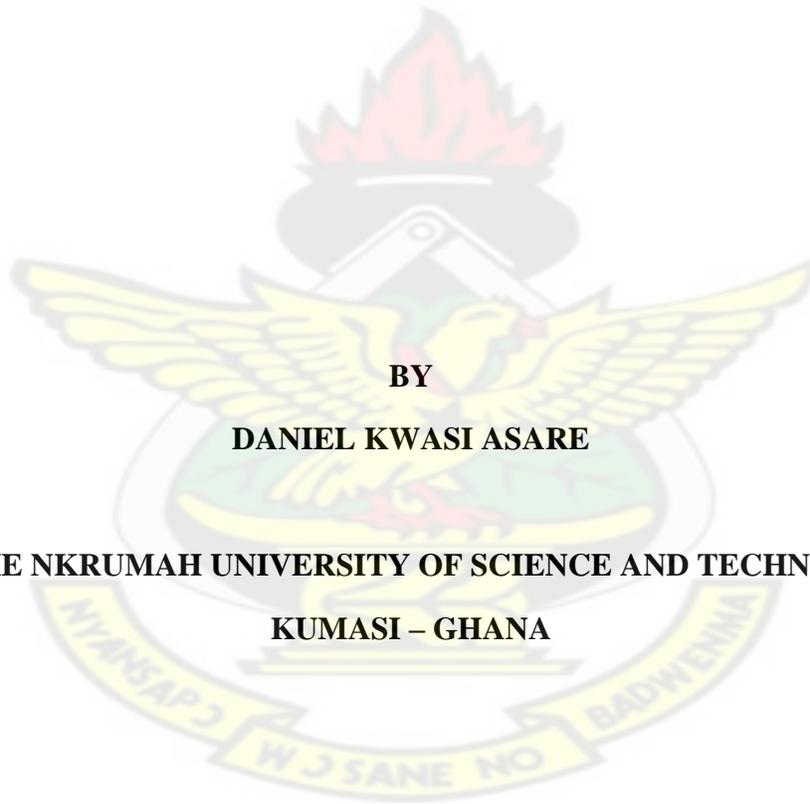


**THE USE OF ASANTE LINGUIST STAFF SYMBOLS IN TEXTILE DESIGN**

KNUST



**BY**

**DANIEL KWASI ASARE**

**KWAME NKRUMAH UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**KUMASI - GHANA**

**FEBRUARY, 2011**

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**THE USE OF ASANTE LINGUIST STAFF SYMBOLS IN TEXTILE DESIGN**

**BY**

**DANIEL KWASI ASARE**

**(B.A. ART TEXTILES)**

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

**MASTER OF FINE ART (TEXTILE DESIGN)**

**Faculty of Art, College of Art and Social Sciences**

**FEBRUARY, 2011**

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## CERTIFICATION

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

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.....

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Signature

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**Certified by:**

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Supervisor's Name

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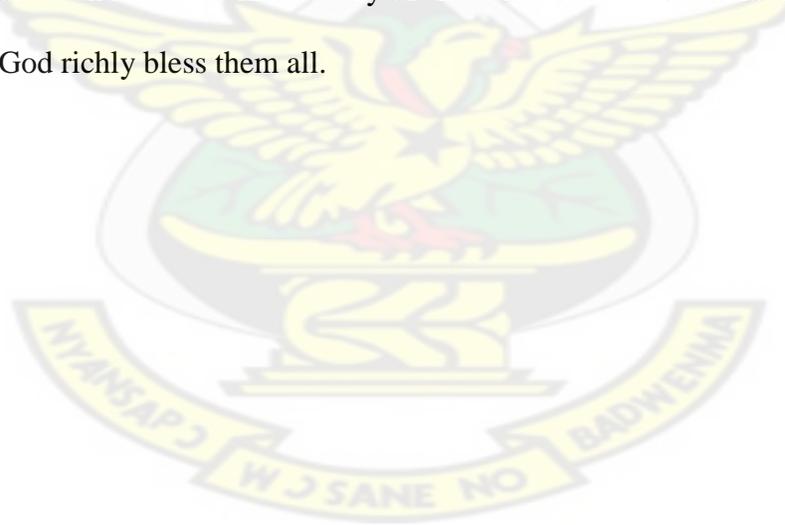
Head of Department's Name

Signature

Date

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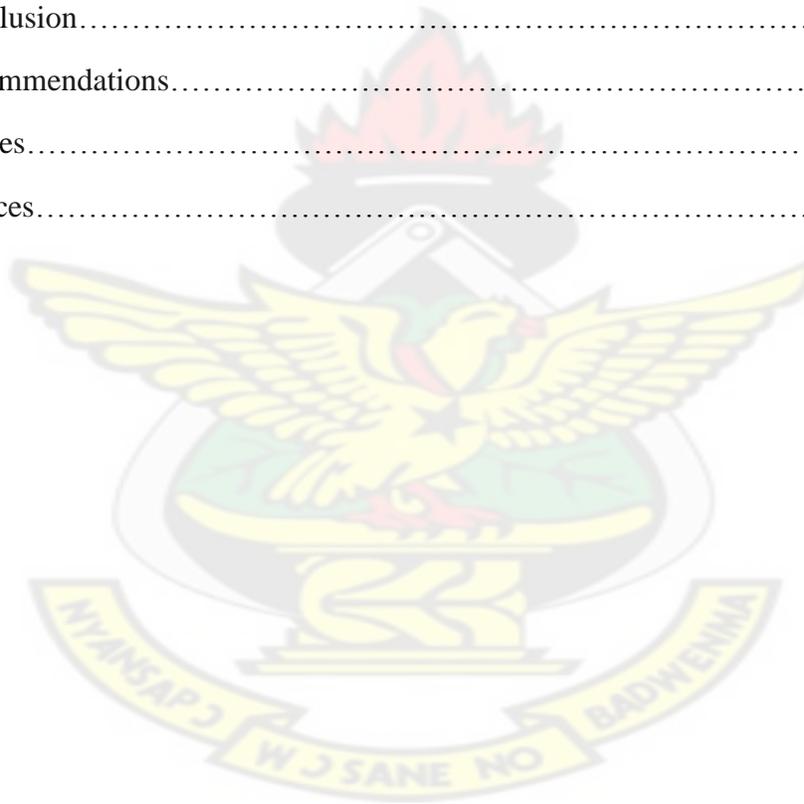
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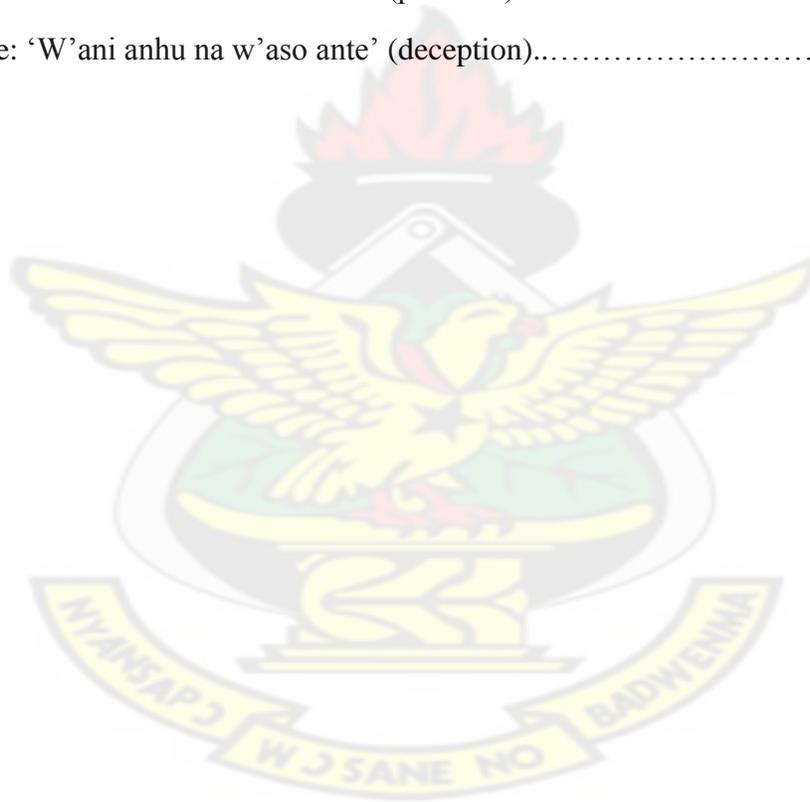
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## **ABSTRACT**

**RESEARCHER:** DANIEL KWASI ASARE, (B.A ART TEXTILES)

**TITLE:** THE USE OF ASANTE LINGUIST STAFF SYMBOLS IN TEXTILE DESIGN

**NUMBER OF PAGES:** 125

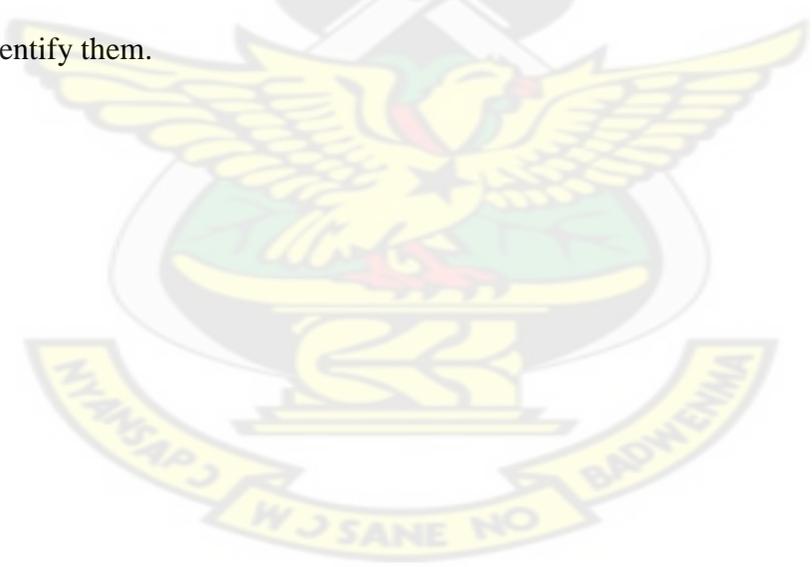
**SUPERVISOR:** MR EBENEZER KOFI HOWARD, B.A ART (TEXTILES), MA ART EDUCATION (KNUST-KUMASI), MFA TEXTILE DESIGN (KNUST-KUMASI)

The purpose of this study was to find out how viable it would be to use traditional symbols with special reference to Asante linguist staff symbols in creating surface textile designs to widen the scope of their application and significance. Most traditional symbols are not popular in usage; hence their philosophical meanings are not understood by many. The study explored the feasibilities of developing textile designs from symbols of Asante linguist staff tops and using the meanings or names of the symbols for the generated designs as a means of making people understand and appreciate the significance of these symbols. As an art studio base experimental study, it employs Adobe Photoshop 7.0, computer graphics software that aids easy manipulation of images for textile designs. Purposive research sampling method was used to gather data from linguists and traditional wood carvers. Sourced images of the symbols were used to produce a number of textile designs of high aesthetic values and which were named in accordance with the name of the symbols to bring out their philosophical and social significance. This project contains images of some Asante linguist staff symbols and highlights on the proverbial, philosophical, aesthetics and social significance of the symbols. The study therefore,

expands the scope of the knowledge on Asante traditional symbolism and application. The research is based on the qualitative research approach and makes use of the experimental and descriptive methods of research. Observation and unstructured interview were the main instruments used for data collection. The study revealed that, Asante linguist staff finials provide a collection of motifs, each with its own unique form that can broaden aesthetic values of designs. It also came to light that the linguist staffs have surface textures nicely engraved on them which provide special texturing effects for textile designs. It was concluded that linguist staff finials can provide an array of motifs for designing textiles which can be exploited, and with the aid of relevant computer aided software designs of precision can be made. By doing so, it is recommended that designers should expose these cultural artifacts through textile designs for people to be able to identify them.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the study**

Designing of textiles is an important component of textile manufacture; it helps, in the long run, in the production of a good designed fabric that is more appealing and therefore marketable. To execute a good design, the designer ought to consider all the various ingredients that come together to achieve the purpose. The arrangement of the motifs, textures and colour are exquisitely done when the principles and elements of design are effectively made use of. Design themes or motifs can be chosen from various sources, whether natural or man-made.

Within the Asante traditional chieftaincy system in Ghana, there are various cultural symbolic artifacts or forms of various shapes and sizes having proverbial and abstract meanings, which are used for specific cultural activities. They carry messages that ought to be understood readily, but one can only understand them when the meanings are explained by their custodians. Some of the symbols like 'sankofa' and other 'adinkra symbols' are popular. It is therefore important to identify and expose other symbols that are not well known, to make them popular and significant in everyday use.

#### **1.1 Statement of the problem**

In Ghana, traditional symbols are found all around the country. They are found in each region and district, and are mostly connected to chieftaincy, religion and the cultural life of the people within the area. These symbolic forms carry messages which have historic or proverbial meanings. They can be seen on durbar grounds, funeral grounds, palaces,

churches and places of worship. Some popular ones are the traditional stools and adinkra symbols which are used for textile designing and other decorative purposes. On the other hand, there are others that cannot be seen often, even though they do not exist in very obscure places.

In Asante and other traditional areas, messages are carried in art forms like stools, linguist staffs and state swords. Each of them carries a message, which has to be explained before one can understand it. If one looks at a display of linguist staff, each carries specific information that explains or describes the symbol mounted on top of the staff. Back in history they were seen often, because the chiefs were active in the day to day administration of their traditional areas. People used to go to the chiefs palace to settle scores and also pay allegiance. These symbols conveyed messages which were of importance to the people and the community at large.

Of late these symbolic forms are not seen much because chiefs have lost some of their political power, and therefore there is less attention on their activities and on these symbolic forms. The infiltration of foreign cultural values has also contributed in the making of these traditional symbolic forms or art works less popular, because the younger generation prefer to copy from foreign cultures. This study therefore seeks to explore the feasibilities of adapting Asante traditional symbols with special reference to linguist staff symbols for textile design.

## **1.2 Research questions**

1. Which Asante linguist staff symbols are suitable for textile design?

2. How feasible can Asante linguist staff symbols be manipulated to produce textile designs of high philosophical and aesthetic values?
3. Can the textile designs generated from selected Asante linguist staff symbols be printed on suitable textile substrate?

### **1.3 Objectives of the study**

1. To identify suitable Asante linguist staff symbols for the project.
2. To generate textile designs from the selected Asante linguist staff symbols to be appreciated philosophically and aesthetically.
3. To print samples of the generated designs on suitable textile substrate for presentation.

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

The use of Asante linguist staff symbols in textile design will help bring to the fore some of the numerous unknown Asante symbols, understand their meanings and the wisdom that went into their creation. People will, henceforth; begin to appreciate the cultural philosophy of the people of Asante, since the meanings of these symbols will be used as the names of the designs. It will also expose new areas for textile designers to explore.

### **1.5 Delimitation**

The research is limited to Asante linguist staff symbols and their symbolic or philosophical meanings. The study also focused on the use of Adobe Photoshop, computer-aided software which is best suited for picture editing and manipulation.

## 1.6 Limitations

It was not easy accessing some of the respondents, especially the linguists who were busy most of the period, either at meetings or attending to their business and therefore had little time to spare for the interaction and interviews.

## 1.7 Definition of terms

- **Finial** – a carved symbol on top of a linguist staff.
- **Fabric** – a flexible sheet material that is assembled of textile fibres and yarns that are woven, knitted, plaited, or otherwise bonded together to give the material mechanical strength.
- **Artifact** – an object carved by traditional or local carvers that has a cultural, historical and aesthetic importance.
- **Aesthetic** – describes the beauty of an object or form usually with artistic piece.
- **Traditional staff** – a traditional symbol of office.
- **Tourist** – a person travelling for pleasure.
- **Selvedge** – border edge of a fabric.

## 1.8 Abbreviations

- **APA** – American Psychology Association.
- **CD** – Compact Disc.
- **KNUST** – Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology.
- **C.N.C** – Centre for National Culture.
- **G.T.B** – Ghana Tourist Board

### **1.9 Arrangement of the rest of the text**

Chapter two contains the review of related literature pertaining to the study, while chapter three outlines and discusses the research methodology. Chapter four deals with presentation and discussion of findings, followed by the fifth chapter that looks at the generation of the designs from selected Asante linguist staff symbols. The sixth chapter contains the results and appreciation of the research and the seventh and final chapter provides the main findings, summary, conclusion and recommendations of the research. The last section is made up of the referencing based on the APA style and the appendices.



## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Overview

This chapter looks at views of various authorities concerning the topic. The review makes an in-depth study of Asante traditional chieftaincy systems and some of their symbols, with reference to linguist staff symbolism, and made deductions to support the study.

#### 2.1 Symbol

A symbol is something such as an object, picture, written word, sound, or particular mark that represents something else by association and resemblance (www.wikipedia.org). Adu-Akwaboa (1994) agrees that a symbol is an object or sign representing something else.

A symbol is something that represents something else, especially an object representing an abstraction; a sign with specific meaning that is a written or printed characters that represent something in specific context; example, an operation or quantity in mathematics or music (Microsoft Encarta, 2009).

Merriam Webster's Dictionary (2002), defines symbol as something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance, or being a visible sign of something invisible. For example, a lion is of courage. It further explains symbol as an arbitrary or conventional sign used in writing or printing relating to a particular field to represent operations, quantities, elementary relations, or qualities. It can also be said to be an act, sound, or object having cultural significance and the capacity to excite or objectify a response.

Encyclopedia Britannica (2010) states that, a symbol is a communication element intended to simply represent or stand for a complex person, object, group or idea. Symbols may be presented graphically, as in the cross for Christianity, the Red Cross or crescent for the life-preserving agencies of Christian and Islamic countries; representationally, as in human figures, for example, Marianne, John Bull, and Uncle Sam standing for France, England, and the United States respectively. Symbols may involve letters, as in 'K' for the chemical element potassium; or may be assigned arbitrarily, as in the mathematical symbol  $\infty$  for infinity or the symbol \$ for dollar.

Agbo (1999) discusses symbols as being multi-functional in nature; they are appreciated for both their aesthetic and communicative values. They are mostly non-verbal illustration of proverbs, parables and maxims which portray the philosophical thinking and the way of life of a particular group of people. However, these symbols are mostly appreciated based on their aesthetic values only. This is because many people do not know the cultural significance of symbols.

Ayensu (1997) states that the state sword is a symbol of authority of the President of the Republic of Ghana, and its origin is deeply rooted in the Akan tradition of kingship authority. The President holds the sword in his right hand when he takes the oath of office at his inauguration. It is also borne before him when he comes to the National Assembly like the state opening of Parliament. Every chief in the Akan traditional area of Ghana and parts of Cote d'Ivoire has a sword that symbolizes the authority of his position.

Ayensu further states that, the mace is a symbol of authority in the Ghanaian Parliament. It is entrusted solely to the speaker, whose daily procession into the chamber led by the Marshal with the Mace. This event signifies the ceremonial opening of each sitting day in the house. It is a symbol of parliamentary authority.

The Akuaba fertility doll is an Asante symbol of fertility. Faik-Nzuji (1996) states that pregnant women or women who want to have a child carry with them a small akuaba doll to protect their fertility or become fertile in cases of sterility. Young girls receive a larger version of this doll from their mothers or their older sisters in order to attract both grace and fertility.

According to Odotei and Awedoba (2006), chiefs continue to adapt from relevant traditional and modern sources to enrich their regalia. Symbols play very active roles in the socio-cultural and political life of Ghana; they serve as a rich source of ideas and inspiration in the quest for national unity. The aesthetics, philosophy and meanings associated with artistic regalia attract studies as well as exhibitions in museums. The continued quest to define Ghanaian identity among sections of the community has encouraged the use of traditional symbols and icons in contemporary Ghanaian art culture and life in general. Many contemporary artists are incorporating traditional symbols and regalia into paintings, sculpture, architecture and fashion design. Christian churches have also adopted some local symbols into their interior decoration. This shows that chiefs from various traditional areas are also adopting some of these symbols and regalia to enrich their customs, and for that matter most of them like Adinkra symbols and linguist staff finials can be found in other traditional jurisdictions being used.

From the various explanations given by these authors, a symbol can be said to be an object made to stand for or represent something else, which can be an office, a wise saying, a group of people, or used as signs to show direction to places. These symbols are usually locally or internationally accepted and recognized, depending on the symbol in contention. As has been stated, mathematical symbols, health symbols, traveling or transportation symbols and others are international symbols that are recognized as such. National symbols like flags, coat of arms of specific countries, and that of international organizations like the Red Cross, Rotary Club, the medical profession etc. are recognized internationally. But symbols representing localized cultural groups can be recognized by the local people, which any foreigner will have to be taught what it stands for or signifies.

## **2.2 Textile design**

Textile, according to Tortora and Merkel (2005), is derived from the Latin term 'textilis', which is based on the verb texere (latin), to weave. It may be defined as follows:

1. A broad classification of materials that can be utilized in constructing fabrics, including textile fibres and yarns.
2. Designates the constructed fabric including woven, knitted, and non-woven structures as well as lace and crocheted goods.
3. Descriptive of processes, organizations, personnel associated with the manufacture of products from fibres to fabrics.

In the fields of art and other creative disciplines, design can be both a noun and a verb. As a verb it describes the creating of an object, form or function, the process of making a drawing of something to show how it will look like.

As a noun, design is seen as;

1. A pattern for decorating something.
2. A drawing that shows how something will be made or what it will look like.
3. A plan that someone has in mind (Longman Dictionary of contemporary English)

Microsoft Encarta (2009) asserts that, design can involve making products, machines, structures that serve their intended purpose and pleasing to the eye.

Adu-Akwaboa (1994) opines that design is a drawing, outline, plan or sketch, a framework or scheme of pictorial construction from which something useful may be made. He further adds that design can simply be an arrangement of accepted elements following certain principles. The elements which include lines, shapes, colours, texture, form, tone and light form the building blocks with which the work is constructed. If these elements are well organized, a design is created.

Tortora and Merkel (2005) describe textile design as an arrangement of form or colours, or both, to be implemented as ornamentation in or on various textile materials. Designs or patterns may be woven or knitted into the structure of a fabric; may form surface decorations; or a blend of colours and may brighten or improve the design or pattern.

There are many man-made and natural objects within the environment which serve as sources of inspiration for textile design.

Adu-Akwaboa enumerates and cites specific examples of such sources in the following:

## **1. Natural sources**

- (a) Plants – trees, stumps, branches, leaves, flowers, fruits, roots, bark of trees etc.
- (b) Man and Animals – insects, reptiles, butterflies, moths, birds etc.
- (c) Rocks – mountains, valleys, stones, pebbles etc.
- (d) The Sky – cloud formations.

**2. Artificial** – household articles – cooking utensils, furniture, bags, boxes, books, etc; buildings, vehicles, and vehicle parts, machines and machine parts.

**3. Geometrical** – circles, squares, triangles, rectangles, spheres, hemispheres, diamonds, abstract scribbles, contours, etc.

**4. Traditional Crafts** – stools, swords, umbrellas, pots, calabashes, carving of human figures, animals and abstract objects, etc.

**5. Adinkra Symbols** – different varieties such as ‘gye nyame’, ‘nkonsonkonson’, ‘dondo’, etc.

**6. Themes and Proverbs** – these are translated into motifs and used. For example ‘Unity is strength’, ‘Seriousness is not indicated by red eyes’ or ‘Household pebbles cut deeper than cutlass’.

**7. Pictorial** – interesting scenes, portraits, crests, symbols, objects etc.

**8. Modification of existing designs** – Modification by:

- a) reduction of motifs;
- b) enlargement of motifs;

- c) adding to the motifs;
- d) subtracting from the motifs;
- e) abstraction of the motifs;
- f) modernization of the motifs;
- g) combination of two or more old and/or new designs.

Any of the above can be drawn and repeated several times in an orderly manner to create a design.

### **2.3 Textile design process (Hand and Computer Aided Design)**

Textile designs can be generated either by hand or by the use of computer software programmes, the latter being a new innovation in designing, is devoid of long and elaborate procedures.

#### **2.3.1 Textile design by hand**

Free hand designing requires the use of various drawing instruments, time and money to come out with a design. Adu-Akwaboa (1994) states that, the fabric to be printed, whatever form it takes e.g. java, wax, curtains, T-shirt etc, should be designed beautifully by hand on paper as exactly as it is expected to appear on the fabric during printing. This method needs careful thinking and sometimes precision. However, by dint of hard work and patience one is able to overcome the problems associated with designing and then design well. Textile designing by hand requires basic materials like soft pencils (2B), eraser, paper (cartridge), colours (designer's gouache, poster), palettes, brushes (sable), drawing instruments, (a pair of compasses, ruling pens etc.), set square, ruler, tracing paper, drawing board, paper clips, sellotape and a pair of scissors. There is also the need

for opaque ink when it comes to tracing for screen printing. Adu-Akwaboa further states that, rich colour sense is obtained through constant colour mixing exercises, and so one will need to spend time to mix colours as often as possible and through that one can attain colour sense and overcome problems associated with colour usage.

Computer Aided Design (CAD) with appropriate design software like Adobe Photoshop 7.0 is capable of editing photo images and manipulating them for textile designing. This is a modern trend of producing accurate graphic designs within short periods.

### **2.3.2 Overview of Adobe Photoshop software**

Appiah and Eshun (2005) state that, Adobe Photoshop is computer software programme for editing graphic images. Adobe Photoshop 7.0 possesses the professional image-editing standard. With its integrated Web tool application, Photoshop delivers a comprehensive environment for professional designers and graphics producers to create sophisticated images for print, the Web, wireless devices, and other media.

Photoshop is one of the most robust and powerful graphics software programmes around. It is not just the industry standard in creative professions, but for science, engineering, and many other types of industries as well. Photoshop delivers high-powered image editing, photo retouching, and compositing tools to help one get professional-quality results.

Computer graphics fall into two main categories, bitmap and vector. One can work with both types of graphics in Photoshop; moreover, a Photoshop file can contain both bitmap and vector data. Understanding the difference between the two categories helps to create, edit, and import artwork ([Adobe/Photoshop7.0/Help.html](http://Adobe/Photoshop7.0/Help.html)).

### **(a) Bitmap images**

Bitmap images, technically called raster images, use a grid of colours known as pixels to represent images. Each pixel is assigned a specific location and colour value. For example, a bicycle tyre in a bitmap image is made up of a mosaic of pixels in that location. When working with bitmap images, pixels are edited rather than objects or shapes. Bitmap images are the most common electronic medium for continuous-tone images, such as photographs or digital paintings, because they can represent subtle gradations of shades and colour. Bitmap images are resolution dependent, that is, they contain a fixed number of pixels. As a result, they can lose detail and appear jagged if they are scaled on-screen or if they are printed at a lower resolution than they were created for (Adobe/Photoshop7.0/Help.html).

### **(b) Vector graphics**

Vector graphics are made up of lines and curves defined by mathematical objects called vectors. Vectors describe an image according to its geometric characteristics. For example, a bicycle tyre in a vector graphic is made up of a mathematical definition of a circle drawn with a certain radius, set at a specific location, and filled with a specific colour. You can move, resize, or change the colour of the tyre without losing the quality of the graphic.

Vector graphics are resolution independent that is, they can be scaled to any size and printed at any resolution without losing detail or clarity. As a result, vector graphics are the best choice for representing bold graphics that must retain crisp lines when scaled to various sizes for example, logos. Because computer monitors represent images by

displaying them on a grid, both vector and bitmap data is displayed as pixels on screen (Adobe/Photoshop 7.0/Help.html).

### **(c) System requirements**

Appiah and Eshun (2005) indicate that to enable the programme operate, the system requires the following specifications:

For Windows:

- Minimum of 4× CD-ROM drive
- Pentium processor, minimum of 8 MB of memory,
- Minimum monitor display area of 640×480 (for large screens setting the resolution to 1024×768 may improve images),
- QuickTime 4.0 (available to install from the CD-ROM)

Macintosh:

- The same specifications as Power PC processor, System 7.0 or higher.

This latest technology of Adobe Photoshop made for designing and its features have the parameters capable of editing and manipulate images for perfect textile design when well handled.

## **2.4 The ethnography of the Asantes**

The Asante people belong to the twi-speaking part of the Akan language group and have been living in the forest areas of modern Ghana. They have such a powerful culture that in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries the Asante influence could be felt up to modern-day Burkina Faso, Togo and Cote d'Ivoire. The Asante capital is Kumasi which is also the residence

of the Asantehene or Asante king. They are known for their centralized political structures.

Quarcoopome (1996) affirms that, organized around matrilineages, the Akans live in communities ranging from villages of a few people to large towns of thousands, each ruled by a head man (Odikro) or chief (Ohene) in whom resides authority over the economic and ritual life of the community. The Asantes are a matrilineal people – meaning that their descent is traced through the female line. The heir to the throne would therefore be one of the king's sister's sons. The word Asante originated from the phrase 'Osa Nti' which means for the 'sake of war'. The ruler of another ethnic group, the Denkyiras, whose sovereignty the Asantes resisted, first used this name to describe the Asante people. This name seems very fitting when considering the rapid pace with which Asante expanded their territory between 1700 and 1900. They became so powerful that they eventually dominated an area of the colonial Gold Coast bigger than the present day Ghana. The success of the Asante military conquest was mostly due to an organized administrative structure in the central state of Kumasi, as well as the rich gold reserve controlled by the Asantes.

### **2.5 Asante traditional administrative system**

The Asantehene, as stated by Ross (2002), originally ruled with the guidance of the Asantemanhyiamu, defined by Wilks (1995) as the "Assembly of the Asante Nation; the highest legislative council and court". This consisted of all Asante paramount chiefs (Amanhene), senior Kumasi chiefs, and selected provincial chiefs, who met once in a year at annual Odwira festival.

Ross further states that, meeting more frequently is a group identified by Wilks as the council of Kumasi, or the inner council, consisting of senior military commanders, other Kumasi functionaries, the queen mother, and several councillors (akyeame), who are often called linguists. A recurring message in Akan proverbial folklore and art emphasized the necessity for a chief to consult with those senior members of his court. This message is usually conveyed in a depiction of three or four heads clustered together. Although it is also applied to images of a single head, the proverb is typically translated as “One head does not go into council”.

Quarcopome (1996) asserts that, the Akan chief presides over a court and a bureaucracy composed of officials, both royal and non-royal, who are ranked hierarchically. Of the non-royal offices in the chiefdom, the position of the linguist or councillor (okyeame) is the most respected.

Osei Kwadwo (2000), states that ‘Asantehene’ or Asante King is assisted by the Paramount chiefs (Amanhene) who are heads of the component states of the Asante Kingdom. The post of ‘Omanhene’ is second in the hierarchy after ‘Asantehene’. The third in hierarchy is the post of ‘Obrempon’. It must be noted that ‘Omanhene’ or paramount chief could be chief in charge of a number of towns scattered in the kingdom. The Obrempon could also be a chief of a single town with historical importance. The next in hierarchy is the post of ‘Odikro’ or chief of a town. ‘Odikro’ is the ruler of a single town or village. He ranks fourth in the hierarchy. ‘Odikro’ is helped to administer his town by his elders known as ‘mpaninfo’ of the town. The elders are selected from individual families of the town. The elders are followed by headmen of the clans in the town. The headman of a clan is called ‘Abusuapanin’. They are followed in hierarchy by

‘Efipanyin’. Each house elder rules over his house. Each of the previously mentioned elders has its female counterpart called ‘Ohemaa’ or ‘obapanyin’, who rules with the king, chief or elder.

## **2.6 Asante Okyeame (linguist)**

The linguist is natively called an ‘okyeame’. The linguist according to Quarcopome, is not only the spokesman for the chief but also an advisor, an intermediary with his subjects, a store of knowledge, a legal expert, an ambassador, and occasionally, a ritual officiator.

Beckwith and Fisher (1999) affirm that, communication with the Asante king or with chiefs and fetish priests will go through an ‘okyeame’. The current Asante king has thirteen linguists. Most paramount chiefs have seven and eight. An ‘okyeame’ must come up with the words, proverb, saying, or metaphor that will most accurately express what the chief is saying or what is being said to the chief. This means that an ‘okyeame’ must not only be a good speaker but must also know as much or more about the social and political system as the chief he serves. As a symbol of authority to speak for the chief, the okyeame carries a staff, an ‘okyeame poma’. The finial or symbol on top of the ‘okyeame poma’ normally represents an Asante proverb or saying.

As stated by Osei Kwadwo (2000), the responsibilities of linguists included the following;

- Linguists lead spokesmen for any delegation sent to make enquiries from deities.
- Linguists also lead delegations to deliver messages from one chief to another.

- Delegations to inform another chief of the death of a chief would always have a linguist to serve as a spokesman.

The other duty of linguists, according to Osei Kwadwo, is serving as the channel between the people and chiefs or kings. Anybody who wants to see the chief should first see the linguist to book an appointment. On the appointed time, the linguist would lead the person to the chief and interpret his mission to him in a language acceptable to the chief's court. The attachment of linguists to chiefs has developed to such a level that nowadays linguists are classified as chief's wives.

## **2.7 Asante symbolism**

Asante's are identified with several symbols which are usually used as a medium of communication. The Asante symbolism consists of songs, dances, poetry, folktales, proverbs, idiomatic expressions as well as designs and patterns such as Adinkra patterns; others are found in crafts like mace, gold weights, the stool, chief's councilors or linguist staff, etc. These symbols portray, more significantly, the true identity of the Asantes.

One particular group of traditional designs and symbols with much significance to the Asantes are adinkra symbols. These are believed to have originated from carved designs on the 'sekyedua', or column of the stool of Nana Adinkra, an Akan chief, who ruled around the early parts of the nineteenth century (Kyeremanten, 1964).

According to Odotei and Awedoba (2006), these Adinkra symbols have become important symbols used in various forms. Today, several of these symbols are incorporated into the logos of companies and gowns of prominent public figures. A few examples are robes of the Speaker of parliament, and the academic gowns of the

Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana. On every product certified by the Ghana Standards Board is the Adinkra symbol 'hwemudua', meaning investigating rod, which symbolizes belief in the best from everything and abhorrence of imperfection.

Another symbolic object is the stool, of which according to Sarpong (1971), symbolizes the soul of the society in Akan traditional life. The seat, which is in the shape of a crescent, symbolizes the warmth of a mother's embrace. The 'obi-te-obi-so dwa' (some-one-sits-upon another stool) is carved in such a way that one stool is standing on top of another. This means that in a society there is a hierarchical order (order of seniority) among the citizens, even among chiefs, elders and the like; there is an order of precedence observed for the good running of the community.

Sarpong further states that, the middle portion of the stool, besides determining the name of the stool, is the object of various patterns and symbols. The circular Rainbow Stool, used by the King of Asante, is the reproduction in wood of the well known proverb; 'Kontonkrowi, eda amansan kon mu' (the rainbow is around the neck of every nation). The symbolism is in two fold. Some people say it reminds the King that death is the lot of everybody, including himself, irrespective of how powerful he is. Therefore he should not be puffed up with pride by reason of his high position on earth. Others think it depicts the power which the king has over everybody in Asante.

## **2.8 Asante linguists' staff**

For the traditional linguist, as stated by Quarcopome (1996), a staff (okyeame poma) constitutes the principal symbol that makes his office and facilitates his functions in and out of the chief's court. The linguist staff is often a carved wooden shaft frequently

segmented and assembled from three parts: a spiked base, a mid section and a figurative finial. The shaft is frequently painted black, gold or silver over a chip-carved or incised surface. The finial has on it an animal, plant, or a human figure, or an artifact or a combination of these. Gold represents social prestige and material wealth in Akan culture, and its use would have a lot to say about the economic position of its owner.

Ross (2002) states that, hundreds of proverbs are known and used by the Akan people, and most of these can be seen represented on top of these linguist staffs. There are some that reflect political authority either because they best distill power relationships or convey the virtues of leadership. The linguist staff's iconography is uniquely suited for the purpose; its symbolism communicates ideas about the chief and his rule. Its imagery is designed to make a poignant, thought provoking statement deemed relevant for the occasion. For example, one staff depicts a figure getting a push for climbing a good tree. This literally means "One can get support if only one embarks on a viable exercise". In Asante language it goes like "Wo foro duapa a na yepea wo".

Symbolism of the Asantes according to Quarcopome (1996) includes gestures, the way a cloth is worn by the people and styles of dancing, which portray their beliefs and aspirations. In Asante, there is the belief that symbols evoke certain feelings in the people, and serve as a unifying force for the clan or people but not for their beauty. Meanings of symbols and gestures are very important aspect of the Asante culture because improper usage of symbols in the presence of elders denotes insults.

Abraham (1991) affirms that, both the ‘abusua’ and ‘oman akyeame’ have symbols which are meaningful to the people who use them. The ‘abusua’ staffs are totemic and are limited to the accepted totems alone, while that of ‘oman’ are diversified in nature.

Odotei and Awedeba (2006) state, that, certain kinds of animals become totemic and are not eaten because of some important historical reason. The Asantes have derived seven distinct clans which cut across all Akan groups in Ghana. Each clan has a totemic animal which depicts the characteristics of its members. They do not, therefore, kill, hurt or hunt animals that represent them. The various Asante clans and their corresponding totems and meanings are shown in Table 2.8.1.

**Table 2.8.1 Totems of Asante clans and their meanings**

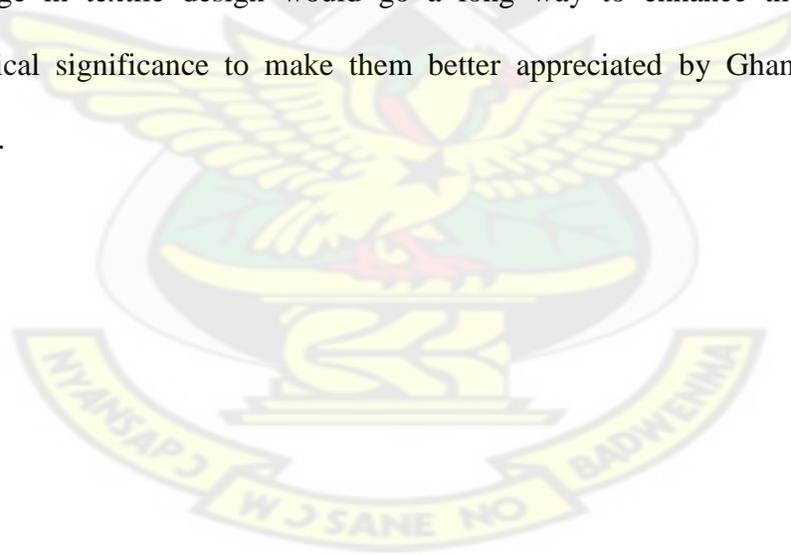
<b>Clan</b>	<b>Totem</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Djyoko	Falcon	Patience
Bretuo	Leopard	Aggressiveness
Asona	Crow	Wisdom
Asenie	Bat	Diplomacy
Aduana	Dog	Skill
Ekoona	Buffalo	Uprightness
Agona	Parrot	Eloquence
Asakyiri	Vulture	Endurance

Source: Odotei & Awedeba (2006)

In Ghana, it is not only the Akan or Asante linguists who carry a staff. The tradition is also found among the Ga and the Ewe people of Ghana. Elsewhere in Africa, a staff is carried by very important personalities as a sign of their office. All the way down south, among the Zulu tribe, you will find Credo Mutwa carrying a staff/scepter with a bird on top of it. This is symbolic and it means that his initiation stream has links with the Enki/Ptah faction. Ptah, an Egyptian deity was referred to as "the Noble Djed" because of the staff he carried around. These Djed were towers used to erect the energetic

‘quarantine’ field around the planet. They were control towers of some kind through which frequency pulses could be sent. In the past those linguists who translated the words of the Neteru Ptah had staff as holder of office in the traditional setup ([www.marshall.edu/akanart/poma.com](http://www.marshall.edu/akanart/poma.com))

Inferring from the literature, it is apparent that linguist staff carrying has been a historical phenomenon. The linguist staff has played and continues to play significant roles in traditional systems. Their historical and cultural importance to traditional rule by sending silent proverbial and philosophical messages cannot be overlooked because of the power and respect associated with them, which have enabled their influence to be sustained till today, as found in many traditional setups within present day Ghana and elsewhere. Their usage in textile design would go a long way to enhance their aesthetic and philosophical significance to make them better appreciated by Ghanaian natives and foreigners.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Overview**

This chapter discusses the methodology of the research. It is made up of the research design, library research, population for the study, sampling technique, data collecting instruments, data collecting procedures and data analysis plan.

#### **3.1 Research design**

Qualitative research design was employed in this study to identify, understand and assess how effective Asante linguist staff symbols can be used in textile design. Qualitative research is a field research in which the researcher makes an effort to study all elements in the setting in order to understand the reality of the situation. The result calls for detailed investigations aimed at understanding the social, cultural and historical setting of Asante traditional symbolism with special reference to linguist staff symbols.

Borg and Gall (1989) state that, qualitative research method is largely subjective, and that they rely heavily on the investigation skill of observation and interpretation to provide valid information. This research method investigates the why and how of decision making, not just what, where, when. Hence, smaller but focused samples are more often needed, rather than large samples.

The researcher selected qualitative method because it is meant to investigate and provide understanding of a history and significance of a social practice. The descriptive and experimental methods of research were used based on qualitative research design. The

experimental method in this sense do not mean scientific enquiry of quantitative research, but art studio base experiment and description.

Frankel and Wallen (1996), affirm that descriptive studies describe a given state of affairs as fully and carefully as possible. The descriptive method was used to provide a detailed description of Asante linguist staffs. Since this requires a more detailed analysis of the various aspects of phenomena and their interrelationships, and also a complete understanding of the people and forms, there was the need to know the types of Asante linguist staffs available, their historical and social importance, and their symbolic and philosophical meanings. This was done descriptively.

The study looked at the possibility of using Asante linguist staff symbols in textile design which involved experimentation. Linguist staff symbols as the literature points out are traditional art forms carved by traditional carvers that have philosophical and proverbial meanings which are very significant to the people. By designing textiles with these symbols can serve as a form of sensitization to the public to know and learn from them. It was under art studio conditions that the experiment was conducted to produce samples of paper and printed designs to meet the formulated objectives.

### **3.2 Library research**

Various libraries were visited by the researcher to obtain relevant secondary data for the study. These include; Department of Art Education Library - KNUST, KNUST Main Library, Faculty of Art Library, and Ashanti Library (C.N.C), all in Kumasi. Other libraries visited by the researcher include; Takoradi Polytechnic Library and the Western Regional Library in Sekondi.

Secondary data collected from these libraries were mainly from documented sources like books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, periodical, journals, catalogues, publications and unpublished thesis.

The data collected through library research were mainly on the history and symbolism of the Asantes.

### **3.3 Population for the study**

A population is the group of people or objects of which the results of the study are intended to apply. Salkind (1991) states that, given the constraints of limited research funds that almost all scientists live with, the next best strategy is to take a portion of a larger group of participants and do the research with that smaller group. In this context, the larger group is referred to as a population and the smaller group selected from a population is referred to as a sample.

The target population for this study comprises Asante linguist staff symbols. The study area was the Asante region of Ghana, but due to the vastness of the region, the area of study was limited to Kumasi, the capital of Asante region, which is also the seat of the Asante traditional council. The accessible population for the study is made up of selected Asante linguist staff symbols of the seven distinctive Asante clans namely; Oyoko/Adako, Bretuo/Agona, Asona, Aduana, Asenie, Ekuona, Asakyiri.

### **3.4 Sampling**

According to Frankel and Wallen (1996), a 'sample' in a research study refers to any group on which information is obtained. Sampling is the process of selecting these groups or individuals. This source further explains that when it is possible, researchers would

prefer to study the entire population in which they are interested. Usually, however, this is difficult to do. Most populations of interest are large, diverse, and scattered over a large area. Finding, let alone contacting, all the members can be time-consuming and expensive, hence, sampling becomes very essential in research to select a manageable size of respondents from the parent population to be studied.

The importance of sampling in this study was to select appropriate kinds of Asante linguist staff symbols and this was done purposefully using the purposive sampling technique. As stated by Frankel and Wallen, in purposive sampling researchers do not study whoever is available, but use their judgment to select a sample that they believe, based on prior information, will provide the data they need. This sampling technique was relevant to the study based on the fact that linguists and carvers have in-depth knowledge and are more conversant with linguist staffs, and therefore the researcher relied on purposive sampling method to select convenient sample size from the population for the study. Therefore the researcher had a specific purpose of interviewing them, as they were chosen for specific information. This helped the researcher to select appropriate linguist staff symbols for the study. Sixteen (16) Asante linguist staff symbols were selected for the study. Information was sourced from five (5) traditional woodcarvers, five (5) linguists, twenty (20) textile students from Takoradi Polytechnic and twenty (20) members of Kumasi natives.

### **3.5 Data collecting instruments**

As a qualitative study, the data collecting instruments used in this research were interviews and observation. These instruments were used to collect data concerning the

history, philosophy and artistic inclination of Asante linguist staff symbols for textile design.

The verbal data gathered through interviews showed clearly what linguists in their own words said about their experiences with the handling of Asante linguist staff symbols. For example, experiences of being a linguist or spokesman for a chief.

Careful examination of various Asante linguist staff symbols with respect to artistic nature and meanings were carried out through observation.

Different linguist staffs were observed by the researcher both at carving centres and chiefs' palaces. The researcher got access to physically examining some of the linguist staffs, which helped in analytical observation and appreciation of the aesthetic values of the symbols. These research instruments enabled the researcher to see, appreciate photograph, and document relevant linguist staff symbols as planned in the study.

### **3.6 Data collecting procedure**

Direct interviews were conducted with respondents. They included linguists, wood carvers, students and a cross section of people in Kumasi. The interviews were carried out in selected palaces and woodcarving centres in the Kumasi metropolis and surrounding areas like Ejisu in the Ejisu-Juabeng municipal area, and Awbiaa in the Kwabre District of the Asante region.

The researcher used structured interview schedule with open ended questions, and really developed a warm attitude with the respondents which created a better platform for soliciting useful information. Respondents responded freely and frankly. The open-ended format of the interview facilitated detailed description and expansion of the views

of respondents. This enabled the researcher to understand respondents better, which is not possible with the use of other research instruments.

Through observation, the researcher physically assessed and examined some linguist staffs. This facilitated analytical assessment of how and what materials the linguist staffs were made of, as well as their aesthetic values, that make them possible to be used for textile design. The various preparations made by the carvers before the linguist staffs are carved as well as the various carving stages, the way they finished and stored the staffs were also observed. Some pictures were also taken with a digital camera to enable the researcher have images documented for use as motifs for textile design.

### **3.7 Data analysis plan**

Data obtained both primary and secondary were analyzed and presented in the form of photographs and tables. The photographs or images of the linguist staff symbols were transformed into motifs for the designs, while the descriptions of the symbols and their meanings as well as the breakdown of the accessible population are presented with tables and figures.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Overview

This chapter looks at presentation and discussion of the field research findings with special reference to the responses from wood carvers, linguist, students and a section of the general public.

#### 4.1 Field research findings

The primary data collected were obtained from local carvers through interviews conducted at wood carving centers at Manhyia in Kumasi and Awhiaa, all in the Ashanti region. At Manhyia, the carvers' main specialities are in carving of stools, linguist staffs, umbrella tops, walking sticks for chiefs and other regalia. At Awhiaa, the carvers are in the business of carving various wooden artefacts, including stools, masks and other sculpture pieces. The next group of people interviewed were linguists who are custodians of linguist staffs. Students and a cross section of natives of Kumasi were also interviewed for the purpose of sourcing information for the study. In all five (5) carvers, five (5) linguists, twenty (20) students and twenty (20) natives from the public were reached for the interview. Table 4.1.1 shows the breakdown of the people interviewed.

**Table 4.1.1 Interview Respondents**

<b>STATUS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
Carvers	5	10
Linguists	5	10
Students	20	40
General Public	20	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The outcome of the interviews and information gathered from the various groups of people summarized below gave the researcher an insight into how people understand Asante linguist staff symbols.

#### **4.2 Responses from woodcarvers**

Interviews with carvers indicate that few of them are into the carving of linguist staffs, because one cannot earn much as they do not get regular orders to carve them. Those who carve them are also into the carving of other chieftaincy artefacts like stools, umbrella tops, and other carvings like walking sticks for chiefs.

Some of the carvers had great grandfathers who were also woodcarvers like the celebrated late Osei Bonsu who was known for his experience in carving symbolic linguist staffs. Osei Bonsu a grandchild of Mensah Bonsu was one time an Asante King. He was a drummer at the Asantehene's palace and learnt the art of carving at the King's court, and carved most linguist staffs for Asantehene's linguists. His great grandson known as Osei Kwadwo Bonsu now a woodcarver at Manhyia in Kumasi indicated that he learnt the art from his father. The carving of linguist staffs and other chief regalia is a family business which every male member of the family who is interested learns to do.

The carved symbols are mounted and fixed on top of well crafted handles or staffs with pointed base as shown in Plate 4.2.1. This affirms the assertion made by Quarcopome (1996) that, the linguist staff is often a carved wooden shaft frequently segmented and assembled from three parts: a spiked base, a mid section and a figurative finial. The carvers know much about the staff symbols and their names because their clients order

them by the name of the symbols. The carvers agreed that using the symbols in designing textiles can enable people know the names of the linguist staff symbols.

From the carving centres, it was observed that linguist staffs were carved from wood to make them easier to be carried by the linguists over lengthy periods. After carving, the staffs are finished by polishing and plaited with gold. The carvers use locally made tools which they handle expertly due to the training they had when they were learners.



Plate 4.2.1: An Asante linguist staff with an elephant symbol

Source: Ross (2002)

Asante linguist staffs were observed to be symbolic, with their numerous philosophical and proverbial meanings serving as reminders to chiefs, elders of traditional systems and the public; the need to be cautious and wary of things they do and say either in public or in private. Some also indicate the need to respect authority or face the wrath of a higher

authority like the ancestors, gods and God who is the Supreme Being, as mentioned by Sarpong (1971) that, the symbolism in the well known carved proverb “Kontonkronwi, ɛda amansan kɔ n mu”, reminds the King that death is the lot of everybody including himself irrespective of how powerful he is. The carving centres are generally not so large, but big enough to accommodate two to four carvers at the same time. In the carving centres are various artifacts on display for sale. They obtain wood from matured forests and keep them to dry enough before they are carved.

The different linguist staff symbols have various shapes, forms and philosophical sayings that can be of interest for textile design and naming of the fabrics.

#### **4.3 Responses from linguists**

Interactions with linguists indicated that linguists hold the staffs and lead the chief or king to functions like durbars, meetings and funerals. They also carry the staffs when they are on an official assignment for the chief or king and therefore are identified by the staff as their symbol of office which makes them important and significant figures of the chief's entourage. They are also regarded as the chief's wives and spokespersons. Osei Kwadwo (2009) affirms that, the attachment of linguists to chiefs has developed to such a level that nowadays linguists are classified as chiefs' wives.

The Okyeame is described by Yankah (1995) as the most conspicuous functionary in the chief's executive wing, performing duties in several spheres of activity including, social, political, religious, and rhetorical on behalf of the chief, in addition to being the chiefs' orator, diplomat, envoy, prosecutor, protocol officer, and prayer officiate and the chiefs' confidant and counsellor. This suggests that linguists are very close to their chiefs.

Each chief has a number of linguists, the number depends on the status of the chief, and the linguists have their head known as 'akyeamehene'. The chief, according to custom as stated by Osei Kwadwo (2009), is not expected to shout or speak so loudly to a gathering, since the chief's speech organs may get injured. For that matter each chief has a number of linguists through whom he speaks to the people.

The linguists interviewed responded that, some of them were appointed; while majority of them inherited the positions from their uncles, which suggests that it is a matrilineal inherited position. Four (4) out of the 5 (five) said that they became linguists by inheritance. Only one said he was appointed by the chief to whom he is very close. This is in agreement to Yankah's statement that the position of linguist is generally inherited through designated matrilineages although occasionally a chief may appoint someone to the position. The position is therefore not a contested one; therefore appointments of new linguists are the sole prerogative of the chiefs.

They indicated that carrying of linguist staffs is a historical event which their ancestors practised and has been handed over to them from generation to generation and for that matter they have no option than to continue. This is confirmed by Osei Kwadwo (2009) that, Awurade Basa, a famous chief of Adanse in Asante named as the first Akan chief who instituted the linguist stool far into history, as a matrimonial inherited position.

The linguist staffs, to them, are important insignia without which they cannot perform certain duties; hence they quickly order for replacements should some get broken or damaged. According to the linguists, the symbols are many and each has its unique meaning with proverbial or philosophical connotations. But there are two distinct staffs

which are the totemic staffs and proverbial staffs. Totemic linguist staffs are those with carved images of certain animals or birds that are solely carried by clan linguists or 'abusua akyeame'. Odotei and Awedoba (2006) mention that, each of the seven Asante clans has a totemic animal which depicts the characteristics of its members. In a public gathering like a durbar, clan members group at where they find their clan linguist staff or where their linguist is seated.

Proverbial symbol staffs are many and are usually carried by linguists of paramount chiefs and the Asante king. Each symbol has something to tell, and responses from the linguists indicated that it will be proper for people to know the meanings of the symbols. The linguists agreed that symbol images in textile design can be a proper avenue to educate people.

#### **4.4 Responses from the general public and students**

The researcher interacted with a section of the public including students to ascertain the extent of popularity of these linguist staff symbols. All the respondents made up of twenty (20) students and twenty (20) members of the public claim that occasionally they see some of these symbols but do not understand them. What they know is that linguist staff indicates the presence of traditional rulers in a public gathering or on television, and that the carrier of the staff is the spokesman or linguist to the chief.

Twelve (12) students out of the twenty (20) respondents from the public claim that they do not bother to understand them because they believe that the linguist staffs are fetish, since they are connected to chieftaincy. The remaining eight (8) students were not sure of what linguist staffs stand for. The expansion of Christianity has made some people to

despise traditional cultural activities which they term as paganism. All the twenty (20) students interviewed also claim that they have not had the chance to learn the meanings of these symbols, because learning about linguist staff is not captured in the school syllabus. Most of the interviewees did not know the importance of linguist staffs and therefore had no knowledge about their meanings. What clearly came out was that, it was the totemic symbols that sixteen (16) of the twenty (20) respondents from the public were familiar with, but proverbial staff symbols even though they claim to have seen some, they did not really understand them.

In response to the question that enquired whether they knew other traditional symbols, eighteen (18) students out of the twenty public respondents, and all the twenty (20) student respondents were able to mention adinkra symbols, traditional stools and swords. They claim that adinkra symbols have been used in designing Adinkra cloths which are worn during funerals. They are even aware that imitations of Adinkra cloths are now printed by some textile industries both within and outside the country, even though they are classified as indigenous crafts or local textiles. Stools and swords are symbolically connected to traditional rule but their specific symbolic meanings are understood by the few who have links with chiefs' courts and palaces. None of the interviewees claimed to have seen linguist staff symbols used in designing any textile material.

From the interview responses and observations, it is apparent that linguist staff symbols are not very popular with most people, even though these symbols are seen occasionally; their philosophical meanings are not known. Naming textile designs with symbols on the staff will enable them recognise the symbols and understand their meanings. This would

be beneficial to children, women, men and students alike who would be able to appreciate and apply the symbols for socio-cultural and aesthetic development of the nation.

The field study enabled the researcher to interview some Asante linguists, traditional woodcarvers, students and members of the public to collect information on Asante symbolism, with much reference to linguists staff symbols. Information gathered from the linguists' shows that, there are different linguist staff finials carried by the various linguists during durbars and other traditional gatherings. Each of the figured staffs has finials that carry its own proverbial symbolic meaning. Linguist staffs are grouped into two categories; the totemic clan linguist staffs and the proverbial state linguist staffs. Even though the Asantehene and all the paramount chiefs belong to clans, their linguists appear on durbar or festival grounds or in public with proverbial linguist staffs. This identifies them as higher or senior linguists. Some of the state linguist staffs called 'asempa ye tia', meaning truth is brief, are without figured finials, and are used when judging capital crimes or in appeals to paramount chiefs, in some Asante states.

Figured linguist staff symbols were introduced after the return of Agyeman Prempeh I, from exile in the late nineteenth century. As stated by Ross (2002) there is no evidence of figured counselors' staffs in the Asantehene's court until after the return of Prempeh I from exile in 1924. This fact was confirmed by some of the linguists interviewed, and suggests that proverbial linguists were introduced into Asante traditional rule after 1924.

#### **4.5 Asante linguist staff symbols and their significance**

There are many linguist staffs', each is carved in distinctive figures or symbols. The figures are those of human figures symbolically carved undertaking some activity, while

others are in the form of animals to represent a proverb, a social event, or to give an advice. Some images collected attest to this as indicated in Table 4.5.1.

**Table 4.5.1 Description and meanings of some Asante linguist staff symbols**

<b>SYMBOLIC MEANING</b>	<b>TYPE OF FIGURE OR DESCRIPTION</b>
• 'Nea adeε wɔ no na odie εnye nea εkɔ m de no.	• Two human figures seated at a table (Plate 4.5.1)
• ɔ sansa kɔ abu a ɔ de n'akyi gya akɔ ma.	• A bird standing on top of another (Plate 4.5.2)
• Ahennie te sε safoa w'anso mu yiye a εfiri wo nsa.	• Human hand holding a key (Plate 4.5.3)
• Kwabea nnim gyata	• A child and a lion (Plate 4.5.4)
• Wo foro duapa a na ye pea wo	• One man pushing another up a tree (Plate 4.5.5)
• ɔ no na wiase safoa kura no	• A cock (Plate 4.5.6)
• Ti koro nkɔ agyina	• Three human heads (Plate 4.5.7)
• Apεε ye kεse a ɔ ye ma dufɔ kyεε	• A hedgehog and a piece of log (Plate 4.5.8)
• Kontonkrowi da amansan kɔ n mu	• A ring around three human heads (Plate 4.5.9)
• ɔ baako were aduro a egu	• A man scraping tree back (Plate 4.5.10)
• Wo so ɔ wɔ ti a nea aka ye ahoma	• A bird holding the head of a snake in its beak (4.5.11)
• ɔ sono akyi aboa biara nni hɔ	• An elephant (Plate 4.5.12)
• Aboa no ti nyera nkwan mu	• Animal head on top of a cooking pot (Plate 4.5.13)
• Prekεε nyaa nadu	• A pineapple (Plate 4.5.14)
• Adwene ho ye den sεn a εnto aponkyerεne	• A frog standing by a mad fish (Plate 4.5.15)
• W'ani anhu na w'aso ante	• Three human figures, one with a covered mouth, another with the covered ears and the third with covered eyes (Plate 4.5.16)

**Source: Field Research (2010)**

Images of some Asante figured linguist staffs and their meanings are shown in Plates 4.5.1 to Plate 4.5.16

### Linguist Staff Symbol (1)



Plate 4.5.1: ‘Nea adeɛ wɔ no na odie, ɛnye nea ɔ kom de no’.

Source: Field research (2010)

**Depiction:** This symbol depicts two men seated at a table with one typically reaching for food, while the other looks on. This symbol is similar to that of Plate 4.4.17

**Proverbial or literal translation** ‘Food is for the one who owns it and not for the one who is hungry.’

**Philosophical meaning:** The symbol is designed to discourage illegitimate people from desiring to become chiefs, thereby averting the numerous chieftaincy disputes.

## Linguist Staff Symbol (2)



Plate 4.5.2: ‘ $\text{O}$  sansa ko abu a  $\text{o}$  de n’akyi gya Akroma’

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** A bird standing over another which is sitting on its eggs.

The message carried by this symbol talks about inheritance.

**Proverbial or literal translation:** ‘When the Kite is away, the Hawk takes responsibility’.

**Philosophical meaning:** When a chief or anyone takes leave, his kinsman becomes heir, or a vacant stool can only be occupied by a next of kin.

### Linguist Staff Symbol (3)



Plate 4.5.3: 'Ahennie te se safoa woanso mu yiye a efiri wo nsa'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** A human hand holding a key with the fore finger pointed upwards.

This symbol is also connected with chieftaincy, and conveys a message to those elected into authority.

**Proverbial or literal translation:** 'Being in authority can be likened to a key in one's hand which if not held properly can lead to lost position.'

**Philosophical meaning:** Whiles in authority one has to be cautious.

#### Linguist Staff Symbol (4)



Plate 4.5.4: 'Kwabea nnim gyata'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** A child touching a lion.

**Proverbial or literal translation:** 'A child does not know the lion'.

**Philosophical:** It means that to be ignorant is dangerous. This suggests that naivety is dangerous, therefore, to be knowledgeable about a subject enhances one's horizon, or one has to be always enlightened.

## Linguist Staff Symbol (5)



Plate 4.5.5: 'Wo foro duapa a na ye pea wo'

Source: myjoyonline.com (2010)

**Depiction:** A man giving a bush to another who is climbing a tree.

**Proverbial or literal meaning:** The one who climbs a good tree gets support.

**Philosophical meaning:** Support or help is given to the one who works for a good course.

## Linguist Staff Symbol (6)



Plate 4.5.6: 'Ŋ no na wiase safoa kura no'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** A crowing cock.

**Proverbial or Literal meaning:** It holds the key to the world.

**Philosophical meaning:** The crow of the cock opens up a new day.

## Linguist Staff Symbol (7)

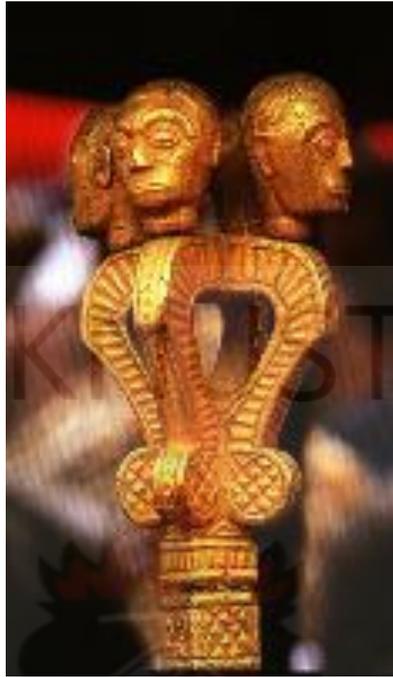


Plate 4.5.7: 'Ti koro nkɔ agyina'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** Four clustered human heads on a pedestal.

**Proverbial or literal meaning:** One head does not make a council.

**Philosophical meaning:** Three heads are better than one. It warns against dictatorship rule.

## Linguist Staff Symbol (8)



Plate 4.5.8: 'Apɛɛ yɛ kɛsɛ a ɔ yɛ ma dufɔ kyɛɛ'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** A hedgehog standing beside a piece of log.

**Proverbial meaning:** When the porcupine grows fat it ends up in dead log.

**Philosophical meaning:** It is wise to care for one's family in order to reap good fortunes in future. It calls for people to be responsible.

## Linguist Staff Symbol (9)



Plate 4.5.9: 'Kontonkrowi eda amansan kò n mu'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** Three men with a ring around their necks.

**Proverbial or literal meaning:** Death is like ring that encircles everyone

**Philosophical meaning:** Death is inevitable

## Linguist Staff Symbol (10)



Plate 4.5.10: 'D baako were aduro a egu'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** A man scraping tree bark with a knife and supports the receptacle with one leg.

**Proverbial or literal meaning:** If one man alone scrapes tree bark, it falls.

**Philosophical meaning:** Cooperation leads to success.

**Linguist Staff Symbol (11)**



Plate 4.5.11: 'Wo so ɔ wo ti a nea aka no ye ahoma'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** A bird that has caught a snake by the head.

**Proverbial or literal meaning:** When caught by the head, the rest of the snake is nothing but rope.

**Philosophical meaning:** Ultimate power rests in the chief.

## Linguist Staff Symbol (12)



Plate 4.5.12: ‘Ɔ sono akyi aboa biara nni ho ’

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** The symbol shows an elephant.

**Proverbial or literal meaning:** In the animal kingdom the elephant is the greatest.

**Philosophical meaning:** The Asantehene is the greatest in the Asante kingdom.

### Linguist Staff Symbol (13)

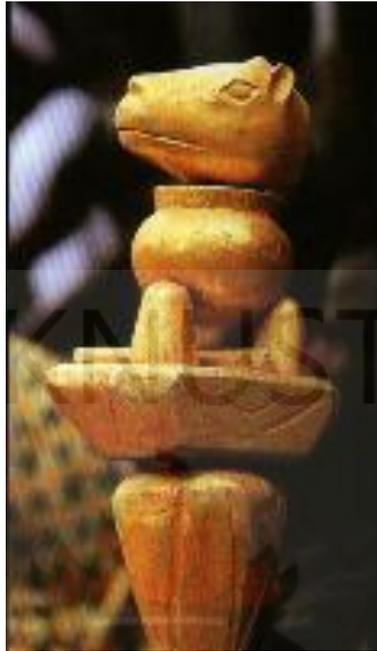


Plate 4.5.13: 'Aboa no ti nyera nkwan mu'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** The symbol shows a big head of an animal placed on top of earthenware or pot on cooking fire.

**Proverbial or literal meaning:** The animal's head is never lost in a soup.

**Philosophical meaning:** No important personality is ever overlooked in a society.

## Linguist Staff Symbol (14)



Plate 4.5.14: 'Prəkεε nyaa na du'

Source: Beckwith & Fisher 1999)

**Depiction:** The symbol shows a matured pineapple with three young suckers.

**Proverbial or literal translation:** The peculiar scent and flavour of 'Prekese' or Galbanum plant (*Tetrapleura tetraplera*) is likened to that of the pineapple.

**Philosophical meaning:** Shows how influential some people are in the society.

### Linguist Staff Symbol (15)



Plate 4.5.15 ‘Adwene ho ye den sen koraa a ɔ nto Aponkyerene’

Source: Beckwith & Fisher (1999)

**Depiction:** The symbol shows a mud fish lying beside a frog.

**Proverbial or literal translation:** The strength of the mud fish cannot match that of the frog. This is because while the mud fish only survive in water; the frog can survive both in water and on land due to its amphibious nature.

**Philosophical meaning:** This symbol highlights the need to give respect to authority.

## Linguist Staff Symbol (16)



Plate 4.5.16: 'W'ani anhu a w'aso ante'

(Beckwith & Fisher 1999)

**Depiction:** The symbol has three figures seated beside each other in a row. With the hands, the first has covered his eyes; the second has covered both ears, while the third has his mouth covered.

**Proverbial or literal translation:** Hear no evil, see no evil, and speak no evil.

**Philosophical meaning:** It is not anything that is worth commenting on.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### GENERATION OF TEXTILE DESIGNS FROM ASANTE LINGUIST STAFF

#### SYMBOLS

##### 5.0 Overview

This chapter provides the procedures used in generating the textile designs from Asante linguist staff symbols using Adobe Photoshop 7.0. To design with this software requires the designer to follow specific steps; most of the steps used therefore run through the generation of the various textile designs. However, in order to get a concrete picture of how the designs were generated, it is very imperative to highlight on the general principles and features of Adobe Photoshop7.0. These have been outlined and discussed in the following:

##### 5.1 Launching Adobe Photoshop 7.0

- Click on the start menu of the task bar (at the bottom left corner of the screen)
- Move cursor and select Adobe Photoshop.
- Double click on Adobe Photoshop 7.0 to display it.

The Adobe Photoshop 7.0 workspace focuses on creating and editing images.

The workspace features menus, a variety of tools/palettes for viewing, editing, and adding relevant elements to images. Plate 1(a) shows Adobe Photoshop workspace.

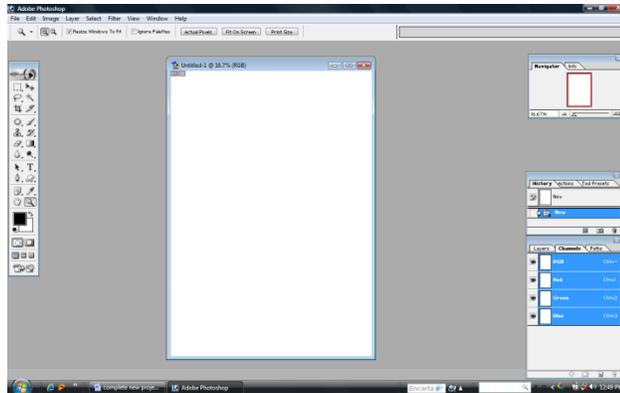


Plate 5.1(a): An opened Photoshop 7.0 workspace

A workspace is any arrangement of various elements such as panels, bars, and windows which help to create and manipulate documents and files.

- The menu bar across the top organizes commands under menus.
- The tools panel (called the tools palette in Photoshop) contains tools for creating and editing images, artworks, page elements, and so on. Related tools are grouped together.
- The control panel (called the option bar) displays options for the currently selected tool.
- The document window (called the stage in flash) displays the file being worked on.
- Panels (called pallets) help you monitor and modify the design.

## 5.2 The tool bar

The program contains a set of tools that enables one to achieve any task set for a work. The tool bar can be activated by selecting tools from the view menu. The tool bar is shown in Plate 5.2(a) with the various features or tools.

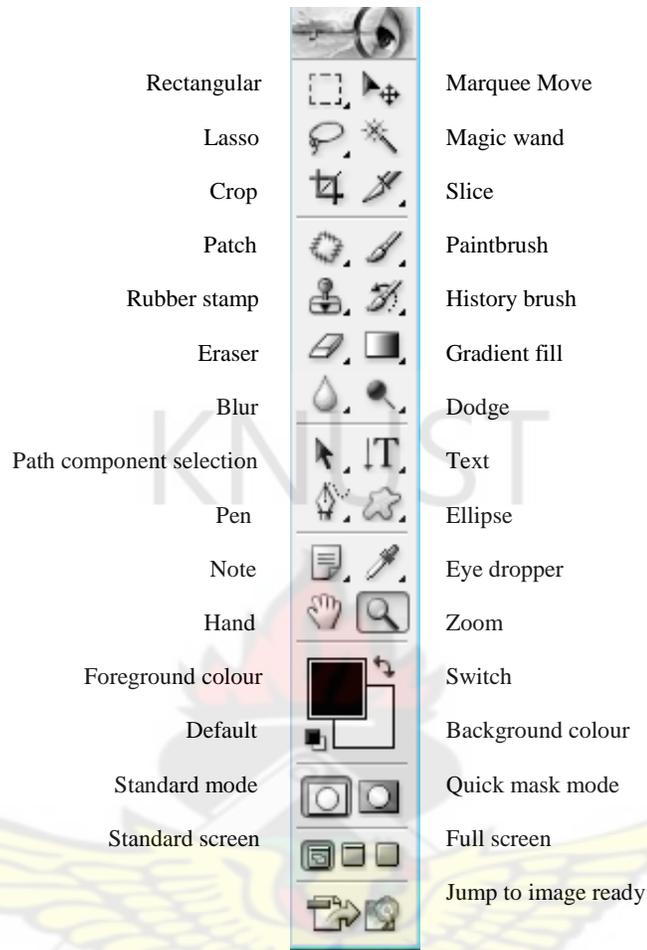


Plate 5.2(a): The toolbar

### 5.2.1 Uses of the tools

**Rectangular Marquee:** This tool is used for quick selection of wider areas on an image.

**Move tool or pointer:** This tool is used in selecting, moving and resizing images.

**Lasso tool (polygonal/magnetic):** These tools are used for creating freehand selections.

**Magic Wand:** It is used to select pixels that have the same colour brightness or hue.

**Cropping tool:** This is used for selecting and trimming of unimportant areas of a picture.

**Slice tool:** It is used for trimming and shaping images.

**Air brush tool:** It gives varied subtle colour saturation by working like a spray can.

**Stamp/clone tool:** It is used to produce same effect or appearance at one side or another side of a picture.

**Eraser tool:** It is used for erasing unwanted areas of an image.

**Blur tool:** It gives a blur effect on an object or picture.

**Paint brush:** It works like a real painting brush for colour and gives same effect on a picture or drawing .

**History brush:** This tool gives the designer the opportunity to recap old or same feature on a working object when changes occur in the picture.

**Gradient fill tool:** This tool gives a smooth colour shade or flint on a selected area or object.

**Dodge tool:** It is used to alter subtle changes on selected parts of an object.

**Zoom/magnifying tool:** This tool increases the size of objects for clarity.

### **5.3 Loading the picture in Photoshop**

- Select file and click open.
- Photoshop displays contents of a directory on drive C.
- Navigate file system and choose the right image.

### **5.4 Picture duplication**

The picture is duplicated in order to keep the original picture.

- Duplication is done by clicking on an image in the menu bar.
- Select duplicate from the sub menu.
- Give the new picture a different name and click OK

After these basic processes, the image or picture in focus is taken through some of the following procedures:

### **5.5 Cropping of the picture**

Cropping is selecting and cutting an interesting part of a picture to work upon.

- To crop an image, the cropping tool is selected.
- A bounding square box (cropping marquee) is displayed on the picture.
- The pointer is moved to a corner of the picture where the cropping is to start.
- The pointer is moved diagonally over the image to make the selection.
- Adjustments can be made by pulling on the bounding square box.

### **5.6 Changing the mode of the picture**

Pictures snapped with cameras are always in the RGB colour mode and this mode is not suitable for textile designing. The mode is changed for easy operation. For this reason, the colour picture is first converted into grayscale mode from RGB. Grayscale converts into different shades of gray and black-and-white. Multichannel mode images contain 256 levels of gray in each channel and are useful for specialized printing.

- This is done by choosing `Image´ on the menu bar.
- Selection of Mode >Grayscale is made.

- When asked to discard colour info, click OK. Photoshop converts the colours in the image to black, white, and shades of gray.
- The picture mode is again changed to multichannel.

This allows the designer to manipulate a separate colour within a different channel for each design. This checks the colour separation of designs made. This is done by selecting `Image>Mode>Multichannel`.

### **5.7 Sketching the motif**

This gives the image a sketchy appearance. These outline effects generally capture the broad mood of the scene and this helps in working out ideas for a finished composition. It is useful for creating a fine-arts or hand-drawn look. To sketch;

- Move to filter on the menu bar.
- Select sketch within the submenu given.

There are several commands categorized under sketch sub menu.

- Choose the appropriate command from the options. The choices to be made can either be stamp or photocopy.

### **5.8 Photocopy and stamp.**

Photocopy stimulates the effect of photocopying an image. Large dark areas tend to be copied only around their edges, and mid-tones fall away to either solid black or solid white.

Stamp simplifies the image so that it appears to be created with a rubber or wood stamp with bold and definite outlines. This filter is best used for black-and-white images. If no

dialogue box appears, the filter effect is applied. If a dialogue box or the filter gallery appears, enter values or select options, and then click OK. Filter gallery provides a preview of many of the special filter effects. When satisfied with the preview, apply to the image.

### **5.9 Checking a repeat out of the picture**

Repeat of a design is always checked in textiles when one end of the picture is joined to the other end. This is done to make sure that during printing the design pattern would be reproduced uniformly across the surface with no overlapping effect or gaps which may distort the design.

In checking the repeat:

- Select Filter>Other>Offset the selection.
- Wrap around option is then selected from the option box. This option joins one end of the design to the other end to check the repeat of the design.

The figure entered within the option box would determine the specified Offset amount moved horizontally or vertically.

### **5.10 Deriving the repeat out of the selection**

To make a repeat out of the pattern made, the design is pattern defined. This is done by selecting

- ‘Define Pattern’ under ‘Edit’ on the ‘Menu bar’.
- Give a Pattern Name and click Enter to save.

To get these patterns repeated on a worksheet in Photoshop

- Go to Edit>Fill.
- Choose pattern from the contents saved.
- Click OK to effect command on the worksheet.

### **5.11 Deriving textures from the pictures**

Texture is used to create surface appearance, and relates to the physical make-up of a given form. Textures give interesting visual quality to textile design and unify the background colour and the motifs in the design.

Textures in the study were derived from the following:

- Different lines and shapes drawn and repeated in different ways for textures.
- Some textures were also created by repeating the main motif in a reduced size.

### **5.12 Application of colour**

Since each channel can be given a different colour, the number of channels used would determine the number of colours that would be used for any design. After getting the design pattern, colour is the next important element to apply. To change colour on any channel:

- Double Click within the channel in focus.
- The spot channel options box opens.
- Change solidity of colour to 100%.
- Click within the small colour closest given and use Adobe colour picker to search for the right colour by dragging the triangles along the scroll bar.

- Colour can be located by entering the ink number.
- One can also click Colour Library which is within the custom colour dialog box and choose from the options provided. Click the desired colour patch in the list to introduce it to the design.

### 5.13 Generation of the textile designs

While discussing the steps involved in producing the various designs, reference would be made where necessary to the Adobe Photoshop procedures already highlighted in the previous sections of this chapter. The conversion and developing of images of the symbols to the final design was done in stages using Adobe Photoshop. The procedures followed to generate the various designs from the photographs or images of the linguist staff symbols to the final designs are described in the following sections.

#### 5.13.1 Design procedure for symbol 1 -‘Ɔ sansa kɔ abu a ɔ de n’akyi gya akroma’

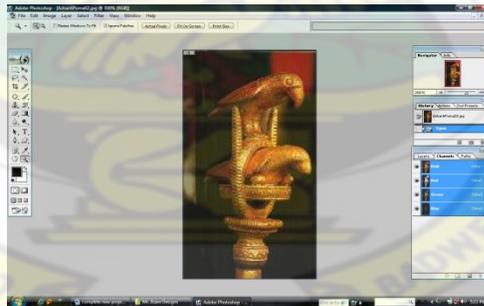


Plate 5.13.1(a): Image of symbol 1 opened in Photoshop

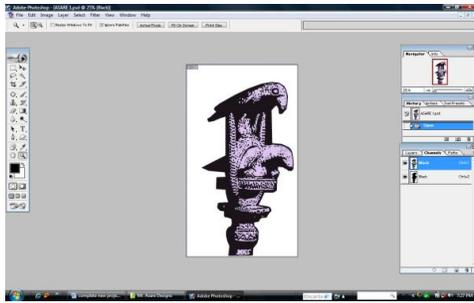


Plate 5.13.1(b): Sketched motif

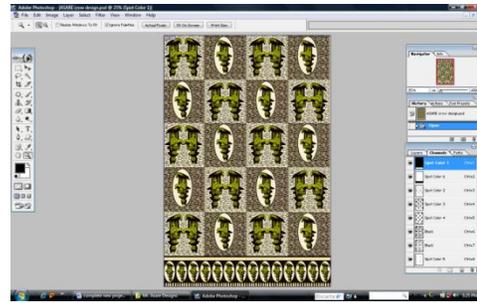


Plate 5.13.1(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.1(d): Three colour ways of the final design

- The image of the symbol was opened in Photoshop as shown in Plate 5.13.1(a)
- The image was then cropped using lasso tool by selecting around the symbol, inverting the selection and backspacing to remove background images or colour.
- This was followed by clicking image>mode>grey scale>multichannel to flatten the image.
- The image was then sketched and stamped. The result is seen in Plate 5.13.1(b) and this was used as the motif for the design.
- The final motif shown in Plate 5.13.1(b) was copied and flipped horizontally to have the motifs facing each other. The single and double motifs were arranged

alternately in horizontal and vertical manner, to create harmony and balance in the pattern arrangement.

- Textures were given to the background to create a counter change pattern arrangement and also to unify the background colour and motifs.
- Single motifs were arranged at the base of the design to give it a border design.
- The final design is shown in Plate 5.113.1(c).
- Three colour ways of the final design is shown in Plate 5.13.1(d).

### 5.13.2 Design procedure for symbol 2 - ‘Ahennie te se safoa woanso mu yiye a efiri wo nsa’

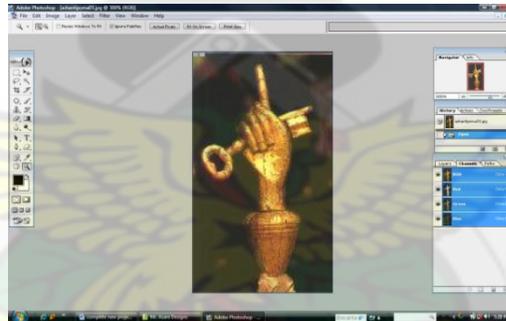


Plate 5.13.2(a): Image of symbol 2 opened in Photoshop



Plate 5.13.2(b): Sketched image for the motif



Plate 5.13.2(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.2(d): The final design rendered in three colour ways

- The image of the symbol was opened in Photoshop as shown in Plate 5.13.2(a).
- The motif was obtained by cropping around the original image using the lasso tool and deleting the background.
- The image mode was changed from RGB (full colour) to multichannel where the image was flattened or converted into black and white.
- The image was thereafter sketched and stamped to get a motif for the design.
- The motif is shown in Plate 5.13.2(b)
- The motif was selected and freely transformed to resize and arrange it.
- The final design in Plate 5.13.2(c) came about when the motif was placed within an oval shape and arranged horizontally in a full drop pattern. Three reduced sizes of the motif were arranged horizontally in the background as motifs, and were given a background colour. Another colour was applied to the space within the oval shapes to bring out the motifs.

### 5.13.3 Design procedure for symbol 3 - ‘Wo foro duapa a na yεpea wo’



Plate 5.13.3(a): Image of symbol 3 opened in Photoshop

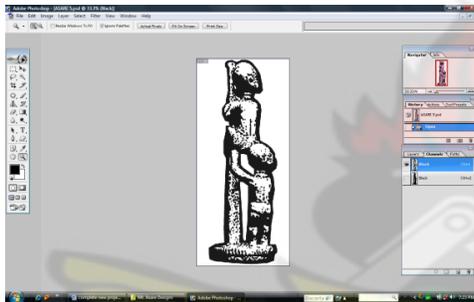


Plate 5.13.3(b): Motif

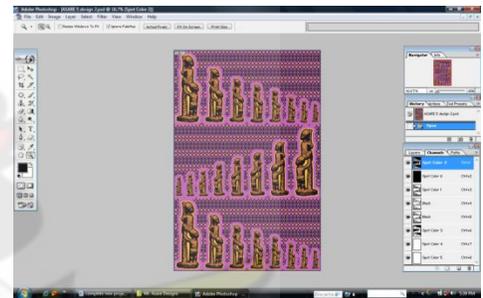


Plate 5.13.3(c): Final design

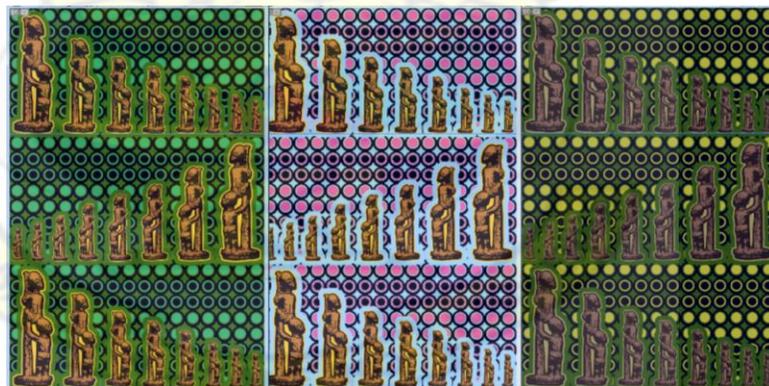


Plate 5.13.3(d): Three colour ways of the final design

- The image of the linguist staff symbol was opened in Photoshop as shown in Plate 5.13.3(a).

- The motif in Plate 5.13.3(b) was obtained by changing the image mode to multichannel, sketching the image by photo copying and then stamping.
- For the final design arrangement, the motif was resized by reducing steadily the image size to give it sloping effect.
- Colour was then applied to the background to obtain the final design in Plate 5.13.3(c).
- Plate 5.13.3(d) shows the final design in three colour ways.

#### 5.13.4 Design procedure for symbol 4 -‘Prəkəsə nyaa nadu’



Plate 5.13.4(a): Image of symbol 4 opened in Photoshop



Plate 5.13.4(b): Motif



Plate 5.13.4(c): Completed design

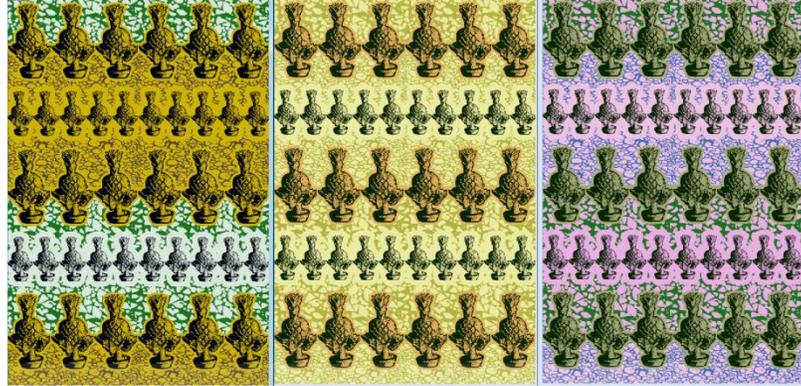


Plate 5.13.4(d): Three colour ways of the final design.

- As shown in Plate 5.13.4(a), the image of the linguist staff symbol was imported into workspace of Photoshop.
- The motif obtained after changing the mode and sketching to get a stamped image is seen in Plate 5.13.4(b).
- Plate 5.13.4(c) exhibits the final design that has pineapple motifs arranged horizontally and interspaced with a linear arrangement of a reduced size of the original motif.
- Plate 5.13.4(d) shows the final design in three colour ways

### 5.13.5 Design procedure for symbol 5 - 'Ti koro nkɔ agyina'



Plate 5.13.5(a): Image of symbol 5 opened in Photoshop

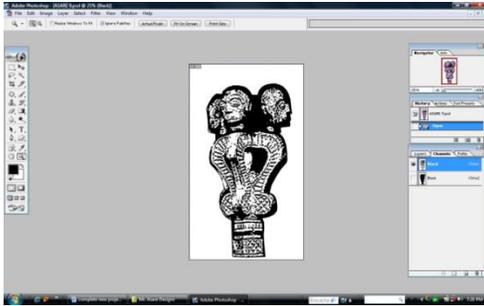


Plate 5.13.5(b): Sketched motif

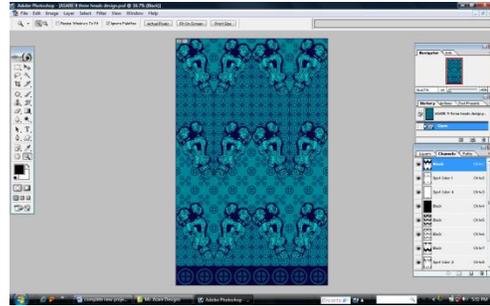


Plate 5.13.5(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.5(d): Final design in three colour ways

- In Plate 5.13.5(a) is the photographic image of the symbol opened in Photoshop.
- The outline of the symbol was cropped and its surroundings deleted.
- The mode of the image was changed to multichannel to permit the application of colour.
- Plate 5.13.5(b) is the sketched motif.
- The sketched motif was selected and transformed for resizing and arrangement.
- The arrangement of the motifs in the design was done horizontally in a tilting manner by selecting and free transforming the unit motif.

- Spaces in-between the arranged motif were selected and filled with textures. There are two varying textures made from geometric shapes.
- Some of the shapes were used for the border design and colour applied to the motifs.
- Colour was applied to the background to get the final design in Plate 5.13.5(c)
- Plate 5.13.5(d) shows final design in three colour ways.

### 5.13.6 Design procedure for symbol 6 - ‘Aboa ti nyera nkwan mu’

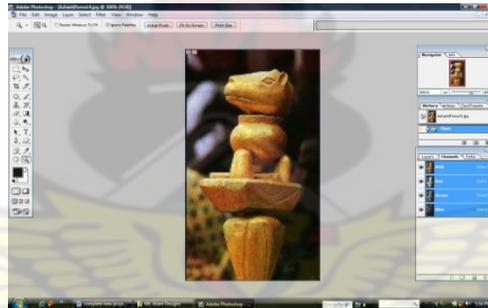


Plate 5.13.6(a): Image of symbol 6 opened in Photoshop

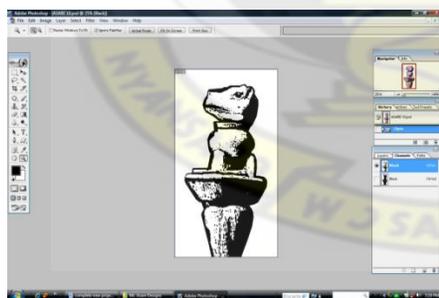


Plate 5.13.6(b): Sketched image



Plate 5.13.6(c): Final design

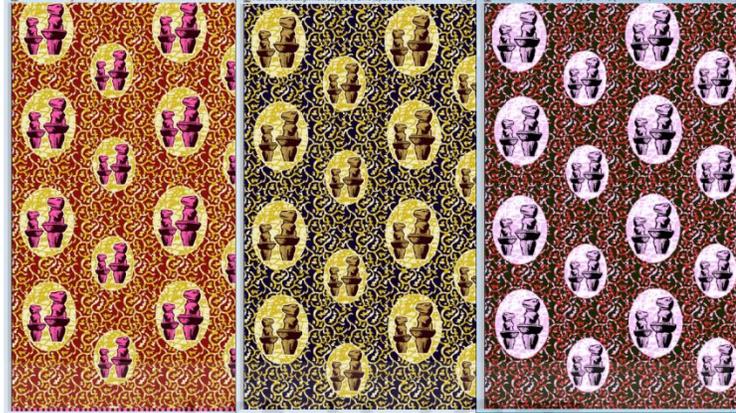


Plate 5.13.6(d) Final design in three colour ways

- The image of the symbol was imported into the workspace of Photoshop as shown in Plate 5.13.6(a).
- The shape of the symbol was cropped out of the picture selecting and deleting the background.
- The motif for the design was obtained by stamping the image to sketch mode as exhibited in Plate 5.13.6(b)
- The image was selected and transformed to be resized and arranged in drawn oval shapes.
- Textures were derived from twigs that were selected, transformed, pattern defined, and then filled as background textures.

### 5.13.7 Design procedure for symbol 7 - ‘Wo so ɔ wo ti a nea aka no ye ahoma’

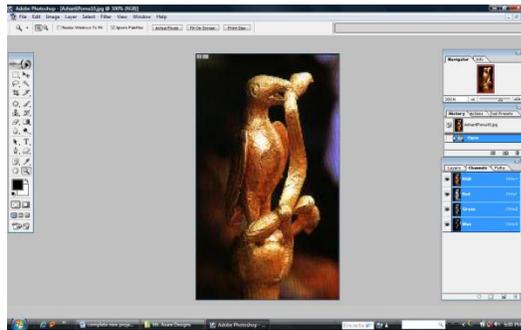


Plate 5.13.7(a): Image of symbol 7 opened in Photoshop

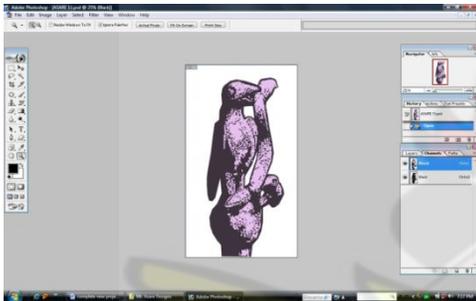


Plate 5.13.7(b): Sketched motif

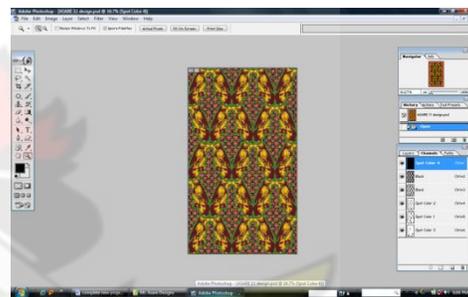


Plate 5.13.7(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.7(d): Three colour ways of the same design

- Image of the symbol opened in Photoshop is shown in Plate 5.13.7(a).
- The sketch of the image as shown in Plate 5.13.7(b) was used as the motif.

- By selecting the motif and transforming it, the motif was arranged in a diamond base pattern layout across the workspace.
- Textures created from geometric shapes were filled in the background.
- Spaces were created around the motifs by clicking on select in the taskbar>modify>expand the borders of the motif and then filled with green colour as shown in the final design in Plate 5.13.7(c), while Plate 5.13.7(d) shows the final design in three colour ways.

### 5.13.8 Design procedure for symbol 8 - ‘O baako wære aduro a egu’



Plate 5.13.8(a): Image of symbol 8 opened in Photoshop



Plate 5.13.8(b): Sketched motif



Plate 5.13.8(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.8(d): Final design in three colour ways

- Plate 5.13.8(a) shows the image of the symbol opened in Photoshop.
- The image was separated from the background by cropping and deleting the background.
- The mode of the image was changed from RGB>Gray scale>Multichannel and then sketched to obtain the motif in Plate 5.13.8(b).
- Motifs were arranged vertically in a half drop pattern layout in linear orientation.
- Cross-hatched lines were filled and used as textures in the background of the design.
- Spaces between arranged motifs were selected and alternately coloured with different colours to arrive at the final design in Plate 5.13.8(c).
- Final design in three-colour ways is shown in Plate 5.13.8(d)

### 5.13.9 Design procedure for symbol 9 - 'Kwabea nnim gyata'

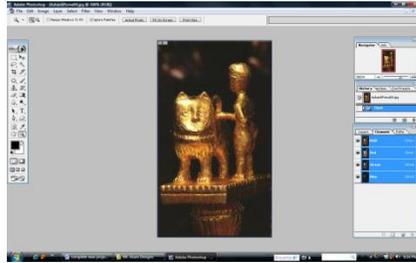


Plate 5.13.9(a): Image of symbol 9 opened in Photoshop

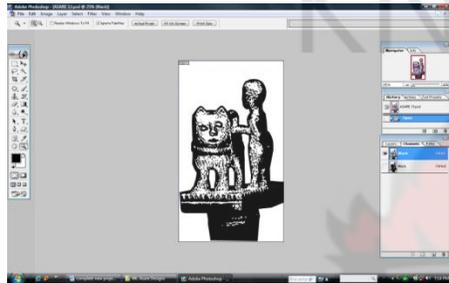


Plate 5.13.9(b): Sketched motif

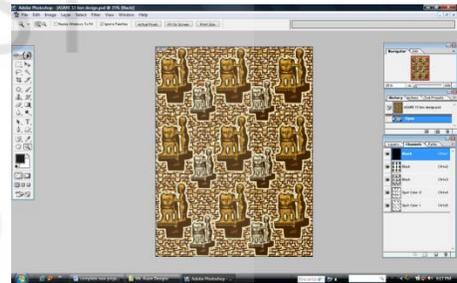


Plate 5.13.9(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.9(d): Three colour ways of the final design

- Plate 5.13.9(a) has the image of the symbol opened in Photoshop
- The shape of the symbol was cropped out of the picture and the background of image deleted.
- Picture mode was changed from RGB to multichannel and sketched by stamping.

- A sketch of the image, as shown in Plate 5.13.9(b), was used as motif for the design.
- The motif was selected and transformed to resize it, and was arranged in half-drop layout.
- Drawn jigsaw lines were filled in the background and also given wax effect.
- The design was finally given a light brown background colour as shown in Plate 5.13.9(c).
- The final design rendered in three colour-ways is shown in Plate 5.13.9(d).

### 5.13.10 Design procedure for symbol 10 - ‘Ō no na wiase safoa kura no’



Plate 5.13.10(a): Image of symbol 10 opened in Photoshop

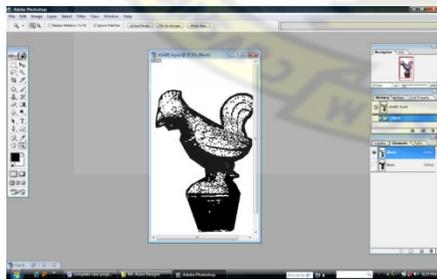


Plate 5.13.10(b): Sketched motif

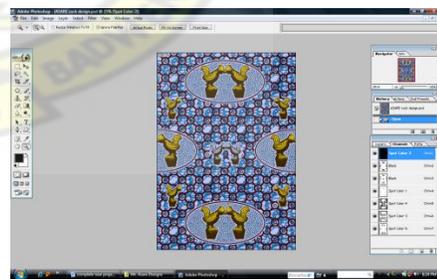


Plate 5.13.10(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.10(d): Final design in 3-colour ways

- Image of the symbol opened in Photoshop is shown in Plate 5.13.10(a).
- Outline of the symbol was cropped and separated from the background by deleting the background.
- The image mode was changed to multichannel and filtered by stamping to get the motif as shown in Plate 5.13.10(b)
- The motif was selected and freely transformed to resize it which was duplicated and arranged within drawn oval shapes.
- Textures made of connected circles were pattern defined and filled on the background of the design.
- In addition to the textures, wax effect was created in the background and given a blue colour.
- The background was coloured light blue and the spaces within the oval shapes and around the motif were coloured with dotted blue colour.
- The final design is shown in Plate 5.13.10(c).
- The final design in three-colour ways is shown in Plate 5.13.10(c).

### 5.13.11 Design procedure for symbol 11 - 'Kontokrowi da amansan kɔ n mu'

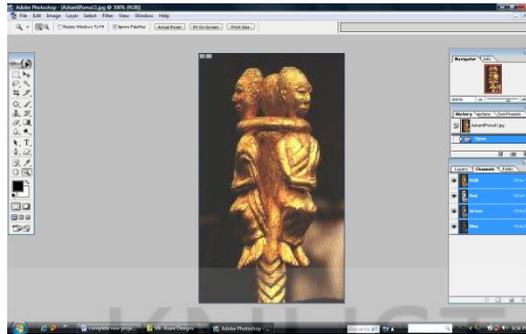


Plate 5.13.11(a): Image of symbol 11 opened in Photoshop

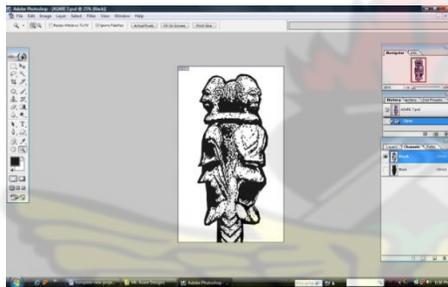


Plate 5.13.11(b): Sketched motif

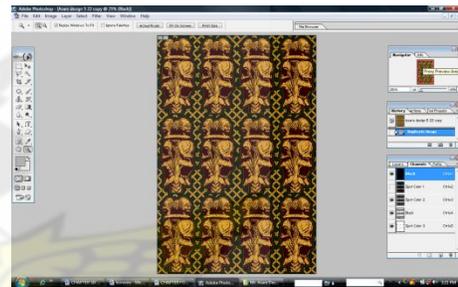


Plate 5.13.11(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.11(d): Final design in 3-colour ways

- Picture of the symbol was opened in Photoshop as shown in Plate 5.13.11(a).
- The mode of the image was changed from RGB to multichannel, cropped and sketched by stamping to get the motif in Plate 5.13.11(b).
- The motif was selected and freely transformed to resize it and arranged.
- Textures made up of cross-hatching lines were filtered to be pattern defined and filled in the background.
- The arranged motifs were selected, and the borders expanded to separate motif from the textures.
- The channels were selected for colour to be applied.
- The final design is shown in Plate 5.13.11(c), Plate 5.13.11(d) is the final design in three colour ways.

### 5.13.12 Design procedure for symbol 12 - ‘Ń sono akyi aboa biara nni ho’



Plate 5.13.12(a): Image of symbol 12 opened in Photoshop



Plate 5.13.12(b): Sketched motif

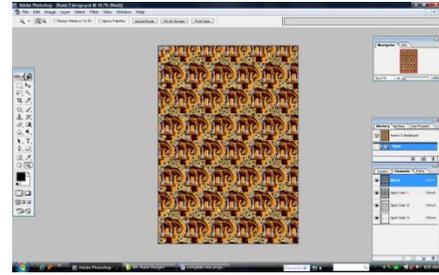


Plate 5.13.12(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.12(d): Final design in 3-colour ways

- Image of symbol was opened in Photoshop as shown in Plate 5.13.12(a)
- The image was taken out of the picture using the crop tool to select the image and the background deleted.
- Image mode was changed to multichannel and stamped to obtain the motif shown in Plate 5.13.12(b).
- Brown colour was applied to the motif.
- By selecting and transforming the motif, the arrangements in Plate 5.13.12(c), was achieved for the final design.
- The textures used were from water bubbles which were pattern defined and filled on the background of the design after offsetting.

- The arranged motifs were selected, borders modified by expanding and deleting to remove the textures around them.
- Tint of brown colour was applied to the background.
- Shown in Plate 5.13.12(d) is the final design in three colour ways.

**5.13.13 Design procedure for symbol 13 - ‘Apɛɛ yɛ kɛsɛ a ɔ yɛ ma dufɔ kyɛɛ’**

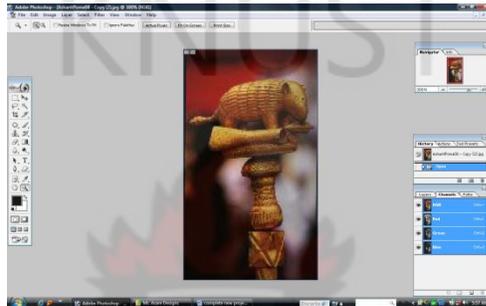


Plate 5.13.13(a): Image of symbol 13 opened in Photoshop

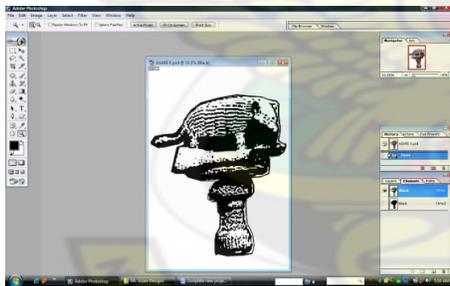


Plate 5.13.13(b): Sketched motif



Plate 5.13.13(c): Final design

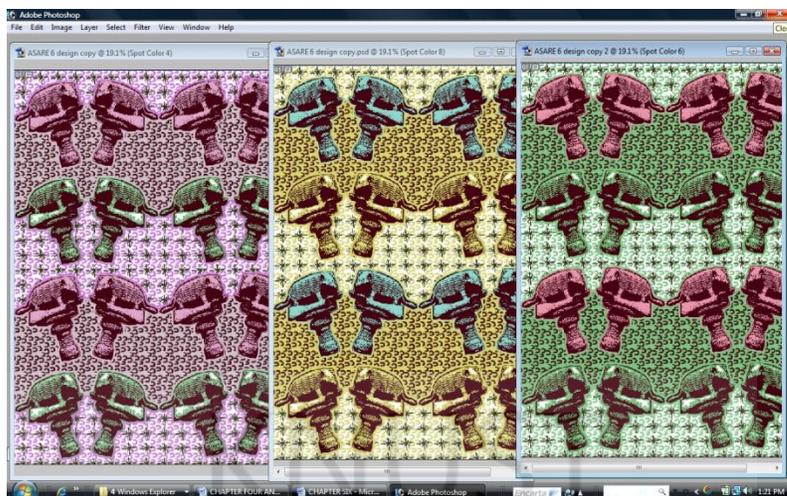


Plate 5.13.13(d) Final design in three colour ways

- The picture of the symbol was opened in Photoshop as shown in Plate 5.13.13(a)
- The shape of the symbol was cropped and the background deleted.
- The mode of the symbol was changed from RGB>Grayscale>multichannel and stamped.
- In Plate 5.13.13(b), the stamped image used for the motif is shown.
- The final design, shown in Plate 5.13.13(c), was arrived at by selecting and transforming the motif to be resized and arranged in two different sizes alternately in half-drop pattern layout.
- Plate 5.13.13(d) shows the final design in three colour ways.

**5.13.14 Design procedure for symbol 14 -‘Nea adeε wɔ no na odie εnye nea ɔ kɔ m de no’**



Plate 5.13.14(a): Image of symbol opened in Photoshop



Plate 5.13.14(b): Sketched motif

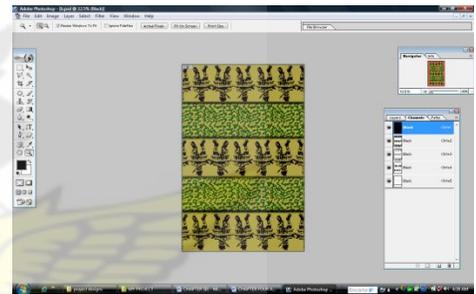


Plate 5.13.14(c): Final design

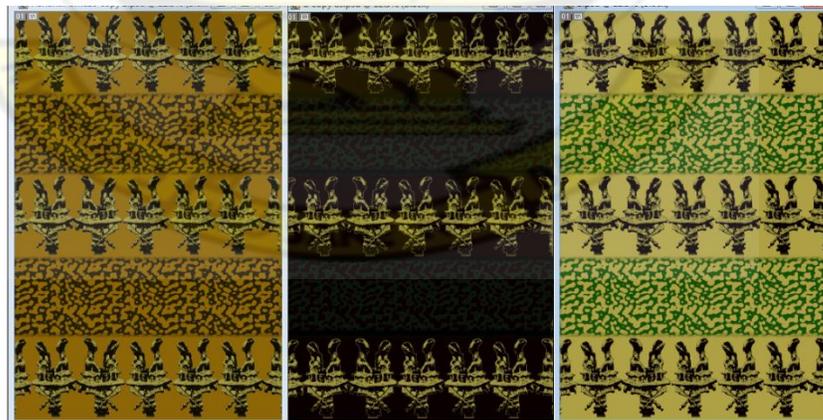


Plate 5.13.14(d): Final design in 3-colour ways

- The picture of the symbol was imported into Photoshop workspace as shown in Plate 5.14.14(a).
- The symbol was cropped out of the picture by deleting the background.
- The symbol was selected and stamped into a motif after changing the image mode to multichannel.
- Motif used for the design is shown in Plate 5.13.14(b).
- Final design was made by arranging the motifs in a horizontal manner, and by selecting areas between the arranged motifs, textures were filled by the pattern define command.
- The final design is seen on Plate 5.13.14(c).
- Plate 5.13.14(d) shows different colour ways of the design.

### 5.13.15 Design procedure for symbol 15 -‘W’ani anhu a w’aso ante’



Plate 5.13.15(a): Image of symbol opened in Photoshop

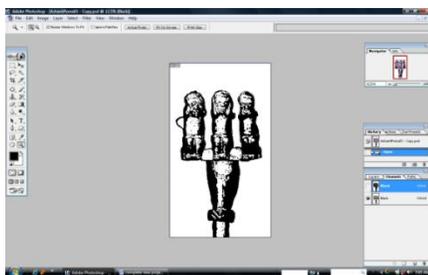


Plate 5.13.15(b): Sketched motif

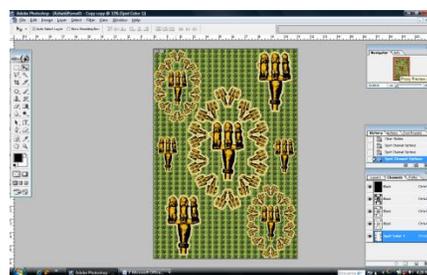


Plate 5.13.15(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.15(d) Final design in 3-colour ways

- The image of the symbol opened in Photoshop is shown in Plate 5.13.15(a).
- It was then cropped, unwanted areas removed and image mode changed to multichannel.
- The image obtained was stamped and used as the motif for the design (Plate 5.13.15(b)).
- By selecting the motif, resizing, copying and pasting the motif, it was arranged in the workspace based on central motif pattern layout concept.
- The design was then given textures and background colour.
- The final design is shown in Plate 5.13.15(c) and three different colour ways of the design is shown in Plate 5.13.15(d).

### 5.13.16 Design procedure for symbol 16-‘Adwene ho ye den sen a ento aponkyerene’

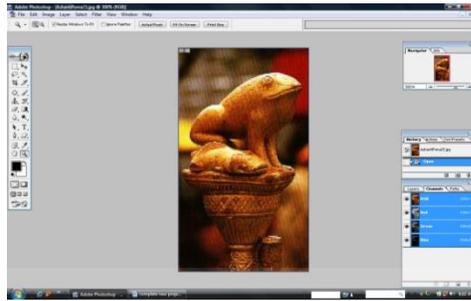


Plate 5.13.16(a): Image of symbol opened in Photoshop

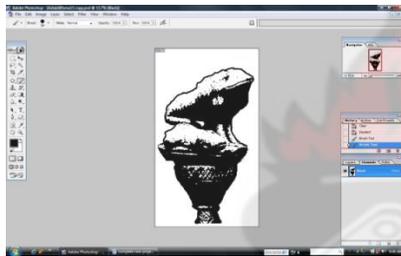


Plate 5.13.16(b): Sketched motif



Plate 5.13.16(c): Final design

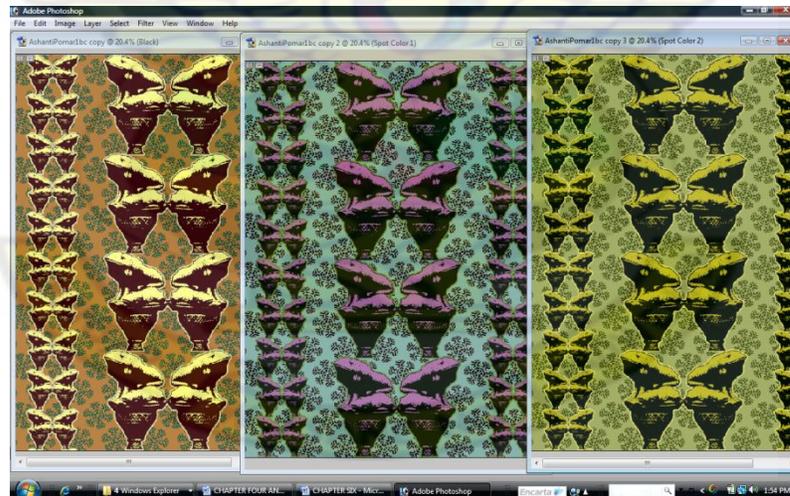


Plate 5.13.16(d): Final design in 3-colour ways

- The image of the symbol opened in Photoshop is shown in Plate 5.13.16(a)
- This symbol was cropped out of the picture and selected for the surrounding portions of the image to be deleted.

- Image mode was changed from RGB>Grayscale>multichannel and sketched to get the motif shown in Plate 5.13.16(b).
- The motif was freely transformed, resized and arranged on the canvas or the workspace.
- A sketched leaf used for the textures was pattern defined and filled as the background textures for the design.
- Final design is shown in Plate 5.13.16(c), and in Plate 5.13.16(d) three colour ways of the final design is shown.

**5.13.17 Design procedure for symbol 17 - ‘Nea adee wɔ no na odie enye nea ɔ kɔ m de no’**



Plate 5.13.17(a): Image of symbol 17 opened in Photoshop



Plate 5.13.17(b): Sketched motif

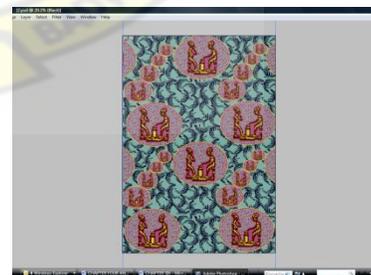


Plate 5.13.17(c): Final design



Plate 5.13.17(d): Final design in three colour ways

- Photograph of the symbol is shown loaded in Photoshop workspace in Plate 5.13.17(a)
- The symbol was cropped out of the image by the use of the crop tool.
- Surrounding portions of the image were deleted by selecting the image and backspacing.
- The mode of image was changed to multichannel and stamped for use as motif for the design in Plate 5.13.17(b)
- The motif was placed within a circle and by free transformation; the motif was resized and arranged.
- Sketched image of a plant was offset and filled on the background as textures.
- The final design and different colour ways of the design are shown in Plates 5.13.17(c) and 5.13.17(d) respectively.

It is apparent that most of the Photoshop commands run through the process of generating the designs. This is so because some of the commands and tools are indispensable as far

as textile design with Photoshop is concerned. However the various commands and tools were varied in the process to achieve special design effects and to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the design results.

# KNUST



## CHAPTER SIX

### RESULTS AND APPRECIATION

#### 6.0 Overview

This chapter presents and appreciates the final designs generated from the selected Asante linguist staff symbols. The appreciation considers the aesthetic qualities with reference to arrangement of motifs, textures, colour combinations and discusses the social and philosophical significance of the meanings of the designs, and the impact they can have on the society.

#### 6.1 Result and Appreciation of Project 1



Plate 6.1: Title: 'Ahennie te se safoa' (Prudence)

The design in Plate 6.1 is named after the linguist staff symbol coined from the proverb; 'Ahennie te se safoa, se w'anso mu yiye efiri wo nsa' which literally means, Power is like

a key, it will slip through the fingers if not held properly. Philosophically, it is a caution to chiefs and those in authority to desist from acts that can make them lose their authority. Socially, it is a call which suggests that no condition is permanent, so everyone should be upright.

The motifs are arranged horizontally within blue circular shapes. The textures are made up of reduced sizes of the motif or symbol. Three of the symbols are used in a unit repeat for the textures. One of the motifs was flipped to have a mirror image of the other, while the base of the third is made to meet the other two. This arrangement is alternated with two hands up and one down for the first repeat, while the next has one hand up and two hands down in a horizontal repeat, with a background of patchy blue effect.

This design can be suitable for those in authority or anyone in some position like chiefs, heads of clan etc., to remind them of what can befall them should they abuse their position.

The design in Plate 6.2 is titled 'Wo foro duapa a na yεpea wo'. The symbol depicts someone getting a push for climbing a tree. Literally, it states that the one who climbs a good tree gets support. In other words, it suggests getting assistance for undertaking a profitable venture. Philosophically, the proverb indicates that one who works for a good cause gets support or help. Socially, the design calls for collaborative support for initiatives like community projects, clean up exercises etc., and also those who have the means to make contributions or give assistance to those who are vulnerable in the society.

## 6.2 Result and Appreciation of Project 2



Plate 6.2: Title: ‘Wo foro duapa a na yepea wo’ (support)

The motif was arranged in ascending and descending order and alternatively. By reducing the sizes of each successive motif in linear arrangement, a diminishing effect was created. The different motif sizes suggests that support knows no boundaries and as such anyone can be offered help provided the venture is profitable, be it a man or woman, young or old. Textures were made from dots and circles and arranged in rolls in the background of the design. Colours used are ultramarine, pink and black for the dots and circles which stand for perfect ventures. The brown and black were used for the figures in symbols. The blue stands for good fortune and harmony. The design can be useful as curtains, men and women’s cloth.

### 6.3 Result and Appreciation of Project 3



Plate 6.3: Title: ‘Prəkese nyaa na du’ (Influence)

Design in plate 6.3 is titled ‘Prəkese nyaa na du’. Literally, pineapple is likened to ‘Prəkese’. Both are plants whose fruits are edible and have strong flavour. When one eats any of the fruits, the aroma of the fruit remains on the person till he washes his mouth or body. One cannot hide the scent or aroma of any of these fruits immediately after eating it. Anything that behaves like ‘Prəkese’ is said to be ‘Prəkese nyaa nadu’ or in other words likened to ‘Prəkese’, or said to be influential. The phrase is an appellation for the plant known as ‘Prəkese’.

‘Prəkese’ is the Akan language name for a plant called Galbanum (*Tetrapleura tetraplera*). The fruit is low in sodium, rich in potassium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, and vitamin C. The dried fruit which is available in Ghana is used in cooking. Dried ‘Prəkese’ fruit

has many uses. It can be used to cure several ailments, and also used as flavour for stews and soups. When eaten in soups, it is capable of ridding the body of several diseases. Pineapple, like ‘Prəkεε’ is a fruit that has got strong scent just like and therefore has been likened to it. It is said that pineapple has its unique flavour or scent just like ‘Prəkεε’ which cannot be suppressed and so wherever pineapple is eaten its scent can be felt. The proverb therefore describes influential people who contribute substantially to society’s progress.

In the design the motif was resized to obtain two different sizes. Each motif size was separately and alternately arranged horizontally in the design. Wax effect was used as textures with cool and dull colours of green and brown to harmonise. The design can be suitable for table cover, curtain and dress material due to its linear pattern layout that makes it fit for a wider application. Influential people can wear the other colour ways which are shown in Plate 5.13.3(d).

#### **6.4 Result and Appreciation of Project 4**



Plate 6.4: Title: ‘Ti koro nkɔ agyina’ (Consensus)

‘Ti koro nkɔ agyina’ is the title of the design shown in Plate 6.4. Literally, the proverb suggests that one head does not constitute a council. Philosophically, as stated by Akrofi (1962), discussion by many is more fruitful than the ideas of one man. Considering its social significance, the symbol suggests teamwork or collaboration when taking decisions for the family, town or nation as a whole. One man decision or dictatorship should therefore be discouraged.

The symbols are arranged in horizontal order with each one facing another in a diagonal manner and portray a border design at the selvedge. The design depicts shades of blue; ultramarine, sea blue and deep blue colours. The textures are made up of circles. The colours used coupled with the pattern arrangement make the design suitable for use as curtain, funeral cloth and for church and everyday wear.

### 6.5 Result and Appreciation of Project 5



Plate 6.5: Title: ‘Aboa ti nyera nkwan mu’ (Prominence)

Design in Plate 6.5 is titled 'Aboa ti nyera nkwan mu'. The head of an animal is always conspicuously seen in the soup. It suggests that the elderly or prominent persons are given the necessary recognition and attention in a gathering or in decision making. The head of the animal looks prominent in the symbol because the head is the store house of wisdom. Philosophically, the design calls on all and sundry to give regards to wisdom.

The design has two different sizes of motifs, small and big, arranged in half drop pattern layout with border design at the selvedge. Wax effect textures were used within the circles, while the main background textures were made from twigs. Colours used are brown, yellow and violet. Violet colour is associated with the female essence of life. It is viewed as mild and gentle, and therefore associated with tenderness, calmness, pleasantness, and sweetness.

In Asante social thought, these attributes are generally considered as essential aspects of the female essence. The yellow stands for royalty. This colour way can therefore be suitable for lady's evening wear, men's shirting and women's costumes. This design can be used, ideally, by heads of clan, family heads and those who play leadership role in the society due to its association with wisdom.

## 6.6 Result and Appreciation of Project 6



Plate 6.6: Title: ‘Wo so כַּסֵּב תִּי אֵינָה אֲכָא נֹוּ יֵאֵהֹוּמָא’ (Respect)

The design in Plate 6.6 is titled ‘Wo so כַּסֵּב תִּי אֵינָה אֲכָא נֹוּ יֵאֵהֹוּמָא’. It depicts a bird that has captured the head of a snake to render it powerless. Literally, it means that, the snake is a mere rope when the head is seized. The philosophical meaning of this is that power rests in the chief or king in traditional rule. Socially, the proverb suggests that all leaders are mere humans; it is the power they hold, that makes them different and powerful.

The design depicts a diamond base pattern layout of the main motifs and having a chain of spiky small geometric shapes as textures. The colours used are brown, golden yellow and green for the motif, and dark green and violet for the background. The design may be suitable for women’s or men’s cloth and may find application in curtains.

## 6.7 Result and Appreciation of Project 7



Plate 6.7: Title: ‘ɔbaako were aduro a egu’ (Support)

The design in Plate 6.7 is titled, ‘ɔbaako were aduro a egu’. Philosophically the proverb suggests that, it is difficult for one person to venture into huge task, and for this reason would need support to succeed. Socially, the proverb reveals that if one undertakes a great task without a helper, one never succeeds which suggests support is necessary in any venture.

The design is rendered in half-drop pattern arrangement and employs dark and light blue colours, with lattice arrangement of lines as background textures. For the background colours, light brown and dark blue have been used one after the other in a vertical order. The design may be suitable for men’s and women’s clothing.

## 6.8 Result and Appreciation of Projects 8



Plate 6.8: Title: 'Kwabia nnim gyata' (Naivety)

The design in Plate 6.8 is titled 'Kwabia nnim gyata' and the literal translation suggests that the child does not know how dangerous the lion is. Philosophically, it translates to mean that naivety is dangerous. It means that ignorance of the child makes him play with the lion which is a dangerous animal. Socially, it gives credence to knowledge and how important it is for one to get enlightened. The motifs are arranged diagonally and textured with lines of jigsaw pattern to suggest that life is not a straight route; there are a lot that one has to learn to get to the top. Colours used are golden brown and dark brown for the motifs which are linked with chieftaincy. The design can be suitable for men's cloth and women's wear.

## 6.9 Result and Appreciation of Project 9

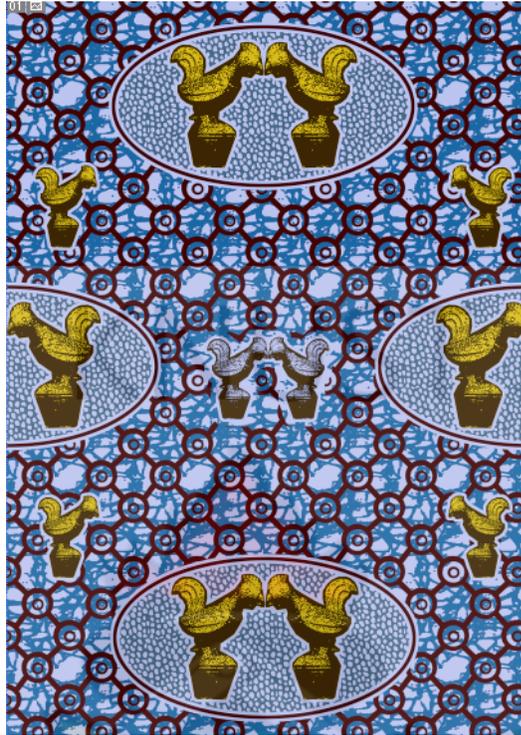


Plate 6.9: Title: 'no na wiase safoa kura no' (Reliance)

Plate 6.9 has the design titled 'no na wiase safoa kura no'. This is translated that cock's crowing at dawn alerts everyone of the dawn of a new day, and therefore holds the keys to a new day. The cock's duty of providing accurate information makes it very reliable. The symbol also stands for loyalty when one looks at it from another translation which says that, no one buys a cock to let it crow in another man's town. The design depicts two cocks facing each other signifying unity and togetherness. The design has a diagonal arrangement of motifs, with connected circles as texture and a wax effect. Colours in the design are black, light blue and yellow. The design can be suitable for shirting, men and women's cloth.

## 6.10 Result and Appreciation of project 10



Plate 6.10: Title: ‘Kontonkrowi eda amansan kɔn mu’ (Eventuality)

‘Kontonkrowi eda amansan kɔn mu’ which means death is inevitable, is the title for the design in Plate 6.10. The symbol shows a ring stuck around the necks of three human figures. The social significance of the symbol is to remind everyone in society about death which is inevitable.

Lattice line arrangements were used as textures. Colours used are black, light brown and dark brown signifying sadness. The design can be useful for funerals and other solemn moments because of the symbolism attached to it.

## 6.11 Results and Appreciation of Project 11

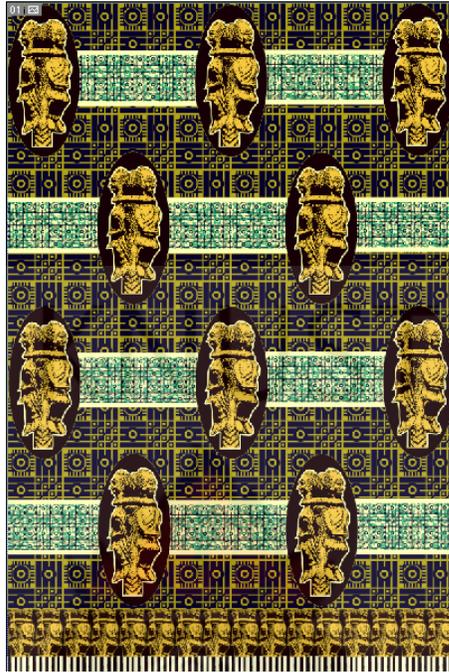


Plate 6.11: Title: 'Kontonkrowi eda amansan kɔn mu' (Ultimate)

The design in Plate 6.11 is titled 'Kontonkrowi da amansan kɔn mu' (the ultimate goal). This is another design from the same symbol as in Plate 6.10. The symbol suggests that, whether rich or poor, young or old, king or subject, each one of us is bound to die one day. It suggests that all men shall be judged by the same natural laws. The motifs run diagonally on green textured stripes in the design. A unit repeat of two boxes with arrangements of circles and lines are filled in the background as textures of the design. The motifs and textures are in gold and black, to recommend the design as a funeral cloth. It can also be used as mammy cloth and for curtains because of the border design.

## 6.12 Result and Appreciation of Project 12



Plate 6.12: Title: ‘sono akyi aboa biara nni h’ (Greatness)

The design labelled Plate 6.12 is titled ‘sono akyi aboa biara nni h’, which literally means there is no animal bigger than the elephant. The elephant in this context is seen as a monumental animal whose structure is not surpassed by any animal. The Asantehene in this case is the monumental figure among the Asantes and therefore should be accorded the necessary respect. Socially every elderly person deserves respect. The colours used for the designs from shades of brown and textures create a patchy bubble effect. The colours stand for royalty. Motif arrangement is in horizontal order. The design can be useful, first and foremost, to high ranked royal personalities like the Asantehene or the paramount chiefs due to their position.

### 6.13 Result and Appreciation of Project 13



Plate 6.13: Title: ‘ $\text{ɔ́sansa kɔ́ abu a ɔ́de n'akyi gya akroma}$ ’ (Inheritance)

Plate 6.13 has the design titled, ‘ $\text{ɔ́sansa kɔ́ abu a ɔ́de n'akyi gya akroma}$ ’, meaning in the king's absence the throne is always guarded by his next of kin. Socially, the design talks about inheritance, which indicates heirs to thrones. This is a system that brings about peace in traditional rule, and to discourage other people from vying for positions they do not have the right to contest for. The design arrangement is in counter change layout with border design. It shows veins and effect of real wax prints. It has green, dark brown and black which signify vitality, fertility, prosperity, fruitfulness, abundant health and spiritual rejuvenation. This suggests that a younger kinsman is always required to replace the king or chief. The design can be used as mammy cloth, royal cloth and dress material for young people.

#### 6.14 Result and appreciation of Project 14

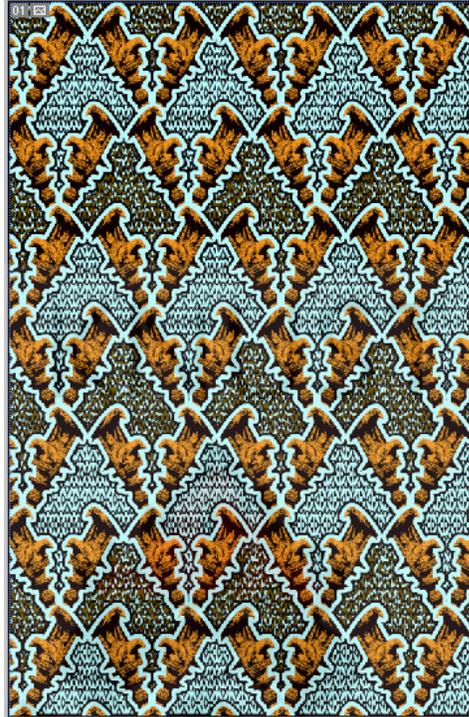


Plate 6.14 Title: 'ṣansa ƙ abu a ɗe n'akyi gya akroma'(Kingsman)

The design shown in Plate 6.14 is also titled 'ṣansa ƙ abu a ɗe n'akyi gya akroma'. It is another design made from the staff symbol having the same name. The motif was slanted at an angle and transformed by flipping horizontally to create the main motif for the design. This motif was arranged horizontally across the working area. Textures were made from reduced sizes of circles and lines. The design can be suitable for chiefs and those in the royal family as well as women's and men's wear. The light brown colour in the motifs makes the design rich and suitable as royal cloth.

## 6.15 Result and Appreciation of Project 15



Plate 6.15 Title: 'Nea adee wɔ no na odie' (Royal)

Plate 6.15 has the design titled 'Nea adee wɔ no na odie' which means that it is only the heir who apparently ascends a throne. The motif shows two human figures seated at a table and while one is seen eating, the other looks on. Socially, it is an advice to those who always like to fight for what does not belong to them and not to deprive others of what belongs to them. The textures are made from feathers which suggest that whatever does not belong to you can fly off like feathers. The colours used are black, violet, dark brown and yellow. The design can be used as women's and men's' cloth, and for funerals and other ceremonial occasions.

## 6.16 Result and Appreciation of Project 16



Plate 6.16 Title: 'Odiadeni' (Heir)

The design labelled Plate 6.16 is titled 'Odiadeni'. It is another design from the symbol, 'Nea adee wo no na odie'. The yellow ochre background and the green textures harmonise to give a serene appeal. It can be used by those in the royal family during traditional gatherings and also as mammy cloth and shirting material.

## 6.17 Result and appreciation of project 17



Plate 6.17: Title: ‘Apεε ye kese a ɔye ma dufɔkyεε’ (Eventuality)

Plate 6.17 showcases the design titled ‘Apεε ye kese a ɔye ma dufɔkyεε’. When the hedgehog grows fat, it eventually ends up in the dead log, is the translation of the proverb. The proverb suggests that whatever social status a woman attains, she will end up eventually becoming somebody’s wife. It is an advice for women to learn to be submissive. The design has two motifs arranged to face each other and the pair used as the main motif have been arranged in full-drop pattern. The textures are from curved and straight lines arranged alternately between the motifs across the design. Colours used are light and dark brown, and blue. It can be useful as women’s cloth, shirting, curtain and dress wear.

## 6.18 Result and appreciation of project 18



Plate 6.18 Title: ‘Adwene ho ye den sen koraa a ento aponkyerene’ (Power)

Plate 6.18 has the design titled ‘Adwene ho ye den sen koraa a ento aponkyerene’, which literally translates as ‘whatever the strength of the mud fish, it cannot surpass that of the frog’. This means that the frog has better survival strength than the mud fish because of its amphibious nature. Both large and small sizes of motifs were arranged vertically, with the smaller motifs. Socially, it suggests how powerful the chief is in society due to his position. Colours used are dark brown and gold for the motifs, light brown for the background, and green for the textures, that gives it a royal appeal. The design can be suitable for men’s and women’s’ cloth and for curtains because of the linear arrangement of the motifs.

## 6.19 Result and appreciation of design 19



Plate 6.19 Title: ‘W’ani anhu na w’aso ante’(Pretense)

‘W’ani anhu a w’aso ante’ is the title of the design in Plate 6.19. The symbol is a reminder for people to be wary of issues that they comment on. Socially, it reminds people to refrain from making comments on issues that do not concern them. Philosophically, it suggests that, the elder does not take action on information indirectly received. The blue, brown, golden yellow and black colours make the design look calm which therefore suggest to the user to be calm and avoid intrusion. It can be used as men’s and women’s wear but can also be suitable for the elderly in society.

## 6.20 Result and appreciation of design 20



Plate 6.20 Title: ‘W’ani anhu na w’aso ante’(Deception)

The design in Plate 6:20 is another design from the linguist staff symbol titled ‘W’ani anhu na w’aso ante’. The motif from the symbol has been arranged in such a way that two of the motifs in a slanting or diagonal pattern are flipped to obtain four in a unit repeat which are arranged horizontally to create a diamond base layout. This is a fancy design with gold, light blue and dark brown colours. The design can be used by men, women, and youth alike for all occasions. The gold colour shows the rich culture of the people and the blues and browns suggest how calm Asante people can be, and be patient on all issues and not to rush to comments.

The designs generated from the linguist staff symbols can go a long way to educate the public on traditional philosophies that are not understood by many. This can even trigger

a move to make people eager to learn about symbols from other traditional areas of Ghana.

# KNUST



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### MAIN FINDINGS, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 7.1 Main findings

This study sought to identify Asante linguist staff symbols, understand their meanings and see how effective they can be used in generating textile designs. For these reasons, therefore, resource persons like woodcarvers and linguists who handle these symbols, were contacted to extract relevant information for the study.

The main findings from the field research were as follows:

- The linguist staffs are symbols of office to the linguists who are spokespersons of the chiefs and clan heads. The presence of a particular linguist at traditional gatherings like durbars, festivals or funerals indicates the presence of a particular clan head or chief.
- The linguist staffs are symbolic since each staff symbol has specific information that is both proverbial and philosophical. These proverbial and philosophical meanings have social implications that if well understood, can make people to appreciate traditional norms to avoid committing social mistakes.
- There are two kinds of linguist staffs, which are the totemic for clan linguists and the type that carry proverbial symbols used by linguists of the Asantehene and the Asante paramount chiefs.
- The carving of linguist staffs is historical because some linguists indicated that this profession were handed to them by their great grandfathers.

- The linguist staffs are carved out of wood which are later painted in gold colour to signify the social prestige and royal importance of the linguist staff to traditional rule. In Asante, gold symbolizes royalty, wealth, elegance, high status, supreme, quality, glory, and spiritual purity.
- Many people see these linguist staff symbols but do not bother to know their meanings because some feel they are fetish due to their connection to chieftaincy rites.
- The meanings of these staff symbols are not known to many people and for that matter their impact on the socio-cultural and traditional life of the people is limited to few royal natives.
- It was observed that the linguist staff symbols have nice surface textures which are created by carvers to add beauty to their work. These surface textures in turn add more beauty to the textile designs created from them.
- The students, members of the public and linguists interviewed agreed that should the linguist staff symbols be used to design textiles, it would help people know and understand their meanings, when the names of the symbols are used for textile designs. This is due to the fact that, textiles and for that matter clothing is one of the basic necessities of man.

The field research study was of crucial importance due to the value of data that was gathered. This gave the researcher an insight into some cultural and traditional activities which served as impetus towards the generation of the textile designs.

The use of Adobe Photoshop 7.0 played a key role in the generation of the designs as its features made it feasible for manipulating photographic images of the linguist staff symbols, to convert them into motifs, and aid transforming and arranging the motifs and textures, with excellent colour application for the textile designs. The generated textile designs were all made in such a way as to show the linguist staff symbols conspicuously for easy identification for the purposes of knowing and identifying them.

## **7.2 Summary**

The generated textile designs have been designed with proverbial and philosophical names. A look at some of the designs shows abstractions and do not bear any direct resemblance to the names given to them. Usually, philosophical names are given by the cloth sellers who use it as a marketing tool to help boost their sales. But this study made a conscious effort to name the designs generated to add value to them.

The main objective of this project was to take a look at traditional systems of Asante people who are known to have an array of rich culture. This stock of symbols and their meanings if well exposed can be a way of educating people on the wisdom and philosophy. Textile design can be one of the mediums by which these symbols can be exposed and understood, since fabrics are worn daily. Using these symbols can be another avenue for textile designers to explore other sources to create innovative designs.

This thesis began with the review of literature related to the topic. To understand these symbols necessitated going to the custodians of the staffs to provide an in-depth knowledge of the symbols, and for that matter traditional elders like chiefs, linguists, clan heads, carvers etc, were of prime importance to the study. Information was, therefore,

solicited from them of which the researcher documented, in the form of photographs and texts. The researcher as well visited palaces, and traditional wood carving centres in Kumasi and its environs to gather data for the study.

Observation and structured interviews were the tools used to obtain the needed information, and with the aid of Adobe Photoshop, a computer aided programme, the researcher was able to manipulate the images into desirable and commercially viable textile designs which have cultural, social and philosophical significance.

### **7.3 Conclusion**

The study reveals that there are a lot that one can learn from one's culture. Many art forms exist that can be exploited as motifs to design textiles. These art forms that are part of our culture and have symbolic, philosophical, proverbial, informative and historical significance can provide a lot of learning or creative platforms for both users and designers.

Local textile designers and textile students can turn attention to these less popular symbols as design sources, and with the aid of relevant computer aided software one can come out with creative textile designs.

To conclude, the researcher attests that with the proper use of the design elements based on design principles, an array of designs can be produced by sourcing themes from our cultural environment.

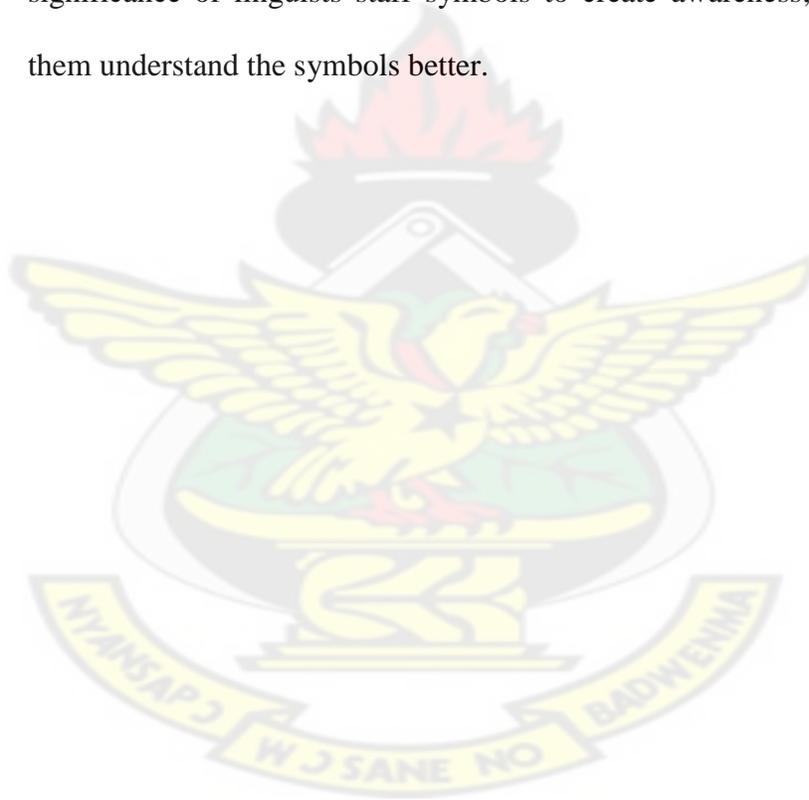
## 7.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made for consideration.

1. Textile designers should produce designs that can help Ghanaians understand their cultural values, to discard the notion that the cultural and chieftaincy systems of Asante and other Ghanaian traditional rites are fetish and demonic.
2. Textile designers in their quest to create textile designs from other traditional or cultural symbols can through field research study, understand, and publish other aspects of our traditional culture that can be of great benefit to the society.
3. The Centre for National Culture in Kumasi should exhibit samples of these designs to encourage other designers to use textile designs as a medium of exposing traditional symbols.
4. The Ghana Tourist Board could catalogue these designs and showcase them in foreign missions to arouse interest of foreigners to appreciate our culture, symbols and designs.
5. Various clans that are affiliated to these symbols should adopt and use these designs during festivals and other cultural and social gatherings. This will help identify them with their symbols.
6. Traditional symbols with their meanings from other ethnic cultures within Ghana should be catalogued and used in this manner to expose them also.
7. Cultural courses in schools should be expanded to include lessons on the study of all traditional symbols and their significance to the society; thereby

enriching students' cultural horizons to give them a better understanding of our tradition.

8. Studies on these traditional symbols can also be taught in basic schools for school children to know about them while they are young so as to put them in a better position to understand some of the proverbs and their social importance.
9. The researcher can organize seminars for students on the meanings and significance of linguists staff symbols to create awareness, that will enable them understand the symbols better.



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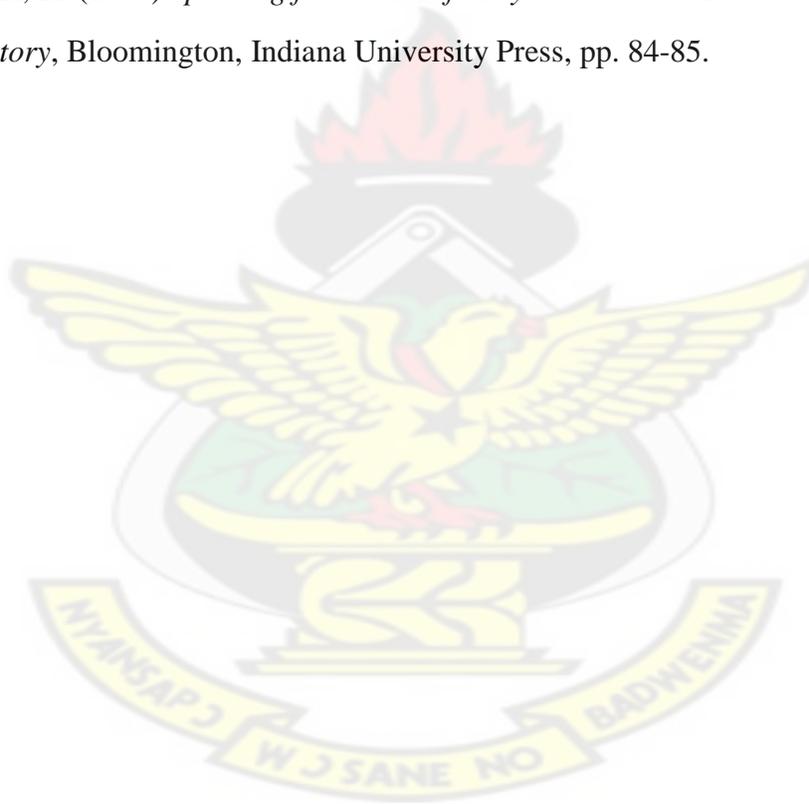
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## APPENDIX 1

### A GUIDED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR LINGUISTS

1. For how long have you been associated with chieftaincy?
2. What role do you play in chieftaincy?
3. Name some traditional symbols.
4. What are the uses of these symbols?
5. How long have these symbols been used?
6. What is the significance or importance of a linguist staff?
7. How many kinds of linguist staff do you know of?
8. Mention some of the symbols of linguist staffs?
9. Are linguist staff symbols proverbial or philosophical?
10. Can a fabric designed with a linguist staff symbol be of importance to the clan or those associated with the symbol?
11. Do you think the symbol can become more popular by using it in designing cloth for the chief, elders and other traditional members?

## APPENDIX 2

### A GUIDED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR WOODCARVERS

1. How long have you been in the carving trade?
2. Where did you learn the profession?
3. Were any of your ancestral fathers in the carving profession?
4. Who are your clients?
5. Do you carve for chiefs and clans?
6. How long have you been carving for chiefs or traditional rulers?
7. Do you carve linguist staffs?
8. How often do you carve such symbols?
9. Name other items do that you carve for traditional rulers.
10. Do you have any knowledge of the meanings of these symbols?
11. Have you ever seen linguist staff symbols used in fabric design? Where and when?
12. Can a fabric designed with a linguist staff symbol be of importance to the clan or those associated with the symbol?
13. Do you think the symbol can become more popular by using it in designing cloth for the chiefs, elders and other traditional leaders?

### APPENDIX 3

#### A GUIDED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC

1. Do you know of any traditional Asante symbols?
2. Mention the traditional Asante symbols that you know.
3. How often do you see these symbols?
4. Give the importance of these symbols.
5. Do you have some knowledge about their meanings?
6. Which symbols do you think is popular, in terms of knowing their meanings?
7. Do you know of other traditional symbols?
8. Can you mention any other symbols and their symbolic meaning?
9. Can a fabric designed with a linguist staff symbol be of importance to the clan or those associated with the symbol?
10. Do you think the symbol can become more popular by using it in designing cloth for the chief, elders and other traditional members?

**APPENDIX 4**

**OBSERVATIONAL GUIDE/CHECK LIST**

**WOODCARVING CENTRES IN ASHANTI REGION**

1. Location of woodcarving centre: In Kumasi   
Outside Kumasi
2. If outside Kumasi, state exact town .....
3. Magnitude or size of carving centre: Small scale  medium scale  large scale
4. Number of carvers .....
5. Skill of carvers: Skilled  Unskilled  Both
6. Number of learner carvers .....
7. Type of wood used for carving: Hard wood  Soft wood
8. Types of carvings: Asante linguist staff symbols  umbrella top symbols   
stools  others .....
9. Quality of products: Excellent  Very good  Good  Average   
Poor
10. Target market: Traditional rulers  Expatriates  Sellers of carvings   
All
11. General observations.....