop concept concepts, prototype and produce, testing and exhibition) systematically aided the production of the novel textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy. The framework is such that Sissala clan totems and the Tumu paramountcy skin regalia were identified through survey and analysis. The totems were sketched and concept designs developed for prototype and simulations to guide the main production. The finished textile regalia were pretested and exhibited to create a platform for in-depth academic and public discourse towards enhancing cultural and artistic knowledge.

### CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the methodology adopted by researcher for gathering data to achieve the objectives of the study. It entails the research design, population, libraries visited, research instruments, the sample size and procedure used for the study.

### 3.1 Research Design

Finding proven answers to research questions is the core of every research study. According to Burns and Grove (2003), research design is a blue print for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings. Noor (2008) agrees that the choice of which research method to employ for a study is dependent on the research question(s). The study focuses on exploring Sissala clan totems to design and produce textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy Skin. Since the study requires an in-depth study of the Sissalas and their clan totems to design and produce unique textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin, the ethnographic action research through studio-based paradigm adopting the Universal Design Model by Zeidman (2003) was employed.

Ethnographic action research according to Tacchi et al. (2003), combines ethnography and action research. Ethnography means to write on a culture of a people. Tacchi et al. (2003) add that, action research means integrating the research findings back into the developing project. Ethnographic action research draws on key ethnographic tools such as participant observation and in-depth interviews, and takes a multi-method approach. In view of this, the Universal Design Model (UDM) by Zeidman (2003) as shown in Figure 3.1 was adopted.

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Analytical Phase:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Observation</li> <li>○ Measurement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>                        | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who is the User?</li> <li>Surveys &amp; Observation</li> <li>Standards</li> <li>Regulations</li> </ul>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Creative Phase:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Evaluation</li> <li>○ Judgement</li> <li>○ Decision</li> </ul> </li> </ul>         | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stretching ideas</li> <li>Drawing Concepts</li> <li>Building Models</li> <li>Ranking &amp; Selecting Ideas</li> </ul>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Executive Phase:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Description</li> <li>○ Translation</li> <li>○ Transmission</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prototyping</li> <li>Details and Specifications</li> <li>Manufacturing</li> <li>Product Testing</li> <li>Usability Testing</li> <li>Compliance with Standards</li> <li>Marketing</li> </ul> |

Figure 3.1: Universal Design Methodology

(Source: Zeidman, 2003)

The reason for adopting the Universal Design Model (UDM) by Zeidman (2003) is because it outlines clear modalities for the effective execution of the project as;

- i. design and produce textile regalia that are free from defects and fit for purpose.
- ii. design and produce textile regalia, using the least amount of time and material and human resources.
- iii. plan the production of the textile regalia efficiently by creating a prototype and simulation that allow one to understand all the necessary resources and allocate them in the production process.

With the adoption of the UDM as a foundation, a model capturing five (5) phases (identify, sketch and develop concept designs, prototype and produce, testing and exhibition) was developed in order to effectively attain the objectives of the study.

**Identify:** This is the first phase of the five-stage model developed from the UDM. The researcher surveyed the six (6) major clans Sissala in the Tumu traditional area and identified and documented their clan totems. The researcher also attended the annual *Paari Gbielle* festival of the chiefs and people of the Tumu traditional area in 2019 and purposefully identified, observed and took pictures of the existing textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy skin.

**Sketch and Develop Concept Designs:** With this phase, data gathered from the survey was evaluated and final decision taken for creation of concept designs. A lot of creativity was also needed here. In view of this, several thumbnail sketches of Sissala clan totems were made and shown to clan heads for validation and approval. The approved drawings were rendered with Adobe Illustrator as a resource for the creation of concept designs of novel textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy.

**Prototype and Produce:** This is an experimental phase of the model which involves the creation of three samples of the skin rug cover. The aim was to identify the most suitable sample. This experimental phase also entails the simulation of *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), *nasin kumpungu* (arm rest), *naasin kumpungu* (foot rest), *geriwarikin*, *nyinchulo* (war dress) and *natengpro* (native boots) with vectorbased computer designing software (CorelDRAW). The simulation was done to give a clear insight into the outcome of the final projects.

**Testing:** This phase embodies strict examination of the finished textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy. The testing was done to check the functionality of the finished works and to ascertain if they were fit for purpose.

**Exhibition:** This final phase covers the exhibition and demonstration of the finished textile regalia at the gallery of the Department of Industrial Art of KNUST for public viewing and academic discourse towards enhancing cultural and artistic knowledge.

### **3.2 Population for the Study**

Population is the aggregate or totality of objects or individuals regarding which inferences are to be made in a sampling study (Sidhu, 2003). Kelly and Long (2000) agrees that population is the total number of units from which data can be collected, such as individuals, artefacts, events or organisations. The study was limited to the Tumu traditional area with the population being the chiefs, linguists, clan heads, clan totems and textile regalia of the Tumu skin. Regalia and clan totems were added to the population because according to Hauert (2007) notes that population does not necessarily mean human beings as it can be finite and infinite.

The Tumu traditional area is composed of six clans and made up of 18 towns and villages. In view of this, the target population for the study was on the entire chiefs and people of the Tumu traditional area, the textile regalia of the skin and the clan totems. The accessible population were the chiefs, and the elders of the six clans, and the textile regalia of the Tumu skin.

### **3.3 Sampling Approach and Sample Size**

Burns and Grove (2003) refer to sampling as a process of selecting a group of people, events or behaviour with which to conduct a study. Vishnevsky (2004) confirms that in sampling, a portion that represents the whole population is selected. In this study the sampling was non-probable and purposive.

Purposive sampling was used in this study. Parahoo (1997) as cited in Mcilpatrick (2008) describes purposive sampling as a method of sampling where researcher deliberately chooses who to include in the study based on their ability to provide necessary data. The rationale for choosing this approach was because researcher was seeking in-depth knowledge about the Sissala clan totems and the textile regalia of the Tumu skin, which the participants could provide by virtue of their experience. Sissala

East Municipality has six (6) paramountcies. Out of this, the study purposively focused on Tumu *kuoro* and his divisional and sub-chiefs in the Tumu paramountcy. Other personalities sampled for the study included clan heads, senior elders, linguists and opinion leaders. In all fifty (50) people were sampled for the study. Purposive sampling method was used in the selection of the chiefs, linguists, clan heads, senior elders and elders and craftsmen (Table 3.1).

### **3.4 Visits to Libraries and Research Centres**

In order to obtain relevant materials and credible secondary data for the study, some places and libraries were selected for visits by researcher. The places visited include:

1. Public Records and Archives Department (PRAAD), Accra
2. Sissala Heritage Foundation, Tumu
3. Centre for National Culture, Wa
4. Upper West Regional House of Chiefs, Wa
5. Crafts Village, Tamale
6. Crafts Village, Bolgatanga
7. Prempeh II Library, KNUST, Kumasi
8. Faculty of Art Library, KNUST, Kumasi
9. Institute of African Studies, Legon, Accra

### **3.5 Data Collection Tools and Procedure**

As an ethnographic action research, tools such as participant observation and interviews were used for the study. These tools were employed for data collection at different periods of the survey.

#### **3.5.1 Participant Observation**

The researcher visited the Tumu *kuoro* palace during the 2019 annual *Paari Gbielle festival* and critically observed and identified the textile regalia.

### 3.5.2 Interviews

Interviews are oral questionnaire used to solicit the views of people concerning a given issue or event (Tettehfiio, 2009). Since the researcher is a native of the traditional area, he communicated in Sissali and used his interpersonal skills to facilitate co-operation and elicit more information from the respondents since all of them spoke freely. Interview guides were prepared and used to collect primary data from chiefs, opinion leaders and other natives of the six clans of the Tumu traditional area, Table 3.1 shows the distribution of the interview respondents.

Table 3.1: Distribution of Interview Respondents

| STATUS                       | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE (%) |
|------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Paramount chief              | 1         | 2              |
| Divisional chiefs            | 10        | 20             |
| Sub-chiefs                   | 5         | 10             |
| Linguists                    | 2         | 4              |
| <i>Jantiina</i> (clan heads) | 6         | 12             |
| Senior elders                | 6         | 12             |
| Opinion leaders              | 6         | 12             |
| General public               | 10        | 20             |
| Craftsmen                    | 4         | 8              |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>50</b> | <b>100</b>     |

The study was carried out in two folds; focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. Group interviews were conducted face to face at the palaces of the chiefs in the Tumu traditional area. The respondents included the chiefs, senior elders and linguists. The uniqueness of a focus group is its ability to generate data based on the

synergy of the group interaction Rabiee (2004). The researcher respected and showed sensitivity to the uniqueness of each member of the group during the interview. Since the group members already know themselves, there was an existing trust and cordiality among at all the interview palaces. It therefore allowed for free expression of views and opinions and vital information was gathered on their clans, totems and regalia. The second fold of the interview was in-depth interviews with purposively sampled natives in the Tumu traditional area. The respondents included *Jantiina* (clan heads) and opinion leaders in the Tumu traditional area. The in-depth-interviews afforded the researcher the unfettered opportunity to explore greater depth of the history of the various Sissala clans and their totems.

Also, some follow up discussions were sometimes held through phone conversations. Bowling (1997) asserts that telephone interviews yield accurate data as 'face to face' interviews. The telephone discussions were necessitated by the Covid19 travel restrictions and also due to the long distance between the respondents and the researcher. Some of the information was therefore sent/received via Emails, Facebook, WhatsApp.

To ensure that the ethics of research was upheld, the interviews were audio recorded with the express permission of all respondents. The audio data collected was later transcribed for analysis.

### **3.6 Data Analysis Plan**

The researcher analysed the data obtained from the interviews and personal observations through descriptive statistics. Calculations, frequency and percentage were used in the analysis.

### 3.7 Data Presentation and Analysis

The interviews were conducted to solicit relevant primary information on Sissala clan totems to augment the selected secondary data to enable the researcher develop concept-based images and designs for the production of textile regalia that reflect the Tumu traditional area. In all, fifty (50) people were interviewed and the results are as follows;

Thirty-nine (39) which represents 78% said they know the Tumu skin regalia but they do not know their symbolic meanings. Six (6) respondents (12%) said they did not know the Tumu skin regalia. Five (5) respondents (10%) said they know Tumu skin regalia and their symbolic meanings. This means that although the vast majority of Sissalas know the textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy skin regalia, they do not know their symbolic meanings. Thus, a gap that needs to be fill.

Out of the fifty respondents, four (4) representing 8% were indifferent on the idea to make imagery of Sissala clan totems for production of textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin. The rest of the forty-six (46) respondents (92%) agreed to the idea of making imagery of Sissala clan totems for production of textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin. It therefore means that there is a massive support for the production of symbolic textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin.

Responding to whether they will purchase artefacts made of Sissala clan totems, forty-eight 48 (96%) of the respondents answered in the affirmative. The other two (2) respondents (4%) said it depends on the quality of the artefacts. This is therefore an endorsement that there is an untapped market for artefacts of Sissala clan totems.

In response to the question on the availability of Sissala symbols in the Tumu traditional area, forty-two (42) out of the fifty (50) respondents which represents 84% said the Tumu traditional area does not have any symbols. The remaining eight (8)

respondents (16%) said they did not know. From the response to this question, it is obvious the Sissala people do not have their own unique symbols.

On colours, forty-five (45) respondents representing 90% of the fifty (50) people interviewed said Tumu traditional area has no specific colours of its own. The other five (5) respondents said they did not have any idea. This means that unlike other traditional areas, Sissalas do not have their own unique colours.

Based on the responses from the interviews, it is evidently clear that there is a clarion call for the design and production of symbolic textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy to educate the youth and general public on Sissala clan totems.

### **3.8 Findings from the Interviews and Personal Observations**

The following are some of the findings made from the interviews and observation:

1. The study revealed that prior to colonialism and subsequent introduction of chieftaincy, the Sissala people were originally acephalous. Power was thus, vested in the *Jantiina* (the landlord) who was seen as the traditional/spiritual anchor of the community.
2. The entire Sissala enclave was and still composed of six major clans;
  - i. *Gangaviaraa* (Crow Clan)
  - ii. *Henviaraa* (Red-pot Clan)
  - iii. *Nyeveviaraa* (Crocodile Clan)
  - iv. *Changbeiviaraa* (Frog Clan)
  - v. *Gunguroviaraa* (Wolf Clan)
  - vi. *Pweiviaraa* (Leopard Clan)
3. The observations at the Tumu kuoro's palace also revealed the following textile regalia;

- i. **Stock of Skins:** the original Tumu skin is composed of two (2) cow hides which are first placed on *korong* (Sissala name for special stage built for chiefs) before a yellow and red rug is placed on it. The lion skin is then placed on it and an antelope skin is placed last.



Plate 3.1: Lion Skin

(Source: Field Survey, 2020)

- ii. **Rug:** Rug is among the first regalia that were used to at the enskinment of Wogrei Kanton II. It is a machine sewn and hand tufted carpet with bold colours and textures as seen in Plate 3.2.



Plate 3.2: Rug

(Source: Field Survey, 2020)

- iii. ***Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest):** *Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest) as shown in Plate 3.3 is a brown upholstery made entirely of leather with strips of leather at the edges of its length and stuffed with kapok fibres.



Plate 3.3: *Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest)

(Source: Field Survey, 2020)

- iv. ***Nasin Kumpungu* (Armrest):** Plate 3.4 (a & b) are two circular upholstery made from leather and stuffed with kapok fibres.



(a) Right *Kumpungu*

(b) Left *Kmpungu*

3.4 (a & b): *Nasin Kumpungu* (Armrest)

(Source: Field Survey, 2020)

- v. ***Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest):** *Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest) as seen in Plate 3.5 is a rectangular upholstery with a printed fabric cover. It is usually filled with cotton or kapok fibres.



Plate 3.5: *Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest)

(Source: Field Survey, 2020)

- vi. ***Geriwarikin* (War Dress):** *Geriwarikin* is also known as *tintaara* in Sissala and it is the war dress of the Tumu *kuoro*. It is a brown old

smock with several talismans and amulets of varied sizes and functions. A photograph of *geriwarikin* is shown in Plate 3.6.



Plate 3.6: *Geriwarikin* (War Dress)  
(Source: Field Survey, 2020)

- vii. ***Nyinchulo* (Hat):** *Nyinchullo* is an accompanying head gear to the *geriwarikin*. It is fashioned out of smock and fortified with several talismans and amulets of varied sizes and functions. See Plate 3.7.



Plate 3.7: *Nyinchulo* (Hat)  
(Tumu *Kuoro*'s Palace, 2020)

### 3.9 Concept Based Images of Sissala Clan Totems

Based on the totems of the Sissala clan totems identified, preliminary sketches were made first before the final images were rendered with Adobe Illustrator (a vectorbased graphics software used for creating logos, icons, drawings, typography, and complex illustrations). Images of totems created are presented as follows;

### 3.9.1 Crow Totem

Figure 3.2 (a, b & c) is an image of a crow bird turning and looking back. Figure 3.2 (a & b) are sketches of the crow bird and (c) is the final image which has been rendered. It represents the *Gangaviaraa* (Crow Clan).

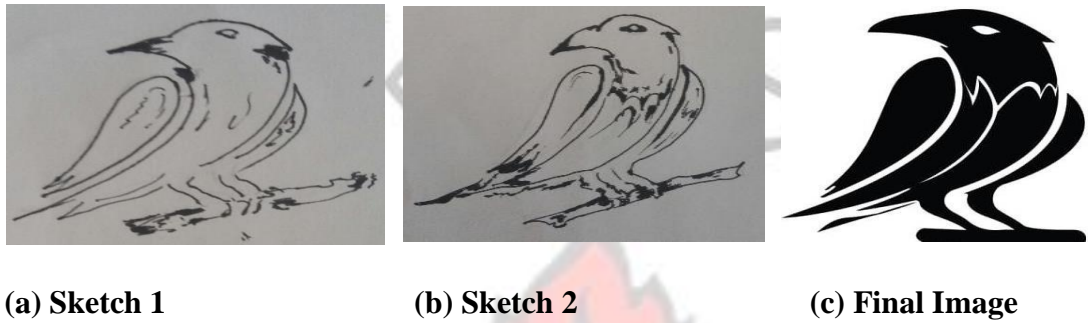


Figure 3.2: (a, b & c): Crow Totem  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.9.2 Red Pot Totem

Figure 3.3 (a, b & c) are images of pot of the *Henviaraa* (Red pot Clan). Figure 3.3 (a & b) are sketches of red pot and (c) is the final rendered image. It reminds members of the *Henviaraa* Clan that in life, there are consequences to every action. It is forbidden for members of such clan do not raise such a pot to the mouth.

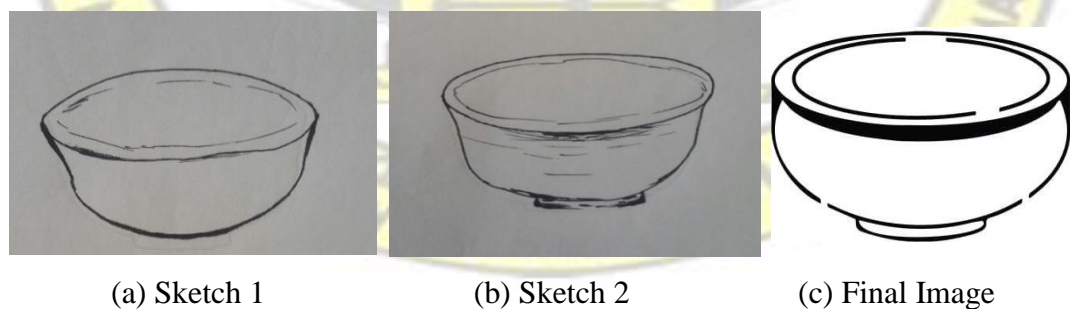
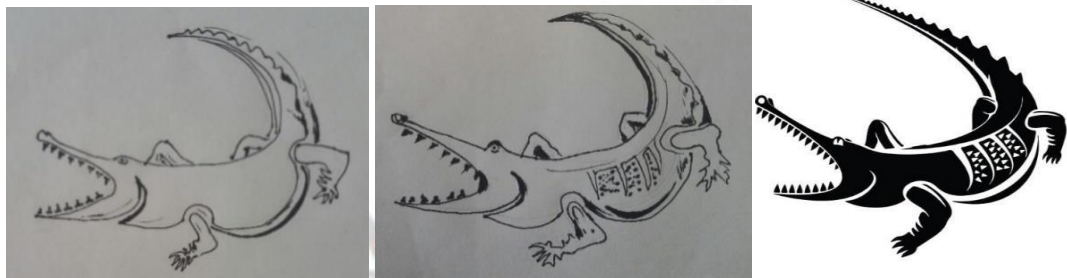


Figure 3.3: (a, b & c): Red-pot Totem  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.9.3 Crocodile Totem

Figure 3.4 (a, b & c) are images of crocodile with open mouth. It is the totem of *Nyeveviara* (Crocodile Clan). Sketches of the crocodile totem were first made as shown in Figure 3.4 (a & b) before the final image was rendered as captured in (c). It reminds members of the clan of their hypervigilance, fierceness, acute senses and encourages them to develop and rely on themselves.



(a) Sketch 1

(b) Sketch 2

(c) Final

Image Figure 3.4: (a, b & c): Crocodile Totem (Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.9.4 Frog Totem

Figure 3.5 (a, b & c) are images of frog with the head up and ready to jump. Figure 3.5 (a & b) are preliminary sketches which were made before the final image was rendered as shown in (c). It represents the *Changbeiviara* (Frog Clan). It urges the clan members to be determined and always be on the move and jump over their fears and other stagnant feelings that weigh them down.



(a) Sketch 1

(b) Sketch 2

(c) Final Image

Figure 3.5: (a, b & c): Frog Totem  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.9.5 Wolf Totem

Figure 3.6 (a, b & c) are images of wolf showing teeth ready to devour its prey. Preliminary sketches of the wolf totem are shown in Figure 3.6 (a & b) and (c) is the final image. It represents the *Gungurovera* (Wolf Clan). Wolf is a symbol of guardianship, ritual and loyalty. The totem symbolizes a high level of intelligence and a deep connection of members of the clan. It also urges the members of the clan to trust their hearts and minds, and have control over their own lives.

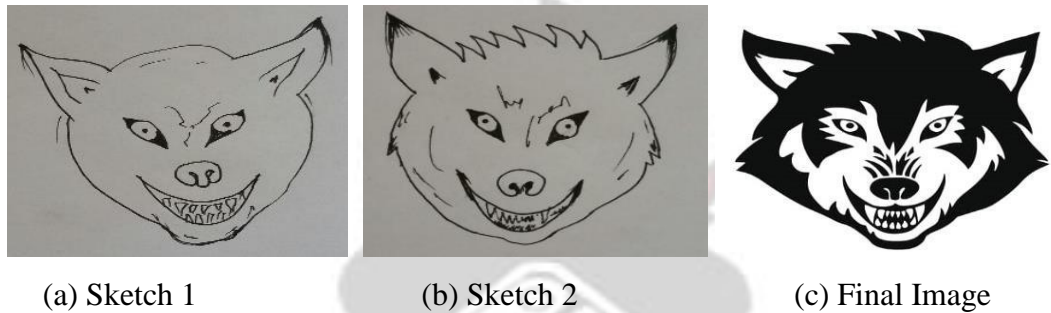


Figure 3.6: (a, b & c): Wolf Totem  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.9.6 Leopard Totem

Figure 3.7 (a, b & c) are images of leopard with open mouth. It represents the *Pweiviara* (Leopard Clan). Stages of preliminary sketches of the leopard are shown in 3.7 (a & b). The final rendered image of the leopard totem is shown in 5.6 (c).

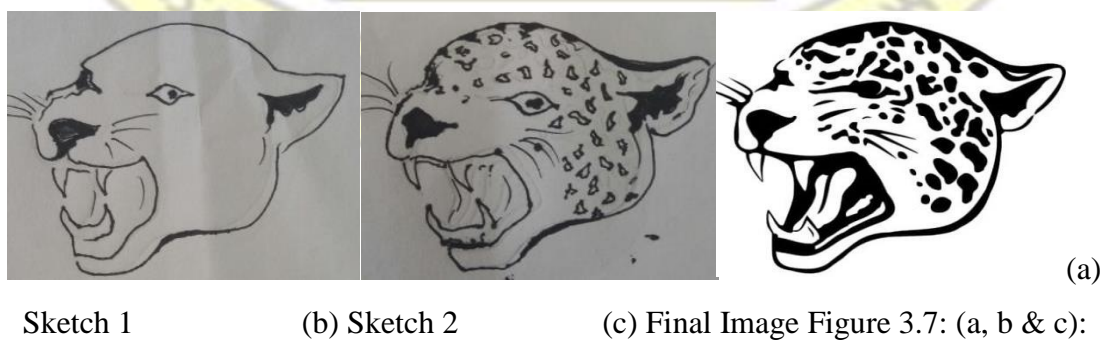


Figure 3.7: (a, b & c):  
Leopard Totem  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.10 Validation of the Concept-Based Images

When the concept-based images of Sissala clan totems were created, they were presented to the respective clan heads for their inputs and approval. Slight suggestions were made on only Figure 3.2 (a, b & c); they wanted the crow to look back to remind and urge them to be conscious of where they come from. After the corrections were made, all the images were approved as true imagery of their clan totems. Thus, paving way for the next stage of the study.

### 3.11 Adobe Photoshop Design

A computerised photo editing and graphic design software (Adobe Photoshop) was used to design the skin rug for the Tumu paramountcy skin with the approved images of Sissala clan totems; see Figure 3.8.



Figure 3.8: Design of Tumu Skin Rug  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The concept of the design is based on ‘unity of purpose’ as espoused by Kuoro Bamula Basinjia, Director of Sissala Heritage Foundation/opinion leader (personal communication, 10th March, 2019), “it is unity in diversity, collectivism and communal spirit among the various Sissala clans in the Tumu traditional area”. The

design is composed of images of the Sissala clan totems which have been arranged to surround a roaring lion in the foreground. Lions are fiercely independent, confident and in control. These traits are all balanced by a quiet demeanour. In like manner, Tumu *kuoro* with all his authority as paramount chief and president of the Tumu traditional area, has a very calm demeanour.

The textures are abstracted from the gorgeous bold pattern stripes that run across the width of the body of tiger. The representation of the roaring lion and the pattern stripes of tiger are symbols of authority of the Tumu *kuoro* and collectively, they depict the appellation of Tumu skin “*Bikobi*” which means ‘dare me not’. The lines traversing and linking the textures in the skin rug design signify family link and kinship ties. It portrays unity in diversity and communal spirit among the various Sissala clans in the Tumu traditional area.

### 3.12 CorelDRAW Simulations

A vector-based computer designing software (CorelDRAW) was used to simulate *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), *nasin kumpungun* (arm rest) *naasin kumpungu* (foot rest), *geriwarikin* (war dress), *nyinchulo* (native hat) and *natengpro* (native boots) before the main production. The simulation was done to give a clear insight into the outcome of the final projects.

#### 3.12.1 *Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest)

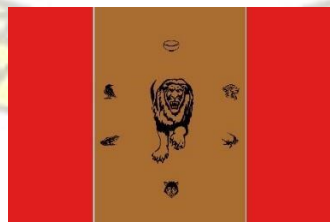


Figure 3.9: Simulated *Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Figure 3.9 is a simulated *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest) which was rendered in a rectangular form. The top was divided into three (3); left, middle and right.

### 3.12.2 *Nasin Kumpungu* (Arm Rest)

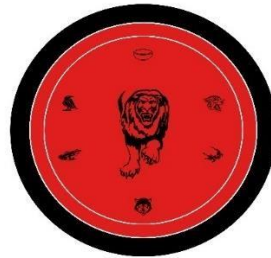


Figure 3.10: Simulated *Nasin Kumpungu* (Arm Rest)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Figure 3.10 is a simulated *nasin kumpungu* (arm rest) rendered in a circular form. Sissala clan totems are arranged around a roaring lion on the top with Sissala clan totems.

### 3.12.3 *Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest)



Figure 3.11: Simulated *Nasin Kumpungu* (Arm Rest)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

3.12.4 *Naasin kumpungu* (Foot Rest) was simulated just like *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest) in a rectangular form with the top divided into three (3); left, middle and right with white colour. The only difference is that it was smaller in size.

### 3.12.5 *Geriwarikin* (War Dress)

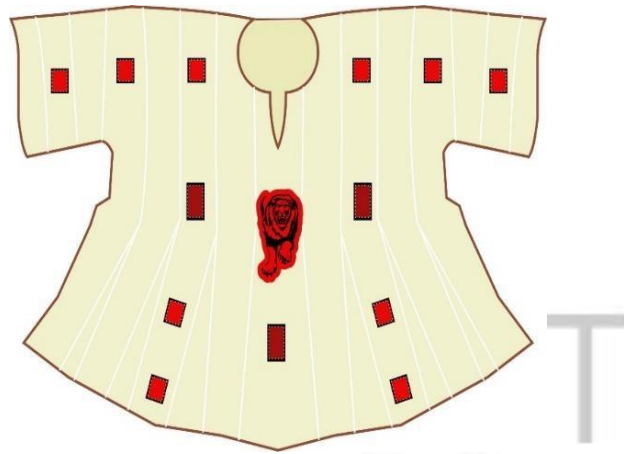


Figure 3.12: Simulated *Geriwarikin* (War dress)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Figure 3.12 is a simulated *geriwarikin* (war dress) with a roaring lion in front and talismans all over.

### 3.12.6 *Nyinchullo* (Native Hat)

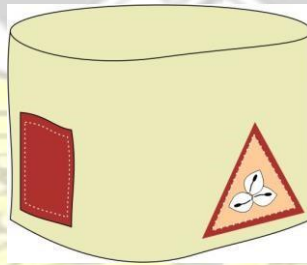


Figure 3.13: *Nyinchullo* (Native Hat)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Figure 3.13 is a simulated *nyinchullo* (native hat) with talismans of varied sizes and colour.

### 3.12.7 *Natengpro* (Native Boots)



Figure 3.14: *Natengpro* (Native Boots)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Figure 3.14 is a simulated *natengpro* (native boots) with shaft, instep, vamp and sole.

### 3.13 Tools, Materials and Methods

Leather was the most conspicuous material used for the production of the symbolic textile regalia such as the rug cover, *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), *nasin kumpungu* (arm rest), *naasin kumpungu* (foot rest) and *natengpro* (native boots). Just like the stool in southern Ghana, skin is the symbol of chiefly authority in the northerner part of Ghana. Lund (200) asserts that skin is the seat of power or throne of chiefs in the northern Ghana including Tumu. In the past, leaders in the Sissala traditional area also doubled as celebrated hunters who would have killed several wild animals. When chieftaincy was later introduced in the area, skins of wild animals such as lion, tiger and leopard were used as their thrones. The practice is still the order of the day. The skin is used to depict power, authority and closeness of the chief to nature. In the case of Tumu *kuoro*, he sits on stocks of skins including lion, tiger, antelope, cow, and sheep as his throne. With the exception of tiger skin, all the others are still in use in the Tumu skin.

As established earlier in the literature review, livestock such as cattle and sheep are reared in abundance in Sissala East Municipality which is seen as a sign of affluence. Leather production is therefore part of the culture of Sissalas with sheep dominating the market. It is against this background that tanned leather from sheep was used as the predominant material for the project to symbolically represent the closeness of Tumu *kuoro* to nature and the agricultural might of the Tumu traditional area. Other tools and materials used for the project are presented in Table 3.2.

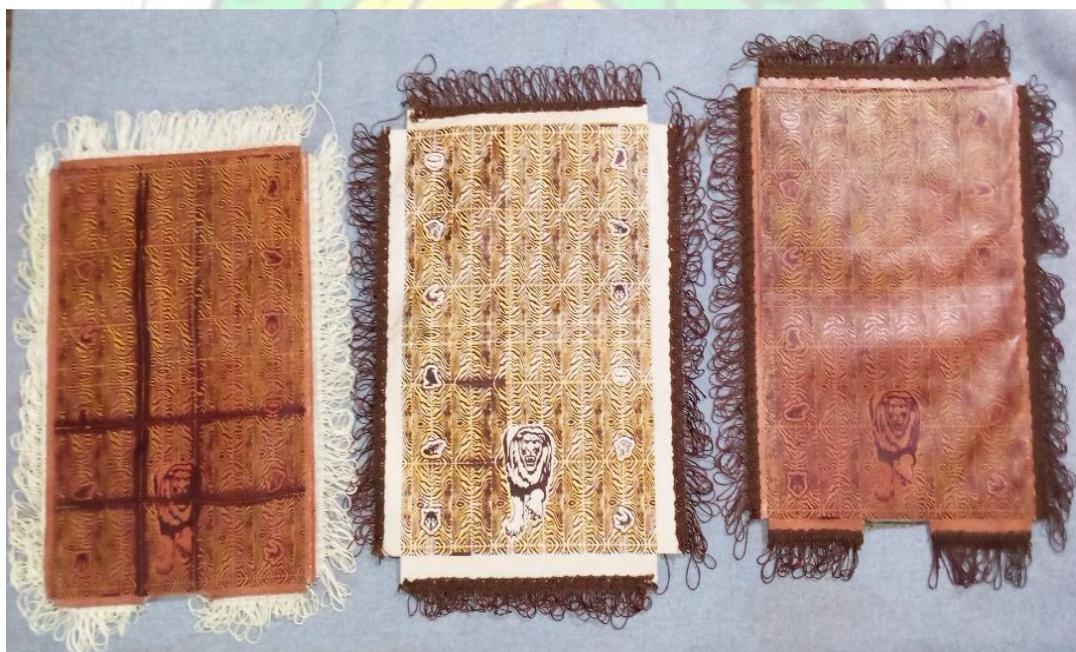
Table 3.2: Tools and Materials Used for the Project

| <b>Tool</b>      | <b>Use</b>   |
|------------------|--|
| Cutting knife    | It was used to cut leather, and foam.  |
| Pair of scissors | It was used to cut strawboard and leather  |
| Squeegee         | It was used for pressing printing paste on to the leather.                         |
| Long Ruler       | For taking measurements.   |
| Pencil           | It was used for sketches and ruling lines  |
| Blunt knife      | It was used for marking lines and applying dye solution.                           |
| Awl              | It was used for making holes on the leather.                                       |
| Needle           | It was used for sewing.  |
| <b>Material</b>  | <b>Use</b>   |
| Printing table   | It provided padded support for printing on the leather.                            |
| Leatherette      | It was used as a backing cover to the printed rug cover.                           |
| Fringes          | They were fixed at the edges of the rug cover as ornamentations.                   |
| <i>Tuo zaafi</i> | It was used as adhesive in fixing the mould of <i>natengpro</i> .                  |
| Packing case     | It was fixed in the leather at the heel part of the shaft to make it firm.         |
| Acrylic paste    | It was the printing paste used to print on the leather.                            |
| Kapok fibres     | It was used to fill the arm rest, bottom rest and footrest.<br>give                |
| Zippers          | They were fixed on bottom rest, arm rests and foot rest as openings.               |
| Foam             | It was sandwiched between the printed leather and the leatherette.                 |
| Adhesive         | It was used to bond the leather, foam and leatherette together before sewing them. |

|                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Rusted nails          | They were soaked to obtain dye solution to design <i>natengpro</i> (native boots). |
| Nylon thread          | It was used for stitching.   |
| Woven strips of smock | They were used to sew the <i>geriwarikin</i> and native hat.                       |

### 3.14 Prototype and Testing of Tumu Skin Rug

Prototype can be anything which takes physical form, be it a space, a model, an interface or even a storyboard (Tarrar, 2018). With the design of the skin in Figure 3.8 as guide, researcher proceeded to produce three (3) samples of the rug cover in different colour schemes. The import of the samples was to check colour harmony and test the feasibility of printing on leather on large format. The prototype was titled Tumu *Kuro's* skin rug. A screen of the final design measuring 30 cm by 42 cm was developed. The techniques employed were screen printing and machine stitching. The materials used were acrylics, leather, leatherette, foam and fringes. After printing the samples, foam was sandwiched between the printed leather and leatherette at the back. Plate 3.8 (a, b & c) are the outcomes of the samples:



Sample (a)

Sample (b)

Sample (c)

### Plate 3.8 (a, b & c): Samples of Tumu Skin Rug

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Sample 3.8 (a) was printed in brown and yellow colours on red leather and finished with cream fringes. The second sample was printed on white leather with brown and yellow colours as shown in Plate 3.8 (b). It has brown fringes at the edges. The last sample, 3.8 (c) has brown and yellow colours printed on red leather with brown fringes at the edges. Each of the samples was tested by washing it with soap and dried in the sunshine and they all proved to be colour fast. They were then presented to the chiefs and elders of the Sissala to solicit views on the products. They were fascinated with the outcome of the samples but chose 3.8 (c) because of its unique colour scheme. After the final sample was chosen, researcher proceeded to commence execution of the final projects of the study.

#### **3.15 Execution of Final Projects**

This section entails elaborate steps the researcher went through to produce the textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin.

##### **3.15.1 Project One: Tumu Skin Rug**

With the approved sample of the Tumu skin rug, in hand, the researcher commenced production of the final work. Materials used in executing the project included: leather, acrylics paste, leaderette, foam and sewing thread. The techniques employed were screen printing on leather, adhesive bonding and sewing.

To begin with, since the chosen sample was a two-colour design (brown and yellow), researcher first separated the totems and textures into two different colour schemes. Each colour was printed out in black and white as seen in 3.9 (a). The printouts were then developed with different screens.



(a) Black & White Printout (b) Textures Screen (c) Totems Screen

Plate 3.9 (a, b & c): Development of Screens

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the screens were developed, the next stage was to prepare the substrate (leather) for printing. Twenty (20) pieces of tanned leather were obtained; see Plate 3.10 (a). The tanned pieces of sheep leather were soaked in water for 30 minutes and hand washed to get rid of their impurities and to open up to make them airy and absorbent as shown in Plate 3.10 (b and c). The washing was also to get rid of the offensive smell that accompanies locally tanned leather. After thorough washing, the leather was then re-soaked in water for an hour to make it soft as captioned in Plate 3.10 (d).



(a) Pieces of Tanned Leather (b) First Soaking of Tanned Leather



(c) Hand Washing of Leather

(d) Re-soaked Leather

Plate 3.10 (a, b, c & d): Treatment of Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The re-soaked leather was stretched, pinned on plywood and left overnight. The stretching was done to flatten the leather and enhance and maintain its dimensional stability as shown in Plate 3.11.

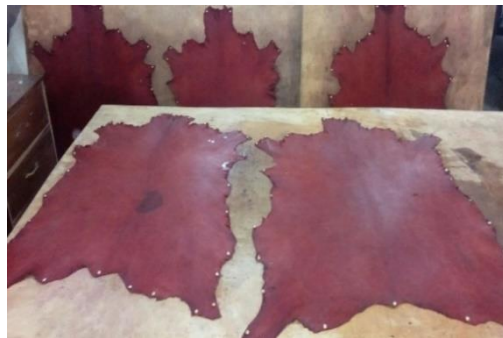


Plate 3.11: Stretched Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The leather was collected the next morning and spread on table and smoothened with sandpaper in a process called sanding as shown in Plate 3.12 (a). This was done to remove the excess flesh within the leather. Plate 3.12 (b) shows treated leather ready for next stage.



(a) Sanding of Leather



(b) Treated Pieces of Leather

Plate 3.12 (a & b): Treatment of Stretched Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After treating the leather, a template measuring 24" by 24" was cut out of chipboard and used to measure the finished pieces of leather. The template aided in accurate and uniform measurement and cutting of each of the 16 units. By this, each piece of leather was spread flat on table and the template placed on it and the shape cut out. Each cut out unit of leather measured 24" by 24". Plate 3.13 shows researcher cutting out the template shape on leather.



Plate 3.13: Researcher Cutting Template Shape on Leather  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After that, two of the cut out units were joined together to get 8 pairs, which collectively gave a measurement of 96" by 96" ". Each pair measured 24" by 24". Plate 3.14 shows 8 pairs of stitched leather laid on printing table for printing.



Plate 3.14: Stitched Pairs of Leather  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The next step was the mixing of the printing paste. With the prototype as guide, acrylic paste was mixed with small quantity of water-based printing paste. This was

done to enhance the viscosity of the paste during printing. The yellow acrylic paste was emptied into a larger container and stirred to uniformly mix with the water-based print paste. Brown colour was obtained by mixing red acrylic with small quantity of black. Plate 3.15 (a, & b) shows the mixing of printing paste.

KNUST



(a) Mixed Brown Paste

(b) Mixed Yellow Paste

Plate 3.15 (a, & b): Mixing of Printing Paste

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Printing was commenced after mixing the print paste. This was done by spreading the stitched pair of leather on the printing table. The screen with textures was placed across the leather and the print paste was poured in bits onto the reservoir of the screen. A squeegee was used to spread and force the paste onto the leather through the permeable portions of the mesh. The squeegee and the screen were then lifted off the printed leather. The process continued till the last pair of leather was printed. The same process was repeated for the second and final colour (brown) after the first colour (yellow) dried. Printing of first and second colours of the textures are shown in Plate 3.16 (a, b & c).



(a) Printing first Colour (b) Drying First Colour (c) Drying of Second Colour

Plate 3.16 (a, b, & c): Printing of Textures on Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The totems which were developed on different screens, were printed separately on different leather. This was done to avoid cutting through the totems during the screen development and subsequent printing. The printing procedure is captured in Plate 3.17 (a, b & c).



(a) Researcher Setting Screen (b) Printed Totems (c) Printed Lion

Plate 3.17 (a, b & c): Printing of Totems

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the totems were printed on a different leather, each of them was cut out following the contours and then arranged and stitched on the printed leather (Plate 3.18).



Plate 3.18: Cut out Totems

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The printed pairs of leather were then stitched together in two groups of four pairs.

Each group measures 48" by 96" as shown in Plate 3.19 (a, b & c).



(a) Stitching of Printed Leather (b) Application of Glue (c) Joint Leather Pair

Plate 3.19 (a, b & c): Joining of Printed Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After joining the printed leather together in two halves on the floor, the cut out totems were arranged on the leather according to the design as shown in Plate 3.20 (a). After the arrangement, each of the totems was held in position with glue; see Plate 3.20 (b). Plate 3.20 (c) shows the stitching around of the contours of the cut out totems with the aid of needle and thread.



(a) Arrangement of Totems (b) Fixing of Totems (c) Sewing of Totems

Plate 3.20 (a, b & c): Fixing Totems on Printed Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Leatherette was spread on the floor and a measurement of 48" by 96 " was marked out on it as shown in Plate 3.21 (a). An allowance of 1" was created around the marked out areas to cater for the foam (Plate 3.21 (b)).



(a) Marking on Leatherette (b) Bonding of Foam & Leatherette

Plate 3.21 (a & b ): Bonding of Foam and Letterette with Adhesive

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the leatherette and foam were bonded together, the edges of the overhangs which measured 48" by 8" were cut out (Plate 3.22).



a

b

Plate 3.22 (a & b): Measuring and Cutting of Overhangs

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After measuring and cutting the overhangs, they were joined together through stitching as shown in Plate 3.23 (a & b).



(a)

(b)

Plate 3.23 (a & b): Sewing of Fringes

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After all the overhangs were stitched, the rug cover was ready for use.



Plate 3.24: Completed Skin Rug Cover

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.15.2 Project Two: *Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest)

Construction of the bottom rest started with the top, which was segmented into left, middle and right. Each of the left and right segments measured 10" by 9". The right and left segments were measured and cut out of light-red leather. Sissala clan totems were printed on the light-brown leather for the middle segment as shown in Plate 3.25 (b).



(a) Cutting of Right & Left Segments      (b) Printed Totems on Middle Segment Plate

3. 25 (a & b): Segments of the Top of Bottom Rest

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After segmenting the top of the bottom rest, a thin white leather of 1" was cut and sandwiched between the 2 segments prior to sewing as seen in Plate 3.26 (a, & b).



(a) Cutting of Leather Strip      (b) Demarcated Segments with Strips Plate

3. 26 (a & b): Sewing of the Top Segments of the Bottom Rest

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the segments of the top of the bottom rest were sewed together, the top was sewed to the sides. This was done by first cutting out 4 sides from a light-red leather and joining them together at the edges to form one long strand of leather. The 2 sides, which made up the length, each measured 30" by 10" and the other 2 ends which made up the width, also measured 10" by 8" each. Holes were punched on the edges of the side leather and the top of the bottom rest and small strips of leather (acting as stitching pins) were used to hold them in position before and during sewing by hand. Plate 3.27 (a & b) shows the sewing of the top segments of the bottom rest.



(a) Inside-out of Bottom Rest (b) Outside-in of Bottom Rest

Plate 3.27 (a & b): Sewing of the Top Segments of the Bottom Rest

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the sides had been joined to the top, the bottom part which measured 30" by 10" was measured and cut out from the leather. A zipper was fixed in the middle before holes were punched on the edge with a stitching awl; see Plate 3.28 (a). Strips of leather were then used as stitching pins to hold the bottom leather to the rest of the bottom rest cover prior to sewing as shown in Figure 3.28(b).



(a) Fixing of Zipper (b) Holding the Edges in Position with Stitching Pins

Plate 3. 28 (a & b): Sewing of the Bottom leather to the Bottom Rest

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Nylon thread was then used to sew the eadges of the bottom rest with the aid of stitching awl. The sewed bottom rest cover was then turned outside out (Plate 3.29) for the next stage of filling.



Plate 3.29: Completed Bottom Rest Cover

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The final stage of the construction of the bottom rest was the stuffing of the sewed cover with with kapok fibres (Plate 3.30a). That was done by filling all the sides of the bottom rest with kapok fibres as seen in Plate 3.30 (b).



(a) Bag of Kapok Fibres (b) Filling of Bottom Rest Cover with Kapok Fibres

Plate 3.30 (a & b): Filling of Bottom Rest Cover with Kapok Fibres

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After carefully stuffing the bottom rest, it was zipped up and turned upright as shown in Plate 3.31.



Plate 3.31: Finished Bottom Rest

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.15.3 Project Three: *Nasin Kumpungu* (Arm Rest)

Materials used in executing the project include: leather, zipper, kapok fibres, and *nylon gu-oo* (nylon thread). The techniques employed were hand sewing and stuffing. Ahead of the construction of the footrest, the totems were first printed on leather as shown in Plate 3.32. Each printed leather was then folded into two equal parts, and folded into two parts again. The folding created a central point.



(a) Totems for Left Arm Rest

(b) Totems for Right Arm Rest

Plate 3.32 (a & b): Printed Totems For Left & Right Armrests

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

In constructing the top of the armrest, a stitching awl was passed through a measuring belt and used to punch on the central point of the folded leather as seen in Plate 3.33

(a). A circle was then created around the printed totems with a diameter of 10" (Plate 3.33b).



(a) Measuring Belt (b) Creating Central Point (c) Fixing White-leather on Edges

Plate 3.33 (a b & c): Measurement of Armrests Top

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

A white leather was used around the edges of the circled totems as shown in Plate 3.34

(c). An additional circle was drawn around the first of half an inch diameter. A local zigzag stitch was then used to hold the red leather to a black leather which measured 1" as captured in Plate 3.34.



Plate 3.34: Construction of Armrests Top

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The construction of the side was done by measuring 3 strips of leather as seen in Plate 3.35 (a). Each strip measured 20" by 8". After that, they were then stitched together with needle and nylon thread as shown in Plate 3.35 (b).



(a) Strips of Leather

(b) Joining Strips of Leather

Plate 3.35 (a & b): Cutting and Joining of Sidestrips

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

All the side strips were joint together to form one continuous strip of leather. The long continuous strip was then joined to the top of the arm rest; see Plate 3.36 (a). This was done by first punching holes on both the top of the armrest and the side. Setting pins were created with tiny leather and used to hook the top leather to one side as seen in Plate 3.36 (b). Nylon thread was then used to sew around the edges of the arm rest with a running stitch as seen in Plate 3.36 (c).



(a) Joining Side Strip to Top      (b) Fastening the Together      (c) Sticking

Plate 3.36 (a, b & c): Joining of Sidestrips To Armrest Top

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The final stage of the construction of the arm rest was the bottom. This was done by first measuring and cutting out the diameter of the bottom part on leather. The process is seen in Plate 3.37 (a and b). The next step was the measuring, cutting and fixing of zipper with machine stitches as seen in Plate 3.37 (c).



(a) Measuring Arm Rest Bottom      (b) Cutting      (c) Fixing Zipper

Plate 3.37 (a, b & c): Measurement, cutting & Fixing of Zip

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the zipper had been fixed as seen in Plate 3.38 (a), a stitching awl was used to punch holes on both side strips and the bottom of the arm rest. Small cut out pieces of leather were used to secure the side and top of the arm rest in position (Plate 3.38b). This was done to hold the bottom part and the rest of the arm rest in position before and during hand sewing with needle and nylon thread.



(a) Fixing of Zipper



(b) Securing Side & Top of Arm Rest

Plate 3.38 (a & b): Securing The Bottom of The Armrest with Setting Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After sewing, the armrest case was stuffed with kapok fibres. This was done by sourcing dried kapok pod from Bolgatanga Smock Village and breaking them open; see Plate 3.39 (a). The seeds were separated from the fibres and the latter were meticulously used to stuff the armrest equally and evenly as shown in Plate 3.39 (b).



(a) Dried Kapok Pods



(b) Stuffing of the Arm Rest Cover

Plate 3.39 (a & b): Stuffing of Armrest With Kapok Fibres

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Plate 3.40 is a photograph of finished arm rests.



Plate 3.40: Finished Armrests

(Source: Studio Works, 2020)

#### 3.15.4 Project Four: *Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest)

The construction of the foot rest followed the same procedure as the bottom rest, except that the measurements differed. Just like the bottom rest, the construction of the foot rest started with the top. The top was segmented into left, middle and right. Each of the left and right segments measured 8" by 10"; see Plate 3.41 (a). The Sissala clan totems were printed on a light-brown leather which measured 12" by 10" for the middle segment of the top of the foot rest as seen in Plate 3.41 (b). The three segments were then stitched together at the edges with nylon thread. Prior to the stitching, a white leather was sandwiched between the segments as captured in Plate 3.41 (c).



(a) Measuring Left & Right Segments (b) Middle Segment (c) Joined Segments

Plate 3.41 (a, b & c): Sewing of the Top Segments of of Foot Rest

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The next step was the construction of the sides of the foot rest cover. This was done by first cutting out 4 sides from a light-red leather and joining them together at the edges to form one long strand of leather as seen in Plate 3.42 (a). Two sides made up the length and each measured 28" by 8". The other two ends which made up the width, also measured 10" by 7" each. Holes were punched on the edges of the side leather and the top of the bottom rest and small strips of leather (acting as stitching pins) were used to hold them in position before and during sewing as seen in Plate 3.42 (b & c).



(a) Joining of Strips (b) Punching of Holes (b) Securing Side & Top of Foot Rest

Plate 3.42 (a, b & c): Sewing of the Sides to the Top of the Foot Rest

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the sides had been joined to the top, the bottom which measured 28" by 8" was measured and cut out from the leather. A zipper was fixed in the middle as shown in

Plate 3.43 (a). This was done before holes were punched on the edge with a stitching awl. Pieces of small leather were used as stitching pins to hold the bottom leather to the rest of the foot rest cover before sewing as seen in Plate 3.43 (b).



(a) Fixing of Zipper

(b) Securing Side & Bottom of Foot Rest

Plate 3.43 (a & b): Sewing of the Bottom Part to the Foot Rest

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Nylon thread was used to sew the edges of the bottom to the foot rest with aid of a stitching awl. The sewed bottom rest cover was then turned outside out as shown in Plate 3.44.



Plate 3.44: Completed Foot Rest Cover

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The foot rest cover was then deligently stuffed with kapok fibres. During the filling, careful examination was intermitently carried out to ensure even filling. After carefully stuffing the bottom rest, it was zipped up and turned upright as shown in Plate 3.45.



Plate 3.45: Finished Foot Rest  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.15.5 Project Five: *Geriwarikin* (War dress)

In producing the *geriwarikin*, strips of smock 56" were first measured as seen in Plate 3.46 (a). The woven strips were gathered and joined together at the edges; see Plate 3. 46 (b).



(a) Measuring Woven Strips of Smock (b) Joining of Woven Strips of Smocks

Plate 3. 46 (a, & b): Measuring and Joining Woven Strips of Smock  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the strips had been stitched together to form a fabric, it was divided into two equal parts and gadders were created from the waist down (Plate 3.47 a & b).



(a) Folding of Smock into Two (b) Creation of Gadders

Plate 3.47 (a & b): Folding & Creation of Gadders

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After measuring and creating the gadders, the sleeves were then created as captured in Plate 3.48 (a & b).



(a) Sewing of Sleeves (b) Sewn Sleeves

Plate 3.48 (a & b): Sewing of Sleeves

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Polyester fabric was then used to line the smock as seen in Plate 3.49.



Plate 3.49: Lining of Smock

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The neck of the smock was then measured and cut out in a circle with V-shape as shown in Plate 3.50. After cutting out the neck, stitches were created at the edges.



Plate 3.50: Cutting of Circular with V-shaped Neck

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

By way of finishing, all protruding fibres and yarns on the surface of the smocks were cropped with scissors. The sewn smock is shown in Plate 3.51.



Plate 3.51: Completed Smock

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the smock was sewn, it was decorated with talismans. The talismans were made from tanned leather of red, white and black colours. It was done by first soaking the leather to get rid of impurities as seen in Plate 3.52 (a). The leather was re-soaked to make it soft and malleable as seen in Plate 3.52 (b).



(a) Washing of Leather      (b) Re-soaking of Leather

Plate 3.52 (a & b): Washing of Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The re-soaked leather was cut into different sizes and shapes as shown in Plate 3.53.



Plate 3.53: Cutout Piece of Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The cut-out pieces of leather of varied colours and shapes were wrapped around each other and sewed with needle and nylon thread in different stitches as seen in Plate 3.54 (a, b & c). This was done to achieve variety in the talismans.



(a)

(b)

(c)

Plate 3.54 (a, b, & c): Sewing of Talismans in Different Colours & Shapes

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the talismans had been sewn, a stitching awl was used to punch holes on them as seen in Plate 3.55 (a & b). The holes were made to serve as pass way for thread during hand sewing.



(a)

(b)

Plate 3.55 (a & b): Punching Holes on Talismans

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The talismans were then decorated with dye obtained from soaking rusted nails. The decorated talismans are shown in Plate 3.56 (a & b).



(a)

(b)

Plate 3.56 (a & b): Decorating Talismans with Dye Solution

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The talismans were arranged and stitched with needle and nylon one after the other on the smock as shown in Plate 3.57



Plate 3.57 (a & b): Stitching the Talisman on the Smock

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After each talisman was stitched on the smock, the nylon thread used for the stitching was cut off with scissors and burnt off immediately to prevent it from unravelling. The finished *geriwarikin* is shown in Plate 3.58 (a & b).



(a) Front View of Geriwarikin (b) Back View of Geriwarikin Plate

3.58 (a & b): Finished *Geriwarikin*

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.12.6 Project Six: *Nynchulo* (Native Hat)

Just like the sewing of the smock, strips of smock of 4" width and 23" length were first stitched together to form the sides of the hat with a sewing machine as shown in Plate

3.59 (a). The stitched strips of smock were then turned inside out and lined as seen in Plate 3.59(b).



(a) Joining Strips of Smock

(b) Lining Strips of Smock

Plate 3.59 (a & b): Joining & Lining of Strips of Smock

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the strips were lined, a round template was then placed on the stitched strips to get the diameter of the hat. The top was then stitched to the sides with sewing machine as seen in Plate 3.60.



Plate 3.60: Sewing of Side & Top of Hat

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

When the sewing finished, the protruding threads were trimmed. Plate 3.61 shows the finished *nyinchullo* ready for the next processes.



Plate 3.61: The Completed *Nyinchullo* (Native Hat)  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The finished hat was embellished with talismans of varied colours, sizes and shapes. Two talismans were taken and stitched on the left and right sides of the hat. A triangular talisman was stitched in front of the hat. Before the stitching was done, cowries were first stitched on top of the triangular talisman with needle and nylon thread as seen in Plate 3.55.



Plate 3.62: Embellishing a Talisman with Cowries  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After each of the three talismans had been stitched on to the hat, the tip of the nylon thread was burnt off with matches. The burning was done to prevent the nylon thread from untying and fraying off after the sewing. The finished *nyninchulo* (native hat) is shown in Plate 3.63 (a & b).



(a) Front View of *Nyinchulo*



(b) Back View of *Nyinchulo*

Plate 3.63 (a & b): Finished *Nyinchulo*

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

### 3.12.7 Project Seven: *Natengpro* (Native Boots)

In order to produce a custom-made native boot, that fit Tumu *kuoro*'s feet, his foot size and shape were first taken. The template made of packing case and measuring 18" by 15" was used to trace the pattern of the *natengpro* on the leather for the shaft (upper part of the boot, from ankle to the top). The processes are captured in Plate 3.64 (a, b, c & d)



(a) *Natengpro* Template



(b) Tracing Pattern on Leather



(c) Cut out Pattern (d) Crosschecking Template Measurement

Plate 3.64 (a, b, c & d): Measuring and Cutting of *Natengpro* Shaft

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the shaft of the *natenpro* had been measured and cut out, the next stage was to measure and cut the instep (part of the top of foot between the toes and the ankle). This was done by first measuring a template on packing case as seen in 5.65 (a). The template was then placed on leather and cutout as shown in Plate 3.65 (b).



(a) Measuring of Instep

(b) Cutting of Instep

Plate 3.65 (a & b): Measuring and Cutting of Instep

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The next step was measuring and cutting of the vamp or “upper” (area of the boot that covers the foot). The process is shown in Plate 3.66 (a, & b).



(a) Cutting of Vamp

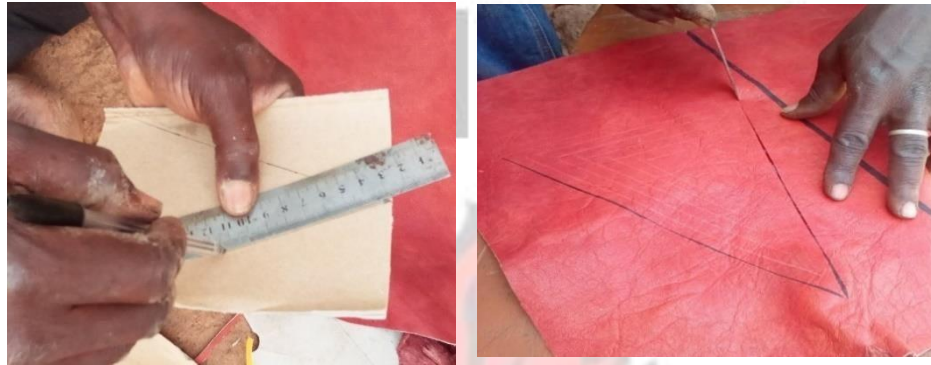
(b) Cutout Vamp

Plate 3.66 (a & b): Measuring and Cutting of *Natengpro* Instep

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The next step was planning and creating a design on the shaft and the vamp of the *natenpro*. This was done with a ruler, pencil and scissors. To begin, a pencil was used

to create three points on a paper and the ruler was used as a guide to connect the points to form a triangle as seen in Plate 3.67 (a). The triangle was cut out and the template used to draw the outline on leather as captured in Plate 3.67 (b). The process was repeated until a total of three triangles were created on the leather with a blunt knife.



(a) Creating & Connecting Points on Paper (b) Drawing of Outlines on Leather Plate

3.67 (a & b): Creating Outlines on Paper & Leather

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The three triangles were painted with dye solution which was obtained from soaking rusted nails. By this, rusted nails were put in a bottle and filled with water and left over night. The reaction of the rusted nails produced a concentrated dye solution; see Plate 3.68 (a). First, a blunt knife was used to trace the lines of the triangles before the outlines were filled up with the black dye solution. The outcome of the designs created with the rusted nails dye solution is seen in Plate 3.68 (b).



(a) Dye Solution from Rusted Nails (b) Designs Created with Rusted Nails

Plate 3.68 (a & b): Creating Designs with Rusted Nails

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After the lines of the triangles had been painted, a straight line was drawn and painted from the shaft through the instep to the vamp as seen in Plate 3.69 (a). A running stitch was made on the line with a thin strip of leather with a stitching awl as captured in Plate 3.69 (b). Plate 3.69 (c) shows the running stitch on the shaft and vamp.



(a) Line on the Shaft (b) Creating Running Stitch (c) Finished Running Stich Plate

3.69 (a, b & c): Stitching on Drawn Lines on Shaft & Vamp

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

When the designs were created, a V-shape mark was created and cut out of the shaft of the *natenpro* with scissors as shown in Plate 3.70 (a). The cavity created thereof was purposely created to serve as an anchor point for the shaft and instep as seen in Plate 3.70 (b).



(a) Cutting of V-shape on the Shaft

(b) Cavity from V-shape Plate

3.70 (a, & b): Cutting of V-shape on the Shaft

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The instep was then joined to the shaft by stitching them together. After the instep and the shaft had been stitched together as seen in Plate 3.71 (a) the former (shaft) was then closed up with stitches. Prior to the stitching with needle and thread, the shaft was turned inside out. When the stitching was done, the shaft was turned outside in as seen in Plate 3.71 (b).



(a) Joining Instep to the Shaft (b) Closed-up Shaft

Plate 3.71 (a & b): Joining of Instep to the Shaft

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The next step of the production was the opening up of the heel part of the shaft for the application of *tuo zaafi* (a stable food made of corn flour or millet flour in the northern part of Ghana); see Plate 3.72 The *tuo zaafi* served as adhesive because of its unique sticky nature.



Plate 3.72: Opening of the Heel Part of Shaft for Application of *Tuo Zaafi*  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

After 30 minutes of application of the *tuo zaafi*, a packing case of 5" by 4" was fixed inbetween the shaft as seen in Plate 3.73. The fixing of the packing case served as the heel which would hold the foot firmly in place within the *natengpro* (native boots).



Plate 3.73: Fixing of Packing Case to Serve as the Heel of *Natengpro*  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The next step was fixing of the shoe mould. The shoe mould was to give the *natengpro* shape while the underneath was being fixed. Plate 3.74 shows the fixing of shoe mould.



Plate 3.74: Putting of *Natengpro* in Shoe Mould  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Lining was then put on the mould and nailed with small nail into the leather as seen in Plate 3.75 (a). This was to hold the lining in place during sewing. The lining and the instep were then stitched together with stitching awl and nylon thread as shown in Plate 3.75 (b).



(a)

(b)

Plate 3.75 (a & b): Fixing of Lining of the *Natengpro* (Native boots)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The sole was fixed by first punching holes in it and finally stitched with nylon thread as seen in Plate 3.76.



Plate 5.76: Fixing of Sole of *Natengpro* (Native boots)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The last step of the construction of the *natengpro* was the covering and sewing of the edges of the shaft. This was done by covering the edges with a 1" strip of printed leather and stitched around. A pull strap of 3" was sewed at the back top of the shafts of the

pair of *natengpro* as seen in Plate 3.77. The edges of the sole were burnished to create a very sleek finished *natengpro*. The *natengpro* were ready for wearing.



Plate 3.77: Finished *Natengpro* (Native boots)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)



## CHAPTER FOUR

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.0. Overview

This chapter presents and discusses the Sissala clan totems. It also appreciates the final textile regalia produced with Sissala clan totems. Seven (7) textile regalia were produced and they reveal concept images generated from Sissala clan totems. These concept-based images portray endearing bond of unity among the various clans in the Tumu traditional area. The Chapter also discusses the symbolic significance and care and maintenance of the finished textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy.

#### 4.1.1 *Gangaviaraa* (Crow Clan)

According to Lurimuah Kanton, senior elder/head of Katon family (personal communication, 12/03/2019), the *Gangaviaraa* (Crow Clan) migrated from Kaha (a village currently inhabited by Dagombas in the Northern Region of Ghana). They left Kaha because of a quarrel arising out of a dog head after sacrifice to the gods. The said dog head was reserved for a younger brother who was not present at the sacrifice and that gave rise to the squabble among the brothers leading to a split among the family. This is believed to be around the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Kputabaga Bein, a great hunter led one of the splinter group of family members to migrate from Kaha for a new settlement. They came through Nyagene, Yagaba, Nangrumba to Karaga (another Dagomba town). This movement is believed to have taken place in the era of the raids of Sumaila Ndwura Jakpa, who was the spear holder and leader of the Gonja legendary fame. Travelling was a very dangerous thing to do because travellers could suffer from surprise attacks and kidnapping.

Lurimuah Kanton continued that, while they (members of the splinter group led by Kputabaga Bein) were still on their journey to find a suitable place to settle, they became very exhausted and decided to rest under a big tree. While resting, everyone

suddenly fell asleep. A crow, which had perched on a dry twig directly above where Kputabaga Bein (the leader) was lying supine, became very frightened due to an approaching enemy army. The crow sprung the twig causing it to break and landed on the chest of the leader's chest. Kputabaga Bein woke up to notice the on-coming army as well as the fleeing crow. He quickly woke all his people up and they managed to escape unhurt. Feeling grateful and indebted to the crow, he instantly decreed (to his people) that from hence, neither they nor their descendants should ever kill or harm the crow in appreciation to it for saving their generation. That is how the people of the Tumu became *Gangaviaraa* (Crow Clan) till date.

Crow symbolizes intelligence, flexibility and destiny. In Sissala mythology, crow is considered a symbol of prophesy, good luck and higher perspective. It is known that a crow's nest is always located in tall trees, which gives it the opportunity to see clearly all that is happening in its surrounding. With crow as the totem of the Tumu people, they see themselves as people with great vision who are able to see all things more clearly. There are two clan settlements which have the crow as their totem. They are; Tumu and Yigantu. The inhabitants of these communities do not intermarry and they do not kill or harm a crow, and if they see one dead, they would bury it with a piece of cloth and offer a sacrifice for it. During the Centenary Anniversary of the Tumu Chiefdom, the crow totem was featured on the cover of the anniversary brochure.

#### **4.1.2 *Henviaraa* (Red-pot Clan)**

*Hene* is a small pot in Sissali. Luri Galla, Jantiina of Sakai/head of *Henviaraa* Clan (personal communication, 13/03/2019) agreed with (Rattary, 1932) that members of *Henviaraa* clan do not intermarry. They do not raise the red pot, which in the firing state has not been blacked. *Henviaraa* clan members are forbidden to raise such a pot

to the lips, but are permitted to eat from it with their fingers. Luri Galla recounts that an ancestor of the clan once did the former while feeding his child, and died in consequence; hence the taboo. He however gave a caveat as espoused by Rattary (1932) that when a *Henviaraa* clansman dies, there is a deliberate and ceremonial violation of this taboo where shea butter is put in a *hene* and melted and the corpse is rubbed with the fat. Prior to burial, the *hene* is raised to the mouth of the corpse three times (four if a woman) with the following words: “What you avoided during life, today you do it”. This is usually done to purge the dead of the ‘avoidance’ which must not be taken to the spirit world; lest, other clansmen would die.

*Hene* has since remained the totem of the *Henviaraa* which serves as a reminder to members of the clan about consequences of their actions. Members of the *Henviaraa* clan address each other as “*nyinanbuu*” (my brother/s). The *Henviaraa* clan has the highest number of settlements in the Tumu traditional area. They include settlements such as Sakai, Kong, Lilixsi, Nankpawie, Santie, Gyigen, Bakoala, Dangi, Goosie and Santijan.

#### **4.1.3 Nyeveviaraa (Crocodile Clan)**

According to Seidu Baluri, *Jantiina* of Bujan (personal communication 14/03/2019), the people of Bujan migrated from Tampara and later to Sirri (communities in Burkina Faso) before they eventually got to Duu in Sissala East Municipality of Ghana. At Duu, they (Bujan people) integrated with the locals and together, they moved towards the West in search of food and shelter. On their way, they jointly fought intruding communities such Kong, Koviele and Bafuljan and settled at their present location closer to “*Bujaalla*” (a large sedimentary rock). They stayed on the *Bujaalla* to fight their opponents who attempted trespassing on their land and enslave them. After they had fought for complete freedom and ownership of the land

on which they had settled, many of the visitors had difficulty in pronouncing the name *Bujaalla*. Their visitors always ended up pronouncing it as Bujan. Eventually the name Bujan was accepted as the name of the community.

Seidu Baluri, *Jantiina* of Bujan (personal communication 14/03/2019), added that the Bujaala people were also great hunters. He recounted further that their ancestor went for usual hunting expedition but got lost in the bush. After he had run out of food and water and was at the verge of dying, he saw a strange animal (crocodile) with fresh mud on it and exclaimed. “I am searching for water and this animal is with fresh mud, where is it coming from”. As if the animal had heard him, the strange animal (crocodile) started moving and he followed and eventually got to a river where he got water to drink. After he drunk the water and was alright, he exclaimed again, “how do I now find my way home” and again, the strange crocodile led him to another river close to the village where he recognized his way back home.

When he got home, he gathered all the people and narrated his ordeal to them. The whole community then followed him back to the river to see the strange crocodile. On their arrival at the river the crocodile had moved out of the water and laid at the bank. There, the then *Jantiina* declared that from that day, no member of their clan and their descendants (male or female) should harm or eat this crocodile. The crocodile has since become the totem of the *Nyibivian* clan (Bujan, Taffiasi, Nabugubelle and Nanchala) and Duu; who later moved to settle at their present location (around Nabulo). Till date, members of the *Nyeveviaraa* clan see themselves as one big family who revere the crocodile. They do not intermarry.

#### **4.1.4 Changbeivaraa (Frog Clan)**

In a personal conversation with the *Jantiina* of Challu, Dabuo Gbene (15/03/2019), it was revealed that the ancestor of the *Changbeiveraa* clan, Batie and his younger

brother Bagre became very thirsty while on a hunting expedition. They searched for water everywhere but found none until they came across a frog, which led them to water at an anthill. They quenched their thirst and decided to settle there and named the area around the anthill as Challu. Some of the clansmen settle at Nahadakui and Hallinboi. Members of the communities avoid frog and do not intermarry. It is sacrilege for a clansman to kill or harm a frog. When a clansman sees a dead frog, he is duty bound to pay his last respect to it and bury it.

#### **4.1.5 *Gungroviaraa* (Wolf Clan)**

Kunja Juah, *Jantiina* of Dolenbezon narrated in a personal communication (16<sup>th</sup> Marh, 2019) that the ancestor of the *Gungroviaraa* is believed to have been attacked by a leopard during a hunting expedition. From nowhere, a wolf appeared with its high-pitched loud rapid giggles which drove the leopard away and thus, saved the man. Upon returning home, their ancestor vowed to his children never to harm or kill a wolf. Till today, his descendants do not only avoid the wolf, but also have it as their totem. Member of this clan do not intermarry. Dolenbezon is the only settlement of the Wolf clan in the Tumu traditional area.

#### **4.1.6 *Pweiviaraa* (Leopard Clan)**

According to Luri Batong, *Jantiina* of Sakallo (personal communication, 17/03/2019) the ancestor of *Pweiviaraa* was a great hunter in Brukon, Burkina Faso who raised a leopard cub as his pet. The pet (leopard) grew to protect him and his family and even assisted him during his hunting expeditions. However, wars and slave raiders drove him and his family away from Brukon to move to Wotulo Burkina before relocating to Peing near Hain in the Upper West Region of Ghana. From Hain, they scattered and came to their current location, Sakallo and Nabullo. Others went to settle at Gwollu,

Jeffissi, Bullu, Botti, Gorimo, Ligbiara and Sobelle (all in the Sissala West District).

All these communities avoid the leopard and Sakallo remains their traditional home.

The leopard signifies the ability to do many tasks at once. It has the ability to see in the dark and is powerful even in the dark. Leopards have strong and muscular bodies. They are excellent swimmers and climbers and also speedy runners. The totem urges the clan members about being quick when it comes to decision making. The leopard totem symbolises the capability of the clan doing anything to reach its goals in the Tumu traditional area and beyond.

#### 4.2.1: Project One: The Finished Rug Cover



Plate 4.1: The Finised Rug Cover

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Plate 4.1 is an assembled finished engineered rug cover printed with Sissala clan totems and decorated with fringes to cover the two (2) movable metal panel stages for Tumu *Kuoro's* skin. Each of the two (2) rug covers measures 96" by 48". When joined together, the two (2) collectively measure up to 96" by 96" (96" square). The square shape of the engineered skin signifies the stability of the Tumu paramountcy skin.

The rug cover is composed of leather. According to Fosu (1994), an art work meant for the chief, must be of the highest level of artistic standard for the designing and the

decoration of the selected objects. Since the aesthetic, appreciation for such a work of art is critically judged by the communicative messages in the physical form, the design concept and printing of the rug cover therefore paid close attention to the traditional setting of the Tumu traditional area. As such, it was printed in two colours on red leather. The colours are yellow and brown. Antubam, (1963) as cited in Acuqye et al. (2018) intimates that all people, irrespective of their location, attribute peculiar symbolic ideas about colour, which are often revealed in their traditional practices of everyday life. In the Sissala traditional setting, yellow is known as *sumunung* (the colour of the yellow pulp of African locust bean). It symbolises sunshine, hope, and happiness. It also signifies freshness, positivity, wealth, energy, optimism, enlightenment, intellect, honour, loyalty and joy. The colour yellow has stood for wisdom and intellect throughout ages. In effect, the manifest presence of yellow on the Tumu *kuoro*'s skin signifies energy, logic, will-power and clarity for decisionmaking for the traditional area.

For the second colour (brown), the Sissala see it as colour of the earth. So, its presence in the printed work helps to create a sense of wholesome feeling of connection with the earth. It also signifies a sense of stability, reliability, elegance, warmth, and honesty of the Tumu *kuoro*'s skin. The use of brown fringes on the edges of the printed skin signifies stability of the Tumu paramountcy skin and presents a sense of belongingness of all the six clans to the traditional area.

In the Ghanaian society, red is generally seen as colour of blood and fire. It is associated with meanings of love, joy, passion, strength and courage. So, the choice of the red skin leather as the background of the cover of the Tumu *kuoro*'s skin symbolises leadership, vibrance, radiance and willpower to deliver on the mandate of the skin to the traditional area.

The work has been reinforced with anti-slip rubber leatherette to prevent it from slipping around on the metal stage platform. The rug cover is fade resistant and easy to clean with a dry brush or a dump cotton cloth.

#### 4.2.2: Project Two: The *Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest)

Plate 4.2 is bottom rest known in Sissali as *kumpungu kpasah* of the Tumu paramountcy skin. It is a rectangular piece of upholstery fashioned out of leather and stuffed with kapok fibres.



Plate 4.2: The Finished *Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Textile design as noted by Tortora and Merkel (2007), is an arrangement of form or colours, or cloth, to be implemented as ornamentation in or on various textile materials. This process involves the continuous organisation of accepted elements and original innovative means to satisfy man's utilitarian and aesthetic needs. Thus, the bottom rest (*kumpungu kpasah*) in Plate 4.2 above was designed and produced with three (3) divisions which stand for the three (3) categories of chiefs in the Tumu paramountcy; sub, divisional and paramount chief. The *Kumpungu Kpasah* (bottom rest) was also printed in three (3) colours; red, brown and white strips of leather. The brown colour in the middle segment stands for the mother earth on which the Tumu *kuoro* sits with his skin. The red skin leather symbolises leadership and will-power and the white strips stand for peace and happiness of the Tumu paramountcy skin.

The Sissala totems printed on brown leather in the middle segment and arranged in a circular form around the roaring lion signifies the circularity of the Tumu paramountcy. The middle segment is stitched to the left and right with a striped white frayed bias leather binding along the edges to depict unity of purpose of the Tumu traditional area.

The bottom rest is stuffed with kapok fibres to soften it before it is placed on the stock of skins for the Tumu *kuoro* to sit on in state during ceremonies. Bottom rest signifies comfortability, riches and royalty (Nkansah, 2008). The new symbolic bottom rest of the Tumu *kuoro* signifies the essence of comfortability of chiefs on their skins and position in the society. The left and right edges of the bottom rest are fixed with two (2) hangers. The hangers aid in lifting of the bottom rest.

The bottom rest is fade resistant and easy to clean with a simple dry-spot clean. When not in use, it is recommended that the bottom rest is packaged in plastic bag to prevent it from accumulating dust and moist. It should be stored in dry airy environment. It can also be polished with neutral polish to evoke shining and sparkling effect.

#### 4.2.3: Project Three: The *Nasin Kumpungu* (Arm Rest)



Plate 4.3: Finished *Nasin Kumpungu* (Armrest)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Plate 4.3 are arm rests known in Sissali as *nasin kumpungu* of the Tumu paramountcy skin. They are two (2) circular pieces of upholstery fashioned of leather

and stuffed with kapok fibres through a zipper at the bottom. The top of each of them is printed with Sissala clan totems to depict the circular nature of the various clans in the Tumu traditional area. The tops are also divided into three (3) circles each in an ascending order and stitched together with a striped white frayed bias leather binding along the edges. The white frayed bias leather signifies peace and happiness of the Tumu paramountcy. The top edges of the *nasin kumpungu* (arm rest) have been fixed with two (2) hangers. The hangers aid in lifting the *nasin kumpungu* (arm rest).

In a personal communication with Bayugo Seidu (custodian of Tumu *kuoro* regalia) on 20/03/2019, he revealed that in the setup of the Tumu *kuoro*'s skin, one *nasin kumpungu* (arm rest) is usually placed on the right-hand side and another to the left for Tumu *kuoro* to lean on and communicate with his elders as and when the need arises while he sits in state. This therefore signifies the dependability of the Tumu *kuoro* on his elders in ruling the traditional area.

The new symbolic *nasin kumpungu* (arm rests) are fade resistant and easy to clean with a brush or foam. They can also be polished for shinning and sparkling effect.

#### 4. 2.4: Project Four: The Finished *Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest)



Plate 4.4: The Finished *Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Plate 4.4 is a foot rest known in Sissali as *kumpungu kpasah* of the Tumu paramountcy skin. Just like *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), the *naasin kumpungu*

(foot rest) of the Tumu paramountcy skin is also a rectangular piece of upholstery which is fashioned of leather and stuffed with dried kapok fibres. It has the same features as *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), except that it is 2" shorter in length and in width.

Foot rest is put on *Asesedwa* (stool) to soften the surface (Nkansah, 2008). Similarly, the *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest) is put on the stock of skins for the Tumu *kuoro* to rest his legs when sitting in state. It signifies the essence of comfortability of Tumu *kuoro* on his skin and position in the paramountcy.

Just like *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), the presence of the brown colour in the middle segment signifies the presence of earth in the Tumu paramountcy. The left and right edges of the *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest) are also fixed with two (2) hangers. The hangers aid in the lifting of the bottom rest. As in the case of the bottom rest and arm rest, the foot rest is also fade resistant and easy to clean with a brush or a dump cotton cloth if it is too dirty. It also recommended that when the *Kumpungu* (foot rest) not in use, it should be packaged in a plastic bag to prevent it from accumulating dust.

#### **4.2.5 Project Five: The *Geriwarikin* (War Dress)**



Plate 4.5 (a & b): *Geriwarikin* (War dress)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Plate 4.5 (a & b) is Tumu *kuoro*'s *geriwarikin* (war dress). It is sewn from woven strips of smock in its raw natural grey colour. The significance of this organic *geriwarikin* is a conscious effort towards a preservation of a friendly environment devoid of chemicals. Akpabli (2011) sees *fugu* (smock) as a mandatory royal costume for chiefs in northern Ghana. For him, the smock/*batakari* is also seen as a war dress and thus, adorned with protective amulets. Acquah et al. (2017), also describe *gbagno* (war/funeral dress) as a wardress by all standards. For them, it is Dagbon's version of the "bullet-proof" vest. For this reason, it is bathed in charms and spiritually fortified to protect the wearer. The *geriwarikin* is also the war regalia of the Sissala people. It is embellished with talismans of varied shapes, sizes and colours with varied roles or functions. The lion printed with brown colour on the *teng fian* (red leather) and stitched on the *geriwarikin* signifies strength, vibrance, courage, fair and firm leadership and willpower of the wearer (Tumu *kuoro*). The rectangular and square talismans symbolize God's influence on man in the Tumu paramountcy. The circular shaped talisman on the back of the *geriwarikin* with three (3) cowries signifies the

presence and power of God and also the spirits of the male in the Tumu Traditional area. The brown talismans stand for decay and the earth. The black signifies sorrow or grief in difficult moments in the Tumu paramountcy.

Marfo (2007) notes that each talisman has a kind of magic power or function that it performs. It is therefore not surprising that Bayugu Seidu, custodian of Tumu *kuoro* regalia (personal communication, 20/03/2019), disclosed that when the *geriwarikin* (war dress) is finally presented to the Tumu skin, they will imbue it with charms and spiritually fortify it to protect the Tumu *kuoro* when he wears it. Marfo (2007), adds that the chief wears this dress to recall how his predecessors fought on the state's behalf. Thus, the *geriwarikin* is not just a piece of royal garment. It serves as an important backdrop for expressing communal code of the Sissala. It is one of the most important traditional relics that reminds the Sissala people of how their forefathers fought gallantly during wars in the past. The *geriwarikin* is therefore not worn for fun but only on serious occasions like funerals of high-ranking members of the Tumu traditional area and *bayiila* (Sissala war dance) during *Paari Gbielle* festival.

#### **4.2.6 Project Five: The *Nyinchullo* (Native Hat)**

Plate 4.6 is the *nyinchullo* (native hat) of the Tumu *kuoro*. *Nyinchullo* is an important component of the Tumu *kuoro*'s regalia. Sissala elders regard *nyinchullo* so high that they hardly wear a smock without one, lest it will be seen as improper dressing. *Nhinchullo* is therefore seen as a complementary dress to smock for every occasion especially among Sissala elders.



Plate 4.6: The *Nyinchullo* (Native Hat)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Just like *geriwarikin* (war dress) in Plate 4.5, *nyinchullo* (native hat) was fashioned of woven strips of woven smock in its raw natural grey colour. The significance is also in line with researcher's conscious effort towards preservation of a friendly environment devoid of chemicals.

The *nyinchullo* (native hat) was embellished with three (3) talismans of different shapes and colours. It must be noted that each talisman has its own unique role or function. The cream colour is neutral, calm, and relaxing. It represents quietude and dependability. The two (2) black brown talismans stand for the earth in the affairs of the Tumu paramountcy. The two (2) rectangular talismans on the sides of the *nyinchullo* (native hat) symbolise God's influence on Tumu *kuoro* in the paramountcy. The triangular talisman decorated with cowries in front of the *nyinchullo* (native hat) signifies the inseparable connection of the wearer (paramount chief of Tumu) and his divisional and sub-chiefs in the traditional area. According to Marfo (2007) headband shows the authority and power of the chief over his people. This is because it is not everybody who is entitled to wear a particular headband within a social gathering. Similarly, the wearing of *nyinchullo* (native hat) the Tumu *kuoro* from other people at events since not everybody is entitled to wear it.

#### 4.2.7 Project Seven: The *Natengpro* (Native Boots)



Plate 4.7: The *Natengpro* (Native Boots)

(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Plate 4.7 is Tumu *kuoro*'s *natengpro* (native boots). They are worn by chiefs during ceremonial occasions. Today, they are fashioned of leather and entirely sewn with awl and nylon thread. They are usually worn with local trousers known in Dagomba as *Kurugu*. (Acquaah (2017) notes that *kurugu* by design is a voluminous local trouser usually sewn from several yards of smock fabric which reaches to the ankles. The legs are sewn close and fitting to allow to be tucked into the local boots (known as *mugri* in Dagomba).

The colour of the leather used for the *natengpro* is red. As has been established earlier in this chapter, red signifies strength and courage among others. So, the choice of the red leather of the *natengpro* symbolises leadership, vibrance, radiance and willpower to deliver on the mandate of the skin to the traditional area. The shafts and the insteps of the *natengpro* are also decorated with three (3) ascending triangles which also stand for the trinity in the Tumu paramountcy (divisional and sub and paramount chief). The sub chiefs in the paramountcy are represented with a small triangle in the middle. It is followed by a medium triangle which represents the divisional chiefs and the bigger

triangle represents the Tumu *kuoro*. The creation of the triangle on the *natengpro* means that the Tumu *kuoro* walks with his divisional and sub-chiefs.

It must be noted that traditionally, *natengpro* is for royalty. There are native sandals that are worn during funerals and those for festive or ceremonial activities (Marfo, 2007). *Natengpro* are worn during special festive occasions including *Paari Gbielle* festival. Wearing or removing *natengpro* requires sitting down and carefully stretching forward the feet. This is so because as a traditional design, they are made without lace or zippers. Mohammed Yakubu, local craft man in Tamale (personal communication, 15/04/2020), explained that the reason for making *natengpro* without lace or zippers is because of what they were made for in the past-horse riding and not for fashion. Oral tradition has it that a horse rider ever fell over, and had his laces caught in the stirrup and was dragged to death. From then, such boots have always been made particularly for safety reasons and not fashion.

For care and maintenance, it is recommended that the *natengpro* is polished with neutral liquid polish to give it elegant and sparkling look. It is recommended further that after every use, the *natengpro* is dried by putting them exposing them in a well-ventilated area. In case of any odour, a small piece of charcoal can be placed inside the smelly *natengpro* overnight.

### **4.3 Testing**

The testing of the finished symbolic textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy was originally planned to be done in two phases; pretesting at KNUST and final testing at the Tumu *kuoro*'s palace in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

#### **4.3.1 Pretesting at KNUST**

When the researcher finished with all the projects, he mounted all the artefacts at the forecourt of the Integrated Rural Art and Industry section of the Department of

Industrial Art of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology for a pretesting session. The objective of the pretesting session was to first showcase the artefacts to researcher's first and second supervisors and the Head of the Leather Section and some students of the Department of Industrial Arts before taking them to the Tumu *kuoro* for final testing at the annual *Paari Gbielle* festival in Tumu. The pretesting was in the form of an art installation whereby the regalia were displayed on an elevated table (in place of the movable metal stages at the Tumu *kuoro* palace) in much the same way as the Tumu *kuoro*'s skin is usually displayed when he sits in state as shown in Plate 4.8.

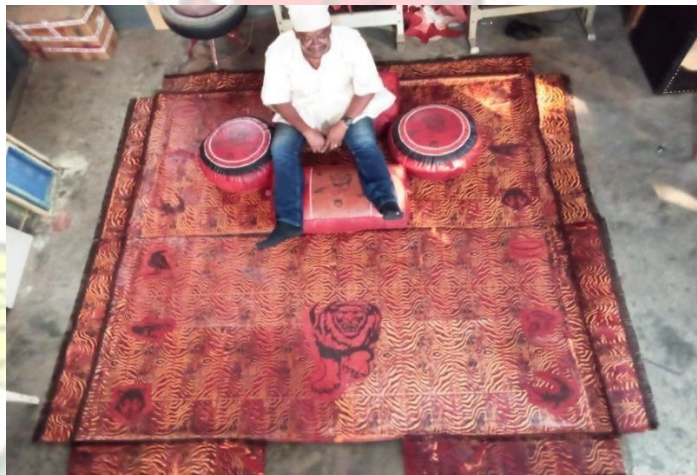


Plate 4.8: Pretesting of Installed Finished Textile Regalia  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

In this particular case, the roaring lion appears in the foreground of the printed leather and a smaller one in the background. The edges of the printed skin leather are aligned with the Sissala clan totems. The bottom rest was placed at the back of the second stage panel (in front of the small lion). Positioned slightly ahead of the bottom rest at both sides (right and left) is a pair of arm rests. The foot rest was also placed in front of both the arm rests and the bottom rest.



Plate 4.9: Pre-testing of the Finished Textile Regalia  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The pretesting also presented an interesting platform for the strict examination of the artefacts by the supervisors. In the process, they crosschecked the specifications of the prototype and simulations to ensure that the details reflected in the finished works. The finishing and aesthetic appeal of the artefacts were also examined to ensure that they were of high standard.

In the end, they expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the works and suggested that the researcher makes recommendations for the care and maintenance for the artifacts produced. The supervisors also expressed concern about the finishing of the *natengpro* (native boots) and recommended that the sole be re-polished with black polish, while neutral polish is applied to the other of the parts.



Plate 4.10: Pretesting of the Finished Textile Regalia  
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

#### 4.3.2 Final Testing at the Tumu *Kuoro*'s Palace

Final testing of the newly produced symbolic textile regalia was scheduled for 21/03/2020 to coincide with the annual *Paari Gbielle* festival at the Tumu *kuoro*'s palace in Tumu in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the President of Ghana, H.E. Nana Akufo-Addo on 14/03/2020 imposed a ban on all public gatherings including festivals for an initial four (4) weeks which was later extended by an additional two weeks. Till date, there is no end in sight of the virus as the number of infected cases and deaths keep rising at an alarming rate. Consequently, for the first time since 2009, the annual *Paari Gbielle* festival has been called off this year. This significantly affected the scheduled final pretesting of the artifacts during the *Paari Gbielle* festival at the Tumu *kuoro*'s palace in Tumu. Consequentially, it was also difficult to travel and personally visit people due the precautionary measures that were in place. The researcher therefore could not also visit the Tumu *kuoro*'s palace as well.

As an alternative measure, the researcher made a five (5) minutes voice over video documentation of the new textile regalia and sent it to the David Bakuuroh, Registrar of the Tumu Traditional Council via WhatsApp. He then made it available to the Tumu *kuoro* and his elders. The researcher made a follow up telephone call to registry of the Tumu Traditional Counsel to obtain feedback on the artefacts. The follow up telephone call was premised on Bowling (1997) assertion that telephone call interviews yield accurate data as 'face to face' interviews. In view of this, in a follow up phone call conversation with David Bakuuroh, Registrar of the Tumu Traditional Council (28/06/2020), he expressed satisfaction on behalf of the Tumu *kuoro* for the outcome of the new textile regalia and admitted that they are a true representation of the totems of the clans of the Tumu traditional area and thus, they reflect the Sissala

people. He added that the artefacts are an improvement of the existing ones with great aesthetic appeal. He intimated further that they will go a long way to accentuate the Tumu skin and reflect his status as the President of Upper West Regional House of Chiefs and a member of the Council of State.

The researcher also posted the video documentation of the new textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy on the Facebook and WhatsApp platforms of Sissala Union, Sissala Youth Forum and Sissala Heritage Foundation for their views on the newly produced textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy. The video documentation elicited some interesting feedbacks from some of the members. In a telephone conversation with Issifu Napuna Alidu, the President of Sissala Youth Forum (28/06/2020), he expressed excitement over the artefacts and requested for the printing of t-shirts with the Sissala clan totems. In another. In another telephone conversation with Jimbili Aminu, Organiser of Sissala Youth Forum (28/06/2020), he was particularly happy about the images of their clan totems on the regalia and thus, also suggested that a cloth of the Sissala clan totems be designed and printed for this year's annual Sissala Youth Forum slated for 20/12/2020. Bamula Basinjia Chiemina, Director of Sissala Heritage Foundation (telephone conversation, 28/06/2020), consented to all the philosophical connotations of the newly produced textile regalia and expressed gratitude to the researcher for the works. In his view, the cultural elements embedded in the artefacts are of great symbolic significance and will therefore go a long way to promote the cultural identity of the Tumu paramountcy skin and the Sissala people at large.

Shaibu Danjuma, another member of the Sissala Union (telephone conversation, 28/06/2020) placed an order for researcher to produce a similar *geriwarikin* (war dress) for him with decorated talismans. Unfortunately, his request

was not met because in the view of the researcher, it is unethical to replicate the *geriwarikin* (war dress) since it was made sanely for the Tumu *kuoro*.

#### 4.4 Exhibition

On 08/10/2020, the researcher mounted an exhibition of the symbolic textile regalia at the gallery of the Department of Industrial Art of KNUST for public viewing, as well as, academic appreciation and critic towards enhancing cultural relevance and artistic knowledge about the work. See Plate 4.12.



Plate 4.11: Tumu Paramountcy Regalia

(Source: Exhibition, 2020)

The exhibition format was largely informed by the traditional display settings for the Tumu *kuoro* when he sits in state. In this particular case, the two-skin rug covers printed with the images of Sissala clan totems were assembled on the floor as is usually done during the enskinment of the Tumu *kuoro* (Refer to Plate 1.1 in Chapter One). The bottom rest was placed at the back of the second skin rug. Positioned slightly ahead of the bottom rest at both sides (right and left) is a pair of arm rests. The foot rest was also placed in front of both the arm rests and the bottom rest. The *geriwarikin* (war dress) was erected on a manikin against the wall. Beneath the *geriwarikin* (war dress) and beside the manikin, were the pair of *natengpro* (native boots). The

arrangement was done to give the audience a clear and unfettered access to the artefacts for better viewing.

The researcher then took time to explain to the audience the philosophy behind each textile regalia and demonstrated how they are each used as well as their respective care and maintenance. The external examiner was particularly happy that clan totems have been explored to design and produce unification regalia for the Tumu paramountcy.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.0 Overview

This chapter entails the summary, conclusion as well as recommendations of the study.

#### 5.1 Summary

Objective one (1) of the study was achieved through extensive interviews conducted in the Tumu traditional area of the Sissala East Municipality of Upper West Region. Through interviews supported by secondary data, the study revealed that before the advent of colonialism and subsequent introduction of chieftaincy, the Sissalas were originally acephalous. Power was vested in the *Jantiina* or *Venetiina* (the landlord or chief priest of the community) who was seen as the traditional/spiritual anchor of the community. The entire Sissala enclave was and still composed of families and further grouped into six major clans. They include;

- i. *Gangaviaraa* (Crow Clan)
- ii. *Henviaraa* (Red-pot Clan)
- iii. *Nyeveviaraa* (Crocodile

Clan) iv. *Changbeiviaraa*

(Frog Clan)

v. *Gunguroviaraa* (Wolf Clan)

vi. *Pweiviaraa* (Leopard Clan)

Each of the Sissala clans is identified with an animal or a bird as its totem, which is accorded with respect, and believed to have a sacred connection with them (clan members). They therefore refrain from mistreating or harming their totems neither do they eat them, though some may do so out of ignorance. The clan members see themselves as one and therefore do not intermarry. The interviews also discovered that unlike Akans, Ewes, Ga and lately Dagombas, the Sissalas do not have their own unique symbols and colour symbolisms. They are therefore yearning for the development of their own unique symbols and colour symbolisms.

Also, through the interviews and personal observation guide, the researcher met the second objective by studying and documenting textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy skin. The researcher attended the annual 2019 *Paari Gbielle* festival and observed and purposively took photographs of the current textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy skin. They include;

i. Rug and stocks of Skins ii.

*Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest) iii.

*Nasin Kumpungu* (Armrest) iv.

*Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest)

v. *Geriwarikin* (War

Dress) vi. *Nyinchulo*

(Native Hat) vii. *Natengpro*

(Native Boots)

The outcome of the personal observations and interviews revealed that with the exception of the stocks of skins, *geriwarikin* (war dress) and *nyinchulo* (native hat), the rest of the textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy skin were and are still being used for their functional purposes. Premium was therefore placed on their functionality with little or no attention to their aesthetic and symbolic significance. The findings however revealed that the Tumu traditional area is ready and willing to embrace new textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin with great symbolic significance that portray the Sissala cultural values.

For the third objective which required the researcher to design and produce textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin using appropriate tools, materials and techniques, the researcher carefully studied the six Sissala clans and their totems. A number of sketches and drawings were made and the final images rendered with computer Adobe Illustrator software. The final images were then taken back to the clan heads for validation and approval. The approved images were then used to design the Tumu paramountcy skin rug with Adobe Photoshop computer software before the prototype and final production were made following the required specifications. A vector-based computer designing software (CorelDRAW) was used to simulate the rest of the textile regalia (*kumpungu kpasah*, *nasin kumpungu naasin kumpungu*, *geriwarikin*, *nyinchulo* and *natengpro*) before the main productions were made following the required specifications.

The final projects (the *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), *nasin kumpungu* (armrest), *naasin kumpungu* (foot rest), *geriwarikin* (war dress), *nyinchulo* (native hat) and *natengpro* (native boots) were analysed and discussed with respect to their conceptual and philosophical/symbolic significance. The aesthetics of the projects in relation to arrangement, textures and colour symbolisms were also discussed.

Recommendations were also offered for the care and maintenance of the newly produced textile regalia.

## 5.2 Conclusion

Unlike the stool regalia in southern Ghana, the textile regalia of skins in northern Ghana have not been given much attention by Ghanaian art and culture scholars. Textiles in Africa represent one of the many creative manifestations of cultural identity that have shaped communities occupying its diverse regions (Acquaye et al., 2018). Therefore, lots of artistic currents run through the textile regalia of skins from one traditional area to the other, yet these regalia have not received the due intellectual attention it deserves. They are often observed as mere stock of skins that serve as thrones for chiefs in northern Ghana. One of the topical issues contributed by this study is how Sissala clans have been explored and their totems used to design and produce symbolic, educative and aesthetically pleasing textile regalia for Tumu paramountcy. Thus, the study provided a great platform for artist, *Jantiina* (chief priests/landlords) and chiefs to share common thoughts in the creation of royal regalia that reflect the traditional setting of the Tumu paramountcy. The contribution of the study to national development is that it promotes the cultural heritage and identity of the Sissala people and socio-economically promotes tourism in the country.

Also, it can be inferred from the designs created that Sissala clan totems are very rich in meaning and when developed into images, can be used for numerous and varied textile designs and artefacts to promote social cohesion and Ghanaian culture. Fish (2005) notes that influential textile design themes in commercial sector relies on few and long held established themes conversational (pictorial), ethnic, floral and geometric. From this assertion, it can be stated that Sissala clan totems stem from

ethnic culture and can therefore be used as rich and undiluted source of inspiration for textures and motifs for textile designing to boost the Ghanaian textile industry.

The outcome of the *geriwarikin* (war dress) revealed that smock producers in northern are doing a whole lot of disservice to themselves and the smock industry by being fixated on dyeing the smocks. They can simply go organic and still produce still have great results.

The philosophical underpinnings of the Sissala clan totems means they can form the basis for the development of unique Sissala symbols to augment the current adinkra symbols and Dagbon and Ewe proverbial symbols in the Ghanaian art industry.

Not all, the new symbolic artefacts produced such as; the *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), *nasin kumpungu* (armrest), *naasin kumpungu* (foot rest), *geriwarikin* (war dress), *nyinchulo* (native hat) and *natengpro* (native boots) are not only improvements on the existing ones with great comfort and aesthetic appeal but they will also help accentuate the Tumu skin and reflect the status of the Tumu *kuoro* as the president of Upper West House of Chiefs and a member of the Council of State. The huge interest of Sissalas in artefacts made with images of their clan totems means that there is an untapped ready market for textile producers and craftsmen in the Ghanaian art industry.

Furthermore, all the clan totems, and the various regalia such as; the *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), *nasin kumpungu* (armrest), *naasin kumpungu* (foot rest), *geriwarikin* (war dress), *nyinchulo* (native hat) and *natengpro* (native boots) that have been identified and documented, could be used as a source of inspiration for further studies. Since there are very little research publications on chieftaincy skin regalia in

northern Ghana, the study forms the basis to fill the void in educating the younger generation and the general public on the northern skin regalia.

# KNUST

## **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations have been made:

- i. The researcher will liaise with his supervisor to publish the project report and ensure that copies are made available at the Tumu Traditional Council, Sissala Heritage Foundation and Tumu library to serve as an educational and research material.
- ii. Designers and craftsmen could experiment with the Sissala clan totems using different methods and techniques to create varied artefacts for the untapped market.
- iii. Smock producers should diversify and venture into the production of more organic smocks for the market since no chemicals and dyeing are required.
- iv. When the textile regalia are not in use, it is recommended that they are folded and packaged in plastic bag to prevent them from accumulating dust. If the leather is dirty or moldy, clean it with damp cotton cloths. Saddle soap or leather conditioners should not be used to clean the artefacts. Also, according to American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works, leather items should not be displayed in direct sunlight or bright light.

#### 5.4 Suggestions for Future Studies

The following suggestions have been offered for future studies:

- i. Other researchers should conduct further studies in the remaining Sissala clans in order to unearth more totems for textile designing and production of artefacts.
- ii. All the various textile regalia such as; *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), *nasin kumpungu* (armrest), *naasin kumpungu* (foot rest), *geriwarikin* (war dress), *nyinchulo* (native hat) and *natengpro* (native boots) which were designed and produced, could be used as a source of inspiration for future studies.

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## APPENDICES

### **Appendix 1: Interview Guide for the chiefs, linguists, elders and natives of Tumu traditional area.**

1. What is the name of the paramountcy skin?
2. What is the title of the skin?
3. What is the appellation of skin?
4. Who is the current occupant of the skin?
5. Who have been the occupants of the skin since its inception?
6. What are the textile regalia of the Tumu paramountcy skin?
7. Do these textile regalia have any symbolic significance? If yes, do you know them?
8. How was the regalia acquired?
9. When was it acquired?
10. How was the name acquired?
11. What was its function at that time?
12. Has there been any change in its function today?
13. What can be done to improve the item?
14. Does Tumu traditional area have unique symbols? If yes, what are these symbols and their significance to the traditional area?

15. Does Tumu traditional area have unique colours? If yes, what are they
16. Tumu traditional area comprises how many clans?
17. Do you support producing textile regalia with images of Sissala clan totems?
18. Would you buy artefacts made of Sissala clan totems?

**Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Clan heads and opinion leaders to solicit views and information on Sissala Clan totems.**

1. What is the name of your clan?
2. What is the origin/history of your clan?
3. Your clan is composed of how many settlements/communities?
4. What is the current state of relationship among the various settlements of your clan?
5. What is the totem of your clan?
6. Is your totem an animal, bird or an object?
7. What is the symbolic significance of your clan totem?
8. Does your clan have unique symbols? If yes, what are these symbols and their significance?
9. Does clan have unique colours? If yes, what are they
10. Do you support an imagery of your clan totem for production of textile regalia for Tumu paramountcy skin? If yes, why, if no, why?

**Appendix 3: Observation guide for identification of Tumu paramountcy skin textile regalia**

1. Name of the item
2. Description of the item
3. Type of the item

4. Uses of item
5. Philosophical importance of item
9. What does it portray?
10. What does it symbolize?
12. Which particular occasion is it worn or used?
13. How is it used?
14. What is its benefit to the chief and the society?
15. Where and how are the skin regalia kept?

#### **Appendix 4: Observation guide for production of skin regalia**

1. What tools, materials and equipment are used to produce skin regalia?
2. How are the tools, materials and equipment used to produce skin regalia?
3. What techniques are used to produce skin regalia?
4. What finishing is given to skin regalia?
5. What improvements can be done to skin regalia?

