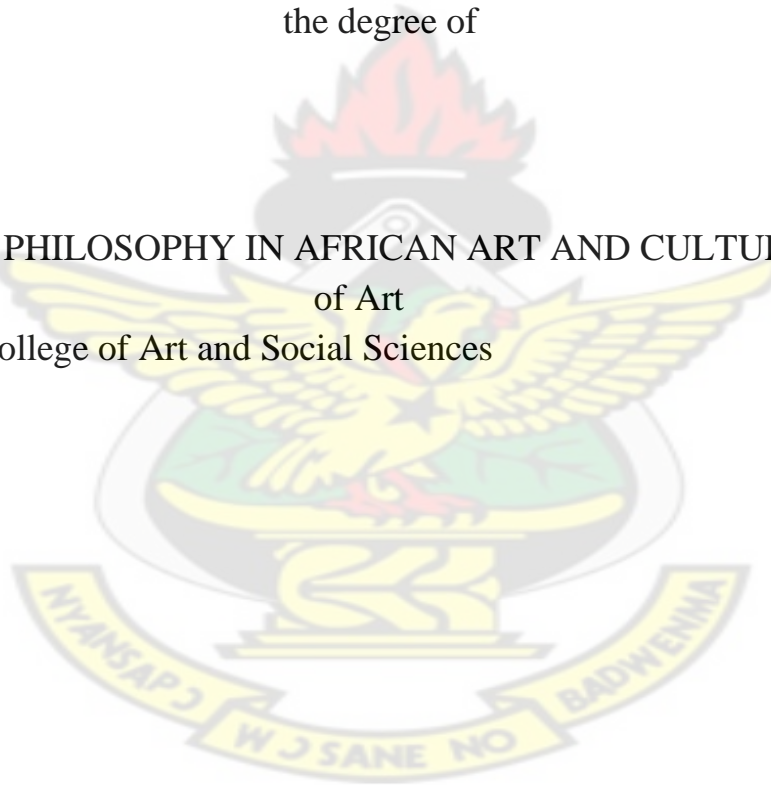


**CLOTHING AND ADORNMENT IN THE GA CULTURE:
SEVENTEENTH TO TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

BY
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the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN AFRICAN ART AND CULTURE Faculty
of Art
College of Art and Social Sciences



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DECLARATION

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

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is on the clothing components associated with *Gas* in the context of their socio-cultural functions from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century. The great number of literature on Ghanaian art indicates that Ghanaians including the *Ga* people uphold their culture and its significance. Yet in spite of the relevance and indispensable nature of clothing and adornment in the culture, researchers and scholars have given it minimal attention. The *Ga* people's desire to combine their traditional costumes with foreign fashion has also resulted in the misuse of the former, within ceremonial and ritual contexts. Another probable reason for this attitude might be the fact that most *Gas* are not familiar with the appropriate uses and meanings of *Ga* costumes. This research then investigates the aesthetic qualities, meanings, functions, symbolisms and significance of *Ga* costumes alongside foreign clothes, by assessing (1) the knowledge level of *Gas* on their costumes; (2) If the norms and values related to adornments are appreciated by the people and (3) the extent to which foreign clothing fashion has affected *Ga* traditional costumes. The study is examined under six chapters: chapter one, two and three deal with an introduction to the study, review of related literature and methodology respectively. While the fourth, fifth and sixth chapters, in that order, cover the data sourced from the field study, analysis of the questionnaire and the summary, conclusion and recommendation. By means of the introduction in chapter one, the meaning, role and significance of costumes, as well as the research questions, objectives, importance and the ethnographic background of the study are presented. Since some literary works have already discussed the origin, uses, cultural symbolisms and acculturation of costumes on a global spectrum, such works are consulted in chapter two, to achieve a comparatively standard work. The methodology in chapter three expanded both qualitative and quantitative approaches employed by means of interviews, questionnaire, observations, participations, oral tradition, photograph taking and collection; all of which are statistically

analyzed, interpreted and described in line with the research questions. The population interviewed covers a sample size of about fifty three (53) people, and for fair coverage this group included traditional leaders, beauticians, educationalist, „ordinary" Ghanaians and youths. Discussions on the data revealed in chapter four that, archaeologist and historians have been able to prove through excavations and artistic impressions respectively, that as early as the seventeenth century *Gas* had existing forms of clothing that have transcended and transformed into the present ones. And that these fashion trends had in them artistic, historical and cultural revelations that distinguished gender, occupation and status. Other contemporary costumes, mostly of foreign tradition, and also patronized by *Gas* from the 19th century to the present time are further assembled in the study, revealing some adulterations and the indecent mode of dressing common with some of the people. Clothing and adornments are also impressively inter-twined with, and inseparable from the social, political, and economic lives of *Gas*, sending information on the philosophies, virtues, and the cultural milieu of the people. As such, these ideals are analyzed and discussed in line with the names, meanings, symbolisms, figures and plates, which establish why, how and when costumes are worn. Chapter five deals with respondents views on a variety of questions in which by means of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), the over 100 questionnaires administered are critically analyzed and interpreted. The study concludes in the sixth chapter, noting how some traditional clothes are unaltered whilst others have been affected by modernization and acculturation. In order to preserve and conserve this great historic heritage (*Ga* clothing and adornment) the study finally recommends further research, documentation, scientific means of preservation, as well as more efforts by the Ghana government, educational institutions, religious organizations and traditional leaders in sensitizing the people through seminars, workshops and durbars.

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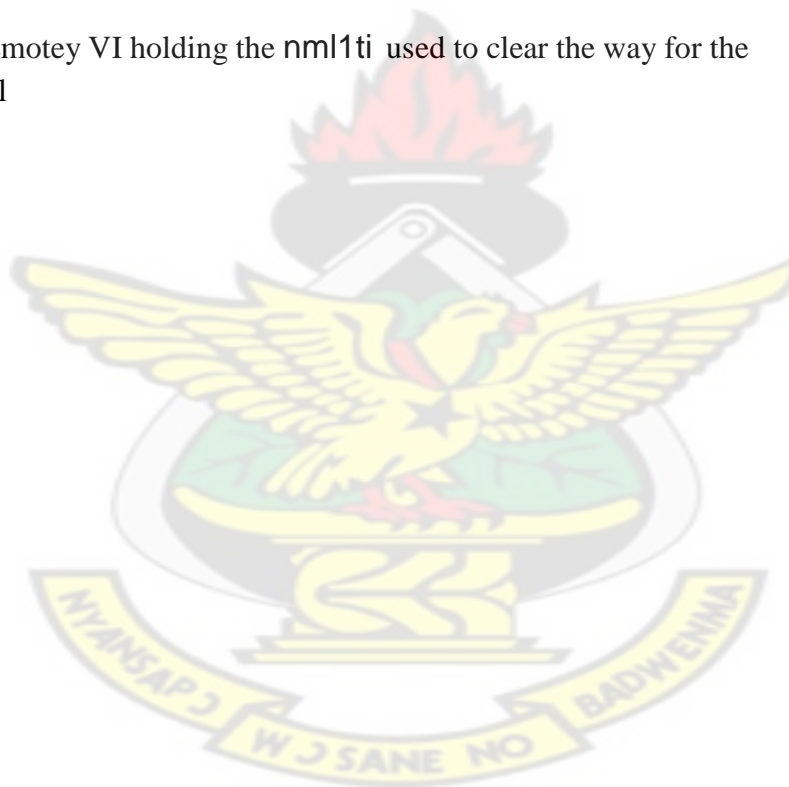
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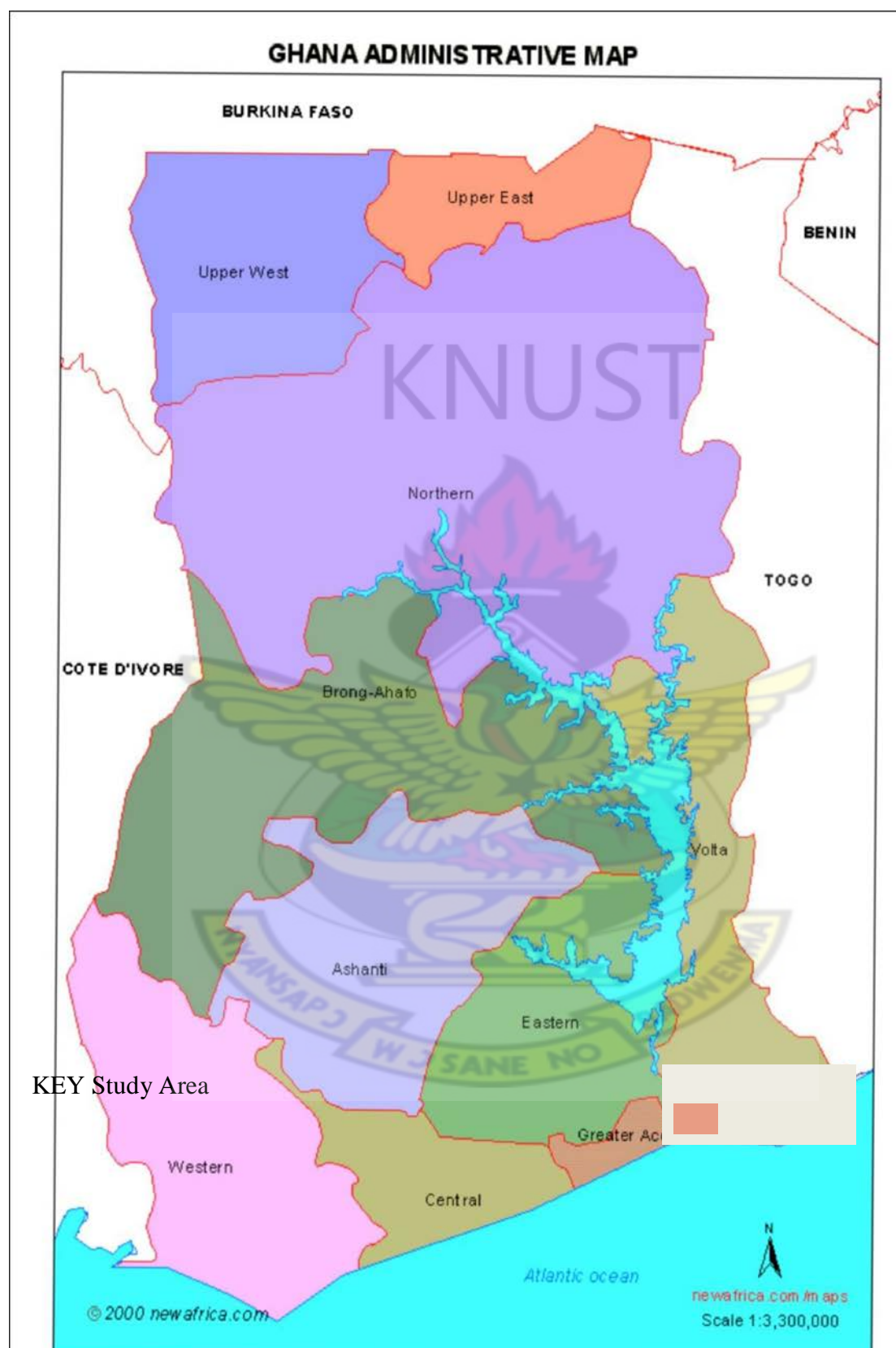
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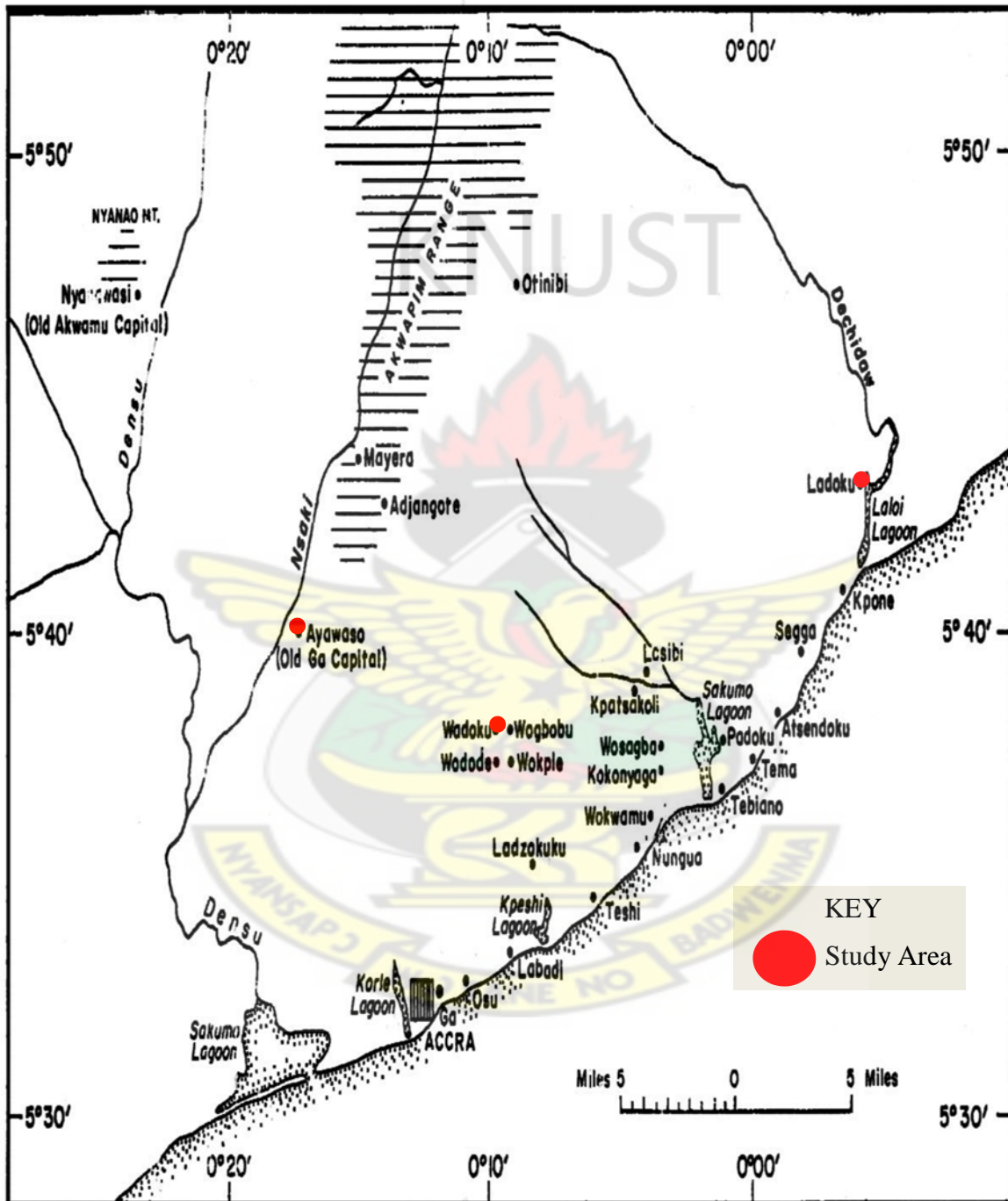
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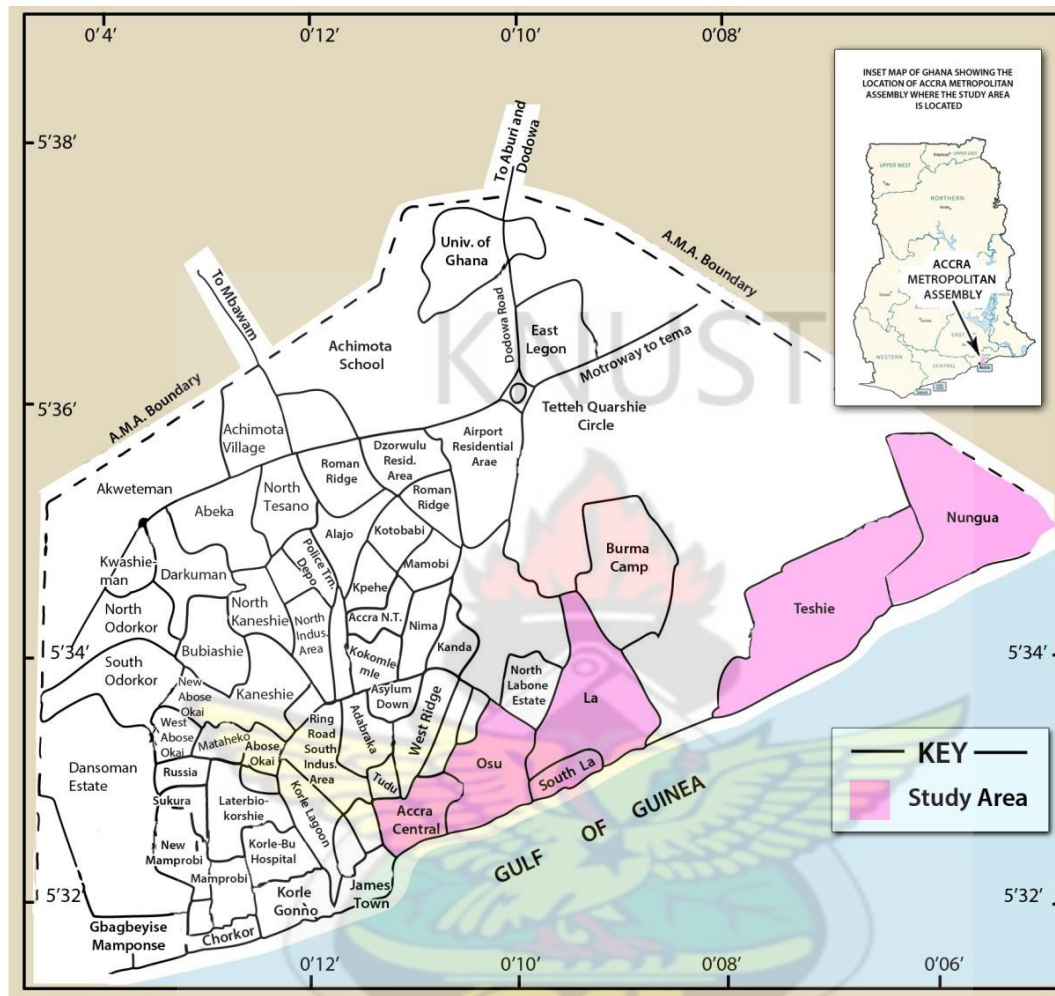
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SOURCE: ACCRA METROPOLITAN ASSEMBLY

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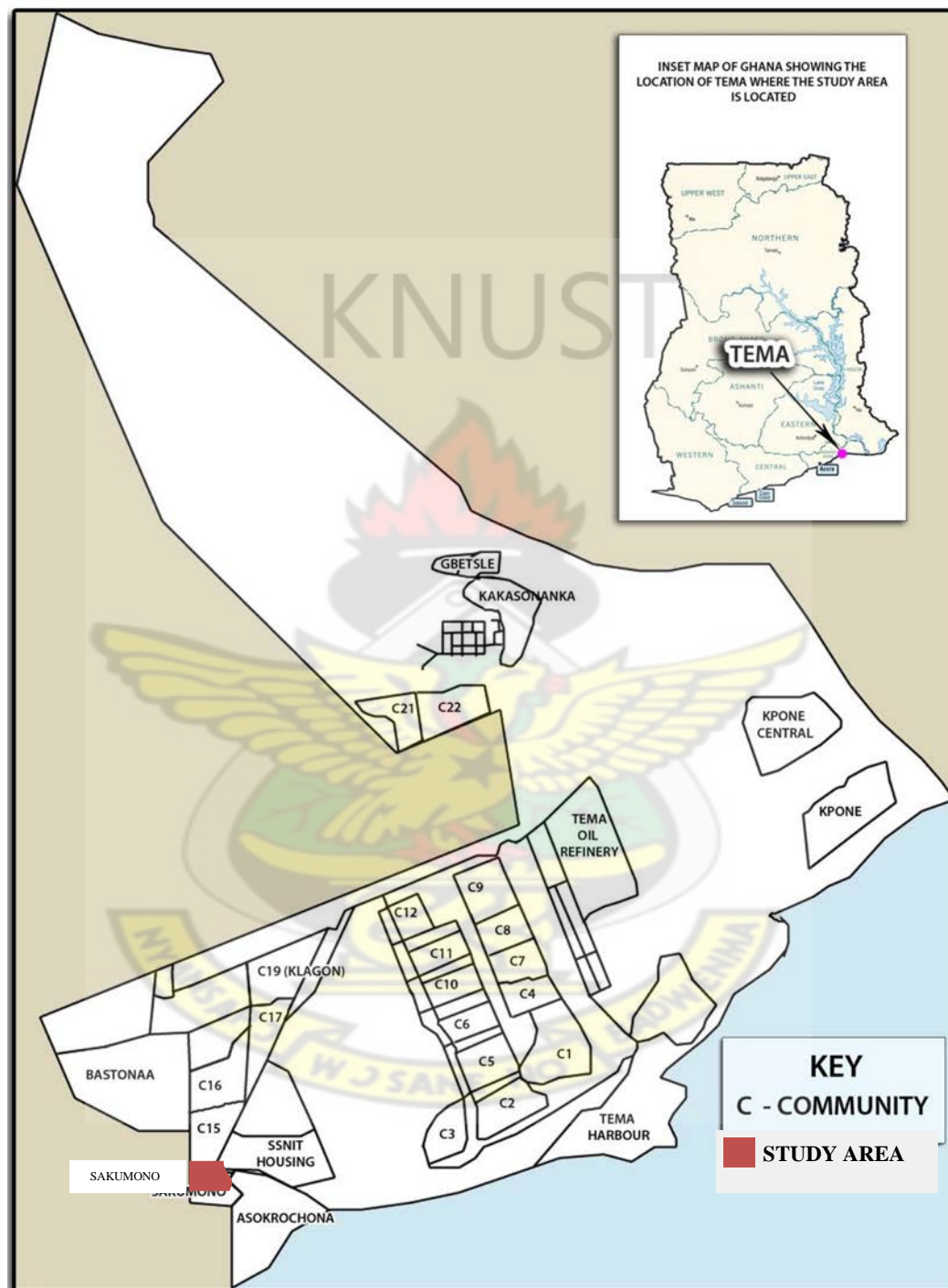
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SOURCE: ACCRA METROPOLITAN ASSEMBLY

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This thesis generally gives an account of the various types of clothing and adornment found among the *Ga* people (*Gas*) in Ghana, and carefully investigates the concepts, uses, cultural symbolisms, and the significance inherent in the art. This first chapter of the thesis, however, focuses on a number of issues such as providing a background information to the research, the problem that has necessitated the study and how the research intends solving it. Related questions are also designed to help the researcher address both the objectives and the research problem. Other areas also examined in the chapter include: delimitation, limitations, the usefulness of the study, how the rest of the text is arranged and an ethnographic account of *Gas*.

1.2 Background of the study

The culture of *Gas* is expressed through their ideas, practices and beliefs which include the visual and performing arts such as sculpture, painting, architecture, dance, music, theatre and literary works. The framework or composition of these works evolves from four aspects of art appreciation and expression which are “aesthetic perception, creative expression, art heritage and aesthetic valuing” (California State Department of Education 1989: ix). Under this broad spectrum of art composition are clothing and adornment which function as visual and also as performing arts. Visual arts comprise all the art works that are visually perceived such as

painting, pottery, leather works, basketry, sculpture and architecture. While dance, music, drama and puppetry are classified under the performing arts. Clothing thus plays a dominant role in the theatre, as a component of Technical Theatre under the performing arts, and since its

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implementation involves construction, painting and dyeing, it also falls within the visual arts. Therefore, clothing and adornment in the *Ga* culture are investigated to embody symbols and representations that conform to the two aforementioned art forms; visual as well as performing arts.

Clothing and adornment refer to all the elements used in covering and adorning the body such as headdress, jewellery, accessories, hand items, footwear and body designs, in relation to a country, time, class or position. The Encyclopaedia Americana 2001: 378 noted that dress or clothing “is an exclusive term for garments, jewelry, cosmetics and hairdress... the term dress may be used interchangeably with the term „costume” [Theater term]””. Moreover, in perspective of *Dress and Adornment*, the various types of „attire” include “ecclesiastical dress; military dress; academic, trade or professional dress; and the national or regional costumes...” (Britannica Macropaedia 2005: 478). Similarly, in this study clothing and adornment will be synonymously represented with dress, attire, apparel or costume.

Clothing is an integral part of life because it reflects the historical past and present of an individual, a community or a nation, sending signals with regards to sex, age, status, occupation, ethnicity, religion, geographical location among others.

It is also possible to determine a person's psychological mind set, tastes and mood through his/her dressing. For instance, it does not take a second to determine an individual's state of mind in relation to his/her costume; whether the person is sound in mind or mentally ill. Likewise, the sexual desire of a person can easily be determined by his/her choice of style as well as colours of costume. And based on cultural representations, the colour of attire can portray the mood of a

person: whether he/she is happy or sad. These bits of message are not verbal; however, they automatically relay information about the wearer. In effect to a person who is familiar with a certain culture, costume communicates.

From a socio-cultural perspective therefore, dressing can be observed in three functionaries, and this may include the physiological differences of individuals (sex), the cultural environs of a person, as well as the world around him or her. Consequently clothing and adornment used by *Ga* people express their perceptions, religious ideas, proverbs, historical periods, ideas and values (virtues and vices). These various forms of dressing are mostly revealed in the daily lives of *Gas*: at birth, initiation, marriage and funerals, the installation of their traditional political leaders, during annual festivals, as well as economic and recreational activities.

Besides, body painting and body markings such as scarification and cicatrices, both of which have symbolic, religious, medicinal and ceremonial functions are also covered by this study. In this context, apart from their specified functions and objectives, all forms of body paintings and body markings, have very powerful aesthetic appeal in *Ga* culture and might be employed for these purposes- aesthetic and symbolic. The study therefore seeks to emphasize two art forms: (1) clothes and accessories, and (2) body paintings and body markings used by *Gas*.

Historical evidence of *Ga* clothing components can presumably be traced from the seventeenth century or earlier. Therefore, investigations are conducted to identify the earliest record, and the possible changes or continuity in these arts; from the traditional environment, alongside contemporary fashion, to the present (seventeenth to the twenty-first century). Can influences such as migration, immigration or globalization have negative or positive impact on *Ga*

costume? A section of the study observes these concerns; showing how *Ga*s reacted to internal and external pressure and their effect on the production and constituents of their clothing elements.

Attention is also drawn to some pictorial and other evidences of *Ga* clothes. In this perspective some clothes used by men, women and children are shown and labeled according to the successive clothing fashions. Different clothes used by some traditional leaders on various occasions are included to address the stereotyped way most Ghanaians costume chiefs, queen mothers, priests and priestess, as expressed in stage/video/film productions. The illustrations which cover garments, head coverings, hairstyles, foot wear, ornaments and body paintings and markings are intended to give detailed information to complement this study. In addition to the pictures collected from *Ga* people, the internet, magazines, books, articles and museums, the researcher has included her own sketches deduced through observation or described to her by some of the respondents. Apart from the latter then, all illustrations are carefully selected from original source and descriptions are included for easy identification.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The *Ga* people in Ghana have interesting and valuable information about the use of clothing and adornment in their political, social, economic and religious lives. Yet it seems little on such issues have been documented.

Despite the potential distinctive contribution that costume can add to the national development and the Ghana government's education on cultural sensitivity, there is to date not a single book on *Ga* costume. Writers appear to be more enthused in investigating other historical events about

Gas, than clothing and adornment of the people. Apparently the empirical status of clothing and adornment in the *Ga* society and the benefits derived, especially in education, for tourism, video film production, and in stage performances have been challenged. Also noticeable is the paradigm shift of ideas and aesthetics (concerning dressing) that seem to undermine the normally “accepted” *Ga* dress code.

Foreign influences have also played a dominant part and have accounted for most of the incongruities of costume on the contemporary Ghanaian stage and screen. This trend coupled with the fact that the present generation continues to adore foreign clothes, poses the danger that *Gas* and other Ghanaians might soon lose record of the *Ga* clothing culture. These are the issues that challenges the researcher (a lecturer in Costume Design and Construction at the University of Ghana, Legon) to conduct a study that would address these concerns.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The study reflects the aesthetic appeals in the clothing and adornments of *Gas*, together with their roles, historical facts, cultural symbolisms, changes and adaptations with regards to their socio-cultural functions. Specific objectives that guided this study are:

- ❖ To investigate the earliest records and some historical developments in *Ga* costume and adornment between the 17th- 18th century.
- ❖ To assess the contemporary fashion trends and their influences among *Gas* from post independent to the present (19th -21st century).
- ❖ To examine and show the uses, cultural importance and symbolisms in *Ga* traditional clothing and adornment as expressed in their political, economic, social and religious lives, including the changes that have occurred in the past and present (18th -21st century).

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions to be addressed are:

1. What is the role of costumes in the socio-cultural activities of *Gas*?
2. How do the *Ga* people associate body painting and body markings with implicit norms, values, principles and symbolisms?
3. How knowledgeable are Ghanaians including *Gas*; concerning the historic clothing trends in the *Ga* tradition?
4. How has acculturation and modernization affected *Ga* traditional clothes?
5. What structural implementations may be feasible to sustain and preserve *Ga* costumes as part of Ghanaian history and especially as a national heritage?

1.6 Delimitation

The study targets the different costumes and accessories related to the socio-cultural activities in the six townships of Accra, namely: *Ga* Mashie, Osu, La, Teshie, Nungua and Tema, between the Seventeenth Century and the present. The main study area is Teshie; however, to ascertain the almost bonded dress code among the six towns, samples are drawn from *Ga* Mashie, La, Osu and Tema. Given that the clothing culture of *Gas* was influenced by other ethnic groups, references are also made to costumes associated with the *Yoruba* of Nigeria as well as that of some ethnic groups in Ghana such as the *Asantes*, *Fantis*, *Krobos* and *Dagbanis*.

1.7 Limitation

Problems encountered during the research include the following, on the next page:

- ☐ the first major encounter was the issue on language barrier. This was because almost all the people in the research community speak the *Ga* dialect; therefore, the researcher was confronted with serious challenges because of her “little *Ga*”.
- ☐ because of non-female involvement in certain *Ga* rituals the researcher was refused access to some information and participation.
- ☐ some of the people also avoided the video and digital coverage; for fear that their photographs would be taken and printed for commercial purposes, other than the intended thesis.
- ☐ because some of the data were collected during the rainy season, some of the photographs taken were blurry and hence could not be used.
- ☐ the study was devoid of costumes from Nungua because the researcher lost her Pen Drive that stored those pictures.
- ☐ since the researcher did not receive any research grant, (apart from the Ghana Government's Student Bursary) the study was „crippled" by financial constraints.
- ☐ it became clear during the study that there is minimal documentation on the research topic; hence, reviewing related literature was a bit problematic.

1.8 Importance of the study

- ❖ The study will add to existing information about the *Ga*, thereby helping to preserve the rich Ghanaian culture as revealed in the socio-cultural lives of the people.
- ❖ It will also benefit cultural organizers, anthropologists, ethnographers, lecturers in African Arts, researchers, film /stage directors, costumiers, fashion designers, and readers who may desire to upgrade their knowledge in the *Ga* dress culture.

❖ People will be educated on the historical records of costume among *Gas*, concerning their indigenous and contemporary clothes, the effect of foreign domination, and the need/ significance of preserving *Ga* costumes for future reference.

1.9 Organization of the rest of Text

The study is discussed under one broad theme. It basically observes the costumes and adornment of the *Ga* within their political, social, economic and religious organizations. The thesis is, however, divided into six chapters to investigate the above theme. Apart from chapter one which has already been outlined, the second chapter dilates on related literature and its impact on the study whiles chapter three addresses the various approaches or methods the researcher used in the study. Chapter four is sub divided into three parts and generally documents historical trends, uses and symbolisms of *Ga* clothing. Part one (1) examines the earliest clothing evidence. The second (2) part concentrates on costumes used during the Rites of Passage – here; clothing is used to inform observers and readers on how to differentiate birth, naming, initiation, marriage, burial and funeral ceremonies among the *Gas*. The third (3) aspect concentrates on clothing elements among *Ga* Traditional rulers and religious bodies, as well as costumes associated with festivals (H4m4w4), economic activities and recreation. While the fifth chapter analyses the questionnaire and the views from respondents, chapter six finally concludes with continuity and changes in the *Ga* clothing culture, as well as offering suggestions and recommendations as a means of preserving *Ga* costumes.

1. 10 Ethnographic account of *Gas*

Accra emerged in the seventeenth century as one of the many trading centers on the Gold Coast of West Africa that served as a link between the expanding Atlantic economy and the African

interior. According to Parker (2000: xvii), “. . . by the beginning of the eighteenth century the three townships that together constituted Accra were the political, economic, and sacred epicenter of *Ga* state and society.” For the next two hundred years, a struggle for possession of the town surfaced when European trading forts and local leaders competed with powerful African neighbours over the jurisdiction of the town and for a portion of its mercantile wealth. Around the middle of the nineteenth century the British consolidated their stand as the dominant coastal power and in 1877, Accra emerged the headquarters of the newly created crown colony of the Gold Coast, and later in 1957 as the capital of Tropical Africa's first independent country.

As recorded in Ghana's census in 1984, Accra had a population of 859,600 people, but currently, according to the 2011 census, Accra is one of West Africa's biggest cities with approximately four million people. In line with the period under study, settlers in the Accra plains were the *Ga* and *Dangme* people who have similar traits with regards language, politics and socio-cultural activities. The *Dangme* people were found on the east and consisted of; *Ningo*, *Shai/Se Kpone/Sege*, *Osu/Osudoku*, *La/Ladoku* and *Gbugbla*. The *Ga* occupied the west and comprised of the *Ga Mashie* of Accra, *Gbese*, *Kinka*, *Sempe* in central Accra and others from places like *Akuapem*, *Akwamu*, *Fanteland*, *Osudoku*, *Aneho* in Togo, and Lagos (Nigeria) found in *Osu*, *La*, *Teshie*, *Tema*, *Nungua*, *Korle Gonno*, *Mamprobi* and some other places (Anquandah 2006 :1).

There are a lot of myths surrounding the origin of *Gas*; one of these myths claims that their ancestors came to this present destination from the east and north and dwelled among several *Guan* groups who preceded them. History cannot determine when this happened and how long these *Guans* who lived before them had stayed there, however, Henderson-Quartey (2001:52) relates: “The living conditions of early humans, universally, have been studied in the Stone Age

which covers the periods formed . . . (Approx. 3 million to 15,000BC).” He continues further that: “this definition would be used to get human activities in the Accra Plains into the frame of universal historic development” (Anquandah 2006: 54).

Another myth also maintains that the traditional history of *Ga* begins with migrations generally believed to have started from the regions east of the Volta River. It is anticipated that, the ancestors of the ethnic groups of Accra, Lateh, Obutu and Mowure migrated from the sea to the Coast one after another. Bruce-Myers (1978:15), a *Ga* historian also recorded another version which says: “The *Ga* came all the way from the central part of the continent... and they are the kinsmen to the Benin.”

Through her own conclusions from “scattered fragments of circumstantial evidence”, Margaret Field (1940:59-61), an anthropologist, relates that: “...the three *Ga* speaking refugee parties: the *Ga-Bonni*, the *Ga-Wo* and the *Ga-Mashi* migrated separately from Tetetutu and other Benin parts.” According to her, the people themselves claim they came down the Niger from inland before traveling along the coast, yet Field asserts that these perceptions do not affirm the true origin of the *Ga* because they lack evidence. This journey in question according to *Krobo* traditions covered the north, central and southern territories of Benin and Togo, however, *Ga* history is not specific on the journeys from Sameh or Benin parts to Tetetutu from where the migration started and ended to the Accra Plains. Nonetheless, Henderson-Quartey (2001:60) continues:

It could be inferred from the references made to the *Ga* on some of the routes which were not mentioned in *Ga* stories that they were numerically insignificant and never the vanguard of the movements. It was most probably at *Tetetutu* that they regrouped into the *Ga-Mashi*, the *Ga-Wo* and the *Ga-Bonni*. This

supposedly, explains the lack of details in the Beginnings of the *Ga* migration.

Tracing the period of the migration is, therefore, a very difficult task because we cannot be sure of how far back into prehistoric periods the migration history could emanate. Yet what appears dependable is that the *Ga*, the *Adangme*, and the related ethnic groups reached their present destination within the same duration from the regions of the south east, which is far beyond the present frontiers of Ghana. And Henderson-Quartey (2001:60) finally sums up: “This is the one clear guide and has been corroborated by archaeological and linguistic studies in this region”. But so far no specific date has been established for the first migration to the Accra Plains.

The territory of *Ga* stretches from Lanma in the West to Tema in the east and from the foot of the Akwapim hills in the north to the Atlantic Ocean in the south. To the north they share a common boundary with the *Adangbe* and in the west with the *Afutu* and *Fante (Akan)*. The land of *Ga* people stretches from the Coast of Ghana from their capital at Accra which is also the capital of Ghana northwards to the foot of the Akwapim Hills and to the east is the Densu River. The traditional western limit where the *Ga* settled is the Sakumo River and the Sakumofio lagoon, a boundary located by a hill and known to the *Ga* as Lanma. *Gas* are almost merged with the closely related *Dangbe* speaking people; located about thirty miles to the east, between Tema and the Laloi lagoon. As indicated already in the introduction chapter, the *Ga* are divided into six major traditional groups which form the modern city of Accra. These are sometimes referred to as towns and they are:

- ☐ Ga Mashie (Central Accra)
- ☐ Osu (Christiansburg)

- ☐ La
- ☐ Teshie
- ☐ Nungua
- ☐ Tema

Each of these towns has many villages which are sub divided into quarters (*akutso*) and their numbers differ from town to town. The area occupied by the *Ga* people lies between longitudes 0°15W and 0°00' (Greenwich Meridian) and latitudes 5° 30' and 5° 45' north. With regards to the climate of the town, Azu (1974:7) has quoted Boateng as saying: "Rainfall is very low, averaging about 30" and the annual average temperature is about 79-6°F". This area constitutes the coastal plains with low hills, grassy plain, and patches of scrub. Along the coast are series of lagoons of different sizes that form the basis of the people's economic and religious sustenance.

Because of its cosmopolitan nature, Accra is basically the centre of trade in Ghana which has necessitated a construction of beautiful tall buildings for transacting business. Presently, it is the only town in Ghana that provides international air travel services.

The most patronized and main religions in *Ga* are Christianity and traditional religion. Due to the large number of immigrants in *Ga*, there are a lot of gods worshipped by the people because of these early settlers (tradition claims that the people brought their own gods). Field (1961: 67) has categorized the *Ga* gods into four: "There are *Kple* and *Kpo* gods which are *Ga* and *Obutu* (*Awutu*) *Me* gods which are of *Adangme* origin; *Otu* gods are Akwapem." Despite the presence of these cults, there is cohesion in *Ga* religious worship, hence, all the worshippers including those of alien origin, take part in the celebration of the supreme gods of the town. Every god has a high priest called a *wul4m4* as well as priests and priestesses. The worship of these deities is

still apparent with *Ga* people because in almost every household the researcher went, there was a family god. This is so because according to the citizens before the white man brought Christianity to Africa, they had already perceived the existence of a Supreme Being, as well as other spirit forces that were believed to protect, heal and see to the general welfare of the people. Therefore, in spite of the existence of Christianity and other religions scattered today, “the missionaries found indigenous *Ga* belief especially tough nut to crack”¹. –Parker 2000:161. The *Ga* traditional religious affiliation is especially noticeable when they solicit for mystical help and during their numerous festivals principal of which is the *H4m4w4* (which means hooting at hunger), which will be discussed in a later chapter.

Regarding Islam, Parker (2000: 165) further writes

Although religious change in early colonial Accra must primarily be seen in terms of the encounter between indigenous structures of belief and Christianity, the latter was not the only world religion to have an impact on the town. Few *Ga* actually converted to Islam.

And as it is noticed today, few of the *Ga* are practicing the Islamic religion as evidenced by the few mosques sited in the community. Comparatively, participation in the Christian religion was a bit favourable and encouraging because, Parker again states:

Systematic evangelistic projects did not get underway at Accra until the 1840s, following the establishment of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society at James Town in 1838 and the consolidation of the tenuous Basel Mission Society present at Osu in 1847. Both missions had the “Christiansburg mulatto” community, many of which were at least nominal Christians.

European pastors were dispatched “intermittently to the Gold Coast forts from the mid-seventeenth century onward” to convert the people to Christ yet, according to oral tradition this

evangelistic project did not gain roots in Accra until the 1840s even when the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society has been established in James town in 1838 and the Basel Mission Society at *Osu* in 1847. Despite their strenuous efforts to win converts, the Missionaries were disappointed because in the early 1870s after nearly forty years of evangelism, the congregation at James Town was less than one hundred souls. The Basel Mission at *Osu* also experienced difficulties similar to those of the Wesleyans in attracting *Ga* converts. Nonetheless, it was observed that the “Basel project, like its Methodist counterpart... had a profound impact on social change in the colonial city and on indigenous *Ga* readings of state, society and history” – Parker: 2000:155-157. Today the plains of Accra are infiltrated with lots of Christian denominations that seem to make mockery of its hostile beginning. Some of these churches are: the Roman Catholic, the Methodist, the Presbyterian, the Seventh-day Adventists, Jehovah's Witness and many more; not to mention the Pentecostal denominations that are determined and manage to congregate anywhere including school buildings.

From the accounts of the history of education, (the *Ga* like any other community) the people have encountered both literary and non-literary education, and have engaged in the formal and informal tutelage. It is apparent that literary education did not receive an initial welcome by the *Ga*, resulting in a revolt that erupted on the introduction of literacy education. For instance “in 1870, the Basel Mission leapt at an offer made by *La Mants*¹ Male Atsem of a piece of land in the town for a church and school....” This idea met fierce opposition when the *Lakpa Wul4m4* (chief priest) Boi Fio and the devotees of the cult repeatedly pulled down the building works. (Parker 2000:160). Nevertheless, today, there are a number of schools found in the *Ga* community; indicative of the success of the missionaries in establishing formal education. Every

suburb in Accra now has numerous basic schools with about 30 high schools; 18 privately owned and about 12 established by the Ghana government. Among the tertiary institutions found in Accra are the Accra Polytechnic, University of Ghana, Legon, University of Ghana Medical School, Regeant University, Dansoman, and the Methodist and Pentecost Universities at Anyea and Awoshie respectively. In view of the availability of these educational facilities, a greater percentage of the people have received Western education, with some of them holding doctoral degrees in various disciplines. Therefore, Parker's (2000:159) assertion that: "Education (*wolonkw1mo*) and, more specifically, literacy (*wolon lee*) were central to the social identity of the *owula*, the wealthy and influential gentlemen", is now a thing of the past.

Traditional education, however, existed in *Ga* before the arrival of Western education; in which the citizens had adopted a system of tuition comparatively informal and totally non-literary. Among other things, traditional education targets to equip the indigenes, on how to handle both the physical and spiritual problems that may confront them in life. To the people, traditional education prepares them to face life challenges as individuals and also as a group, aiding them to trail their ancestral course of reverential obedience to the gods; to escape undue punishment from them, and thereby receiving blessings. In the political arena for instance, a *Ga* chief is trained on how to govern his subjects, know the importance and consequences of his position as a traditional head and above all, his obligation to observe and enforce the laws of the land. Officials at the chief's court are also trained on their role and duties including the dos and don'ts of the „land".

In traditional health services delivery, the people are educated on how to appeal to medical spirits to cure the afflicted. The ritual specialist and his devotees of the cults of the deities are

taught on how to offer sacrifice, pacify an offended deity, pour libation on various occasions and how to celebrate festivals. In the light of tuition on traditional medicine, Field (1961:121) has observed why specific medicines have to be placed on special stands. She states:

For instance, a pot of medicine to keep off witches must be insulated from the earth – it must not stand on clay or earthen pedestal for witches' power can travel through the earth.

This, and many other lessons on traditional medicine practices are inculcated in the traditional priest to enable him provide effective health treatment in the community. Belief in the presence and power of the gods has made the teaching and implementation of virtues and vices among most of the towns very easy to accomplish. The people are taught how to have a clean moral standing in order to avoid the wrath of the gods. The researcher recalls an incident concerning a friend who accompanied her when she was collecting data on the H4m4w4 Festival at Teshie. In the excitement of the celebration her friend lost her jacket. When the researcher reported the incident to her respondent, she expressed no panic but just said "we will find it." And true to her word she brought it back barely some few minutes that she had gone searching for it. She remarked, "...during the festival nobody steals because of their awareness of the presence of the gods". The people are also taught among other things to be respectful, obedient and hospitable.

Instructions on *Ga* traditional economic activities also endow citizens with knowledge on how to replenish the land for all year bountiful harvest. For instance, it is a taboo in the *Ga* community to fish in the sea on Tuesdays; a custom that helps to preserve and restock fish in the sea to feed the people throughout the year. Other taught occupations include: carpentry, beading, pottery, carving and fishing. Trading is a common occupation in *Ga*, mainly because the people are introduced to it at an early stage in their lives; most probably during infancy.

The rites of passage also provide another opportunity for imparting knowledge to the people. During the celebration of the *Ga* puberty rite, (to be discussed in detail later), the initiate is taught how to take care of herself and her future husband and children, while boys go through training to take up their responsibilities as future bread-winners of their families. Pregnant women learn how to go through successful pregnancies, what to eat and what not, what taboos to adhere to in order to have safe delivery and a healthy baby. The people are also trained on how to prepare dead bodies for burial without any contamination on the living. Obviously, this trend of traditional education offers the *Ga* the opportunity to provide tuition in all aspects of their lives while proving to be ardent observers of *Ga* rules and regulations.

Ga people are generally noted for such productive activities as fishing, salt-making, livestock-raising, crafts and farming. Oral and documentary sources indicate that these economic activities are an inherent trade of the past as recorded by Hinderson-Quartey (2001:28) that:

The evidence of stone hoes discovered in many areas indicates their use on the farms and suggest that agriculture was the prime occupation. The production of pottery and signs of iron foundries demonstrates the beginnings of the chief industries of the area...

He further points out that, "There is evidence that domestication of animals was common probably with poultry, goats, and sheep in their settlements". And today, the situation is not different as *Gas* follow the old tradition. According to *Ga* oral tradition it appears that though the *Ga* settled near the sea, they were not extensively engaged in marine fishing. "Sea fishing as is done today by the *Ga* was introduced by the *Fante*", hence, the trade brought some cultural and economic integration between the *Ga* and *Fante*, and it is still the custom among the *Ga* fishermen to buy „medicine" (*tsofa*) from *Fantes* for their canoes to make good harvest. This

important economic activity has actually helped to sustain the Ghanaian food industry because *Gas* “had, and still have a custom of preserving and restocking fish in the lagoons”. In view of this, sea-fishing is done throughout the year, with the exception of Tuesdays, and brief periods of ritual bans on fishing for specific species of fish such as the sea bream, *tsile* before the annual festival in August. The productive tools used in fishing also showed an improved mode of production, and this is evidenced by the fact that *Gas* sometimes make their own fishing gear. Fishing hooks were either made out of a special type of thorn or carved out of wood called *haatso*; and the canoes used by the *Ga* fisherman were made from dugout timber (Odotei 1995:60, 61).

Another important economic activity in *Ga* is salt-making. Commending this trade, Odotei (:61) writes on the appraisal from several writers concerning the industry, quoting her as writing that:

Several writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, such as Tilleman, Rask, Atkin and Smith commented on the importance of salt produced in Accra. Smith observed that the salt ponds in Accra yielded vast quantities of salt sufficient to supply not only the whole coast but all the ships that trade there.

She commented further that the sources of this salt making were the Kpesi, Sakumo, Kole, Klote, Sango and Motwe lagoons and even though this flourishing industry seemed to have come to an end during the Second World War, salt-making still remains the major trade and a source of livelihood for some *Ga* indigenes .

Farming is another primary economic activity of the *Ga*. These farmers are located around the coastal towns and in the inland village. Oral sources gathered indicated that the *Ga* engaged in intensive farming as mentioned in an earlier paragraph when quoting Hinderson-Quartey. There were farmers who permanently lived and farmed in the villages, as well as those who lived in the

towns but went to stay temporarily in the villages during the planting and harvesting seasons. As eager and industrious as *Gas* are with farming, they are not able to produce much to feed themselves, because of unfavourable climatic conditions (Odotei 1995:62). Field (1961:80) buttresses this point by stating that “The Accra region is the driest area in Southern Ghana with a mean annual rainfall of less than 30 inches”. Consequently, *Ga* oral traditions recount a famine which hit the *Ga* drastically and resulted in the institution of a great festival known as H4m4w4 (Nortey 2008:2).

During the celebration of H4m4w4, the people perform rituals with the view to unveiling the ghosts of their ancestors to participate in the festival. However, due to self-styled irrigation, there is a relative success with farming in the community. Some of the crops grown by *Gas* are cassava, yam, okra, garden eggs, beans, tomatoes, pepper and maize. Millet used to be the staple food of the *Ga*. The gourd of calabash is another crop of importance to them and this was “cultivated extensively in the Accra plains especially in Tema”. According to tradition „Tema” is a corruption of the word “*Toman*” which means „the town of gourds”. These gourds come in different shapes designed to serve specific functions. The globular-shaped fruit with depressed top and bottom (*akpaki*) had three uses. The biggest one was used to store clothes; the medium-sized ones were used to sell cooked foods like *kenkey*; and the smallest ones were designed and decorated for use as jewellery cases by the women (Odotei 1995:63).

Livestock-raising and hunting are some features of the *Ga* economy. The Accra plains are said to be suitable for livestock-raising and Ningo abounds with cattle while La is noted with plain well-watered meadows suitable for cattle pasturage. The trade for the latter is predominantly in cows. Aside cattle, the *Ga* also rear sheep, goats, pig and fowls produced either on a large scale or on

small scale depending on the individual and space available. Hunting expedition for the *Ga* was previously a great supplement of their meat requirement. The Accra plains were noted for plenty of hare which were hunted with clubs. These animals were caught by a team of hunters who manage to succeed in the game by beating the animals to death. (Odotei1995:63). Yet, as noted by the elders, later in time hunters used bullets and fixed them on their jumpers or smocks as shown on page 233. Oral sources support this investigation and confirmed that the Accra plains used to be a thick forest in which abounded plenty games. Some of the remains are the groves which can now be located at La and Nungua, and which contain the shrines of the people's divinities.

Blacksmithing is another lucrative industry among *Gas*. Even though information on *Ga* blacksmiths is scanty, it is believed that *Ga* blacksmiths melted iron from a special type of stone called *opipo*. Hoes, cutlasses, fishing hooks and iron implements were made from this source. Until recently, gold ornaments were not the favourite of the *Gas*; theirs was the wearing of beads of all kinds. Beads were and are very well appreciated, especially the *koli* and *adiagba*, known as the Aggrey beads (Odotei 1995: 63). Women especially the older ones trade in beads; precious jewellery which characterizes all *Ga* ceremonies.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Overview

Investigations on clothing and adornment used throughout the world have received impressive attention by a lot of writers. Prior empirical studies have examined among others the history or origin of clothing, why people wear clothes, psychological as well as the cross –cultural influences of costume design and construction. Undoubtedly any anticipated quality research on clothing can only be better appreciated by comparing and contrasting collected data with existing literature. On this basis, this chapter seeks to review such works in line with the underlying topic, in order to stay focused and also produce a relevant material that can measure up with those standards as well as facilitate future research. The investigation will finally conclude on how these related literature inspired the study. The chapter examines the following headings:

1. The origin of clothing and adornment
2. Reasons for clothing choice and use.
3. Ritual or ceremonial costumes
4. The costumier and clothing
5. The socio-political significance of body art and adornment
6. Imagery in Costume as a means of Cultural expression
7. Colour symbolisms in clothing

2.2 The origin of Clothing and Adornment

The history of clothing is believed to be as old as creation itself. Christians assert that when the first human couple realized they were naked, they made clothes out of fig leaves to cover themselves (Genesis 1:7). The Bible recounts further at Genesis 3:21 that God later gave the couple a long gown made with animal skin. Apparently the need to clothe and adorn the body became functional to human existence as far back as over 6,000 years and to date. Consequently all throughout the world costume has a peculiar history that reflects the culture of the people concerned.

Archaeological studies and writings on clothing and adornment inform readers on how researchers have authenticated the origin of clothing. The accounts of Tortora & Eubank (1989) and Payne (1965) indicate that the use of clothing was first discovered through “prehistoric cave paintings, from the Old stone Age, or Early Paleolithic Period, some 30,000 years ago”. However, Barton (1969:3) mentions that “the actual relics of Egyptian life in 1500 B.C. are more numerous than those of Western European life in 600 A.D.”. And that the Chaldeans, Assyrians, Babylonians, Cretans and Persians were all influenced by Egyptian culture, so even though “Egypt was already spent” before the arrival of the Golden Age of Greece, Egyptian art and learning “colored Greek development”. Hence through Greece and Rome, Egypt influenced the art of Western Europe, and therefore clothing.

According to the above mentioned writers even though these paintings provided scanty information on dressing, they provide archaeological proofs suggesting, however, that people used clothes in the form of “draped skirts, cut and sewn trousers, and a cape-like garment, probably all of which were made from skins”. For instance Tortora & Eubank (1989: 1) have recorded that archeologists arrived at this conclusions based on unearthing needles used for

sewing, bone scrapers for processing skins, and bone devices that were presumed to be used for fastening clothing in sites dating from the same general period (about 30,000 ago years). They stated further that the oldest textile materials also discovered by archeologist date from the 7th millennium B.C. These fabrics were twined, knotted and needle made crafts found in an excavation at Nahal Hermer, Israel. Quoting Mellart (1963), Tortora & Eubank mention that:

What appears to be one of the earliest examples of skill in textile weaving has been found in excavation of Catal Huyuk in Antonia (modern Turkey) where actual woven fabrics dating from 8500 years ago have been found.

Due to the complex nature of these weaving, the archaeologist concluded that this art must have started earlier before the stated date. They suggest that if cloth was made, it was presumed to have been sewn into outfits. However, there were no records of the form of the clothes. In a related report Barton (1969) and Payne (1965) have also recorded in their separate books the earliest record of clothing. They reiterated that due to their belief in life after death, Egyptians buried the dead with their personal belongings, which they might need in the „other world“. Among such items were tools, food, drinks and clothes. Payne (1965:11) indicated that many of the tombs and temples were full of paintings and sculptures that portrayed the Egyptian dress culture. Similarly Barton (1969:8-15) pointed out that the wearing of braided hair, decorative fillets and the use of elaborate makeup existed with the Egyptians before the pre historic period. She indicated and illustrated that the use of wigs was common among the men and women who wore them in “strange colors”, with some decorated with gold ribbons. The women also wore a cone which contained oil perfume on the crown of their heads, while their royals were identified with crowns decorated with royal feathers.

Then too Yarwood (1992), Tortora & Eubank, Barton, and Payne give a chronological summary of clothes and accessories used in the Ancient World since 3000B.C.-A.D.300, from Mesopotamia to present Vietnam; 1964-1974. Clothing elements discussed under the various periods include fabrics, wigs, hairstyles, beads, gold, rings and so on. Interestingly, each of these items is treated with accuracy and precision. The authors draw reader's attention and enthusiasm with pictorial evidence as well as supporting sketches. As a result, Payne (1965.10) does not only establish the asserted information, but also finds it more appropriate to dilate on how some of the costumes are worn. She reports:

One figure from the rowler tomb of the fifth dynasty in the Cairo museum has the overlapping end of his loin skirt rounding out in front with no sharp angles; another has a sharp angular fold on the left side only; on a third there is a half-pyramid extending beyond the body in what seems to be a solid almost architectural structure (fig5).

The figure five in parenthesis indicates that Payne has supported her descriptions with sketches, for better understanding which the present researcher finds very commendable. Unfortunately, however, these extensive works on the origin of clothes used within the stated periods, discussed by the various writers did not report on the origin of West African costumes, let alone that of Ghana.

Nonetheless, the accounts of Clarke (2009), Gardi (2009), Anquanda (1982) Levtzion (1980), Barbot (1723), Ogilby (1670), de Maree (1987/1602) and many others point to the earliest record of the culture of the people living in parts of the West African sub-regions. Among other things some of these archeologists, historians and ethnographers witnessed and reported on clothing and accessories worn between the tenth and seventeenth centuries.

Regarding textiles; archeologist have reported that woven-striped fabrics have existed in some parts of West Africa around the sixth century A.D. Various writers have also emphasized on the origin of strip-woven fabric, tracing it with the Egyptians then to the Roman Kingdom, through the Northern parts of the continent, across the Sahara into the Central, Western and extreme Southern parts of the African continent. Assessing the clothing nature in Mali around the eleventh and eighteenth centuries, Bolland (1992:54) noted that textiles discovered among the skeletal remains in the burial caves proved that the people used cotton, wool, leather and fiber skirts which point to the obvious existence of looms, and fastenings at the time.

In *Woven Beauty. The Art of West African Textiles*, various writers have also examined some clothes associated with Nigerians, Ghanaians, Malians and other African countries. Benhard Gardi (2009:30) for instance also investigates textiles related to the people of Mali, between the tenth and eleventh centuries indicating that hundreds of cotton fiber was found in Tellem burial caves in the Falaises de Bandiagara. It was also presumed that wool fabric and processed „wild silk“ had existed earlier than these dates, with indigo dying attaining a great progression. He continues:

Although we do not know with certainty who actually manufactured these textiles and where – neither whorl nor fragments of loom were found in the caves- we may assume that most of them were produced somewhere nearby. A few fragments were imported probably through the well documented trans-Saharan trade.

To him, the stretch between the two discovery locations point to two probabilities that may have existed a thousand years earlier, thus, (1) two types of looms had existed in West Africa, and (2) yarns were processed from a variety of fibres. He therefore concluded that older clues discovered in the Sahara suggested that weaving in Africa dates back even further in time, and that “a

symmetric analysis of the great rock painting found there with many of them going back as far as the Neolithic age and showing detailed sense of human beings wearing garments is pending”.

Report on the history of textiles in Nigeria by the same book also revealed that although cotton was not very familiar with the people, around the ninth and tenth centuries textiles produced in the *Igbo* territory of eastern Benin was made from plant fiber, and that this same fiber was called *Ufa* in *Igara*. The inhabitants of *Somorika* referred to it as *ebase*, while in *Orupa* it was known as *Okene*. The source of the yarn was the inner bark fibers of a „certain tree” and the usefulness of this product manifested itself in heavy-woven cloths, serving as shrouds or worn to denote status. “Dating back some several hundred years”, another cloth, the *Aso-oke*- meaning a high status cloth- is closely associated with the *Yoruba* of Nigeria. Among their tradition a strip-weave of the cloth “has a cultural and metaphorical significance” that requires a grandmother to present her daughter with a strip of *Aso-oke* to tie her first child; in symbol of literary supporting the newborn baby (Clarke 2009:124).

Around the eighteenth century, another researcher Macdonald George (1969: 54, 55), detected that *Ashantis* used looms that were similar to that of the English. According to him the web from the loom was not more than four inches, and also, cloths were made into variety of designs as well as with bright colours. Further, other tribes like the *Akim* and *Kwahu* territories used looms which were probably borrowed from the *Ashantis*. Their cloths were also made with native dyes, or spun from cotton. Quoting Bodwich, Macdonald indicated:

two dyes only used by the *Ashantis*, red and yellow which obtained from dye woods, and a third, blue, obtained from the leaves of a plant growing about two feet high, which when mixed with their yellow produces a very fine green.

Still on colour discovery, Macdonald claims he found among the *Krobos* “a fourth colour a black dye from a climber called *otatshe*”, which produces rich deep-black dye when pounded and boiled. In addition both the bark and the wood of *odubeng* gave yellow dye while the plant *Akase* produced blue colour. A red dye known as *Tchara* was also in use at the time, and this was obtained from the seeds of the *Tsere* fruit.

The *kente* cloth is a very beautiful and unique piece of artistry adorned by Ghanaians and other nationals, and presumed to have originated with the *Ashantis* and the *Ewes* of Ghana. Reporting on *kente*, Amoako – Attah (2007), Fianu (2007), Ahiagble (2004), Ross (1998) and Asamoah – Yaw (1994) discuss among others the origin, names, meanings and significance of some *kente* motifs, in addition to their colours and symbolisms. The origin of *kente* cloth remains a controversy between two schools of thought. While *Ewes* claim to have initiated it, *Ashantis* also have a strong view that they are the custodians of the art. According to *Ashanti* oral source, *kente* was brought to Kumasi around the 1700, after defeating the people of Techiman who were believed to have acquired it from the Northern part of Ivory Coast. Another myth reported by these writers suggest that two *Ashanti* hunters observed and learnt it from the way a spider designs its web; like the basket (*kenten*), therefore assuming the name *kente*.

Kente is a woven material of multiple colours used for ceremonial occasions and each pattern has a name and a message that it conveys. It is a century – old tradition of strip weaving very famous because of its association with royalty and the rites of passage. Writing about Ghana's *kente* and *Adinkra*, Fianu (2007:13- 28) expands among other topics, the names and meanings of some *kente* motifs and how these philosophies are proverbial in building hope and confidence in wearers.

In a related account, Asamoah – Yaw (1994:4-6) mentions that *kente* is made with two or several colour combinations, woven in geometric or pictogram shapes, originally created for *Ashanti* chiefs for ceremonial occasions. The cloth in its initial stages was made in black and white cotton yarn in basic patterns called *Ahwepan*. Impressively, discoveries made later in the years provided colourful threads like yellow or gold and red processed from the *Dua-Sika* and *Kasie* trees respectively, resulting in colourful *kente* cloths with intricate patterns that have given the cloth its honourable status on the local scene and the international publicity. As part of its import, the initial intention of weavers was to signal people (subjects) about the mood or social prominence of users (mostly royals); such that the *Abrempong – ntoma* used during festive occasions easily identified *Ashanti* paramount chiefs, while the *Kyemea kente* was reserved for queen mothers.

Around the nineteenth century when Britain imposed their form of governance on *Ashantis*, their indigenous traditions existed alongside a “new bourgeois class of local inhabitants” whose desire for excellence marched that of their foreign master, and the traditional rulers. These group of people therefore started using the *kente* cloth. The African market was then onwards introduced to silk scarfs brought by the European merchants. Weavers loosened the fabric and used the silk in designing a type of *kente* cloth known as *Sirikye-kente*. With this new dimension therefore, (before the First World War, around 1914) the fine-cotton *kente* cloth co-existed with that of the silk and rayon, or a combination of the two, obtained from the Chinese and the Indian merchants.

The various writers have indicated that the beautiful colours such as gold, green, blue, white, purple, orange etc, and the numerous designs with which the *kente* cloth is presently made, have special symbolic messages that they communicate. The cloths are associated with legends or

philosophies. For instance, the *Adjwina – asa kente* properly portray the exhaustion or end of all creativity, maintaining that creative piece is the best ever made therefore second to none. A *kente* cloth with the sun motif (*Owia*) also symbolizes life giving energy, cosmic power, divine power, advancement and progress while the zigzag pattern (*Nkyimkyim*), indicates prudence, balance and vigilance in pursuit of a successful life. Asamoah-Yaw (1994:39) reports that in the past the *Abusua–ye-dom kente* cloth was worn by *Ashanti* kingmakers, agitating for the removal of a stubborn chief. Other cloths with similar characteristics include: *1mma da* (never seen its likeness before), *Sika Futro* (gold – dust or as precious as gold dust) and *Fathia fata* Nkrumah (Ghana's first president Nkrumah deserves his wife Fatia). Inferring, the couple is a good match (Amoako-Attah 2007:9-23; Asamoah-Yaw 1994: 38-43).

Concerning *Ewes* hold on the origin of the *kente* cloth, as already been noted, Ahiagble reports that *Ewes* were the first people to bring the art from Notsie in Togo or probably from an earlier site. And from that period down to the present; “within *Ewe* culture, *kente* has thus become a visual presentation of history, oral literature, philosophy, moral principles, religious beliefs and rules of social conduct”. To *Ewes*, far back into history the *Ashantis* held the ancestors of *Adotime* captives of war, among which were skilful weavers. In order to break the language barrier and be able to teach *Ashantis* the craft, the *Ewe* employed basic *Ewe* words such as *kee* (to press the thread in order to create the shed) and *tee* (which means using the reed to press the weft yarn and make it compact). The original *Ewe* name for *kente*, *Agbamevo*, derived from two words: *agba* (loom) and *avo* (cloth) was therefore replaced with *kee* and *tee* which were put together as *keetee* or *kente*. The uniqueness of the *Ewe kente* is confirmed by its warp and weft. And also by the symbolic or abstract motifs that are woven unto the cloth. Similar to the social

classification of the *Ashanti kente*, the *Ewe* ones are worn with pride as well as “bodily adornment and object of unity associated with rites of passage and other rituals”; often used during the rites for the parents of newborn twins, puberty rites, marriage ceremonies and ordination of priest/priestesses. For example, to honour the *Ewe* girl, she is adorned with the *agble kente* cloth when she sees her first menstruation (Ahiagble 2004:42). The *Ewe kente* is also associated with names and meanings such as *Akpedo* (unity or togetherness), *Fiawoyome*; which means the chiefs retinue, and refers to the ability of the chief to protect and see to the survival and continuity of the community. The *Togodo* or *Adanuvo* shown on page 242, has “twenty-four small squares”, with each symbolically referring to the twenty-four days used by their ancestors to avoid the pursuit of King Agorkoli at Notsie in Togo- during their migration to other parts of the Volta Region. The various symbols in the cloth suggest that even as people are entangled with the numerous challenges in life, balance can be sought through „vigilance and prudence“. Some of these symbols include: butterfly, chameleon, comb, crocodiles joined at the back, and many others (Ahiagble: 49-69).

In *Wrapped in Pride: Ghanaian Kente and American Identity*, Ross (1998) similarly describes the *kente* cloth of *Ashantis* and that of *Ewes* as the “best known of all African Textiles ... so renowned internationally and admired in many parts of the world”. Tracing its origin to the Gold Coast of West Africa, the writer indicates that this special cloth was traditionally used by men as toga whilst their women wore it “as an upper and lower wrapper”. Yet over the past forty years, apart from its social functions especially in royal regalia and other rites (as has already been digested by the previous writers) *kente* has been prominent in academia, and Ross describes how in the USA academic gowns are designed in *kente* cloth or with *kente* strips to show class distinction. In a similar vein religious leaders such as bishops and other church officials wear

robes decorated with *kente* cloths, in accordance with their religious obligations and positions. Hats, ties, shoes, slippers, bags, book covers, ornaments, band-aids, balloons and greeting cards are also designed with *kente* and marketed at home and abroad. Hence, its usage both religious and profane, is not seen with aesthetic appeals only but also the manner it “evoke and celebrate a shared cultural heritage bridging nations ... [because] *kente* remains the textile of choice for African Americans on many occasions that foreground issues of heritage and achievement” (Ross 1998:19).

The *adinkra* cloth which is also worn by Ghanaians is believed to originate from *Ashanti*. According to Fianu (2007) *Adinkra* which literally means to bid -fare - well is an old traditional art form dating back to over 150 years. Its origin, according to oral tradition is from Gyaman, Cote d'Ivoire. To this ascertainment, Amoako - Attah (2007:24) reiterated that when *Ashantis* defeated the people of Gyaman (who are believed to be partly from Brong Ahafo, Ghana, and also from Cote d'Ivoire), they took with them the stool of their chief, Kofi Adinkra, together with some craftsmen. *Ashantis* claim they discovered the *adinkra* symbols from the stool of the chief, hence its name. Both writers have reported that the *adinkra* cloth comes in different forms such as the *Kuntunkuni*, *Nwɔmu* (Embroidery) and *Ntiamu* (Stamping), which are made in dark colours such as red and black used for funerals, as well as bright ones like white and blue reserved for happy occasions.

Similar to the *kente*, the *adinkra* cloth conveys messages in symbols such as *Gye Nyame* (except God), *Sankɔfa* (return and possess it or return to your roots) and *Nyame bewu ansa na mawu* (I will die only when God ceases to exist). There are others such as *Akokɔbatan nan tia ba, na enkum ba* (the hen steps on its chick but does not kill it), *Binnkabi* - Do not bite the other/ Do not

cheat your neighbor- propagates peace, unity and friendliness. *Matemasie* (I have heard and kept it) denotes deciphering knowledge or wisdom and preserving it in your head, whilst *Owuo-atwedee baakommfo*, portrays the inevitability of death. The one with *Akofona* motiff (state ceremonial sword) which is a symbol of authority is used by a chief during his swearing in at his ordination. All these symbols are embedded in *Akan* beliefs to establish confidence in their traditional leaders, to unify their citizens and also strengthen the belief in the cult of their ancestors and life after death (Amoako-Attah 2007:28-56; Fianu 2007: 38-49).

Oral tradition on textiles of *Gas* mentions that *Gas* patronized the *kyenkyen* cloth together with *l4n* (raffia fibre), *nyanyara* leaf (*Momordica charantia*), *kpekpe* and *oloobo*. Since the raffia and the *nyanyara* are plant fibres, their origin can be traced to *Gas* earliest discoveries and awareness on clothing; probably before the pre-historic period. The *kpekpe* and *oloobo* cloths are however, current and according to some *Ga* elders, thier origin may point to the 1800s.

The *l4n* is a long green grass which is collected and dried to obtain a brownish colour. It can be either used in its brownish state or dyed according to its ritual purpose, and mostly worn by priests and priestesses; especially the *Tigare* priest and priestess who use it as a skirt. Chiefs, *otofo* initiates and some other *Gas* may be required by tradition to wear a string or two of the *l4n* as necklace, bracelet or anklet (See pg126).

The *nyanyara* leaf is a creeping plant collected and designed in its green state to suit a religious purpose. It is believed to have the ability to cleanse, protect and empower users and thus reserved for *Ga* traditional leaders such as chief priests, chiefs, priests/priestess and used during ceremonial occasions such as durbars, coronations, festivals, and sometimes for healing (Nortey

2008:146). With such people of rank the fiber is created as bead and worn as a necklace, but in very few instances (to be discussed later) *nyanyara* can be worn around the waist. Until recently *nyanyara* was solely connected with such functions, but today some *Ga* traditional groups such as dancers and musicians also wear the *nyanyara* necklace during performance.

Kpekpe is a sack cloth, brown in colour and used in the olden days to make clothes. This tradition was not uncommon to the other Gold Coasters. Royals and commoners (males, females and children) all used the *kpekpe*; however, their position and status were identified by factors such as style, length and volume of their respective dress.

The *oloobo* – shown on page 242- is a woven cloth with an eagle motif that explains the alertness and care of the bird in relation to the wearer. Some *Ga* elders noted that even though all *Gas* may use the cloth, its significance and ritual import is mostly observed among priests and priestesses. In this regard, after the training period the priest or priestess is customarily obliged to present himself/herself to the chief (to greet him), and the only material used is the *oloobo* cloth which can be sewn into a long dress in the case of the priestess, and a jumper plus togas or a big loin cloth and jumper when a priest is the focus.

Commenting on the earliest forms of dressing, Levtzion (1980) established that the ancient kingdom of Ghana was believed to have developed alongside small states within the Guinea Coast, and that ancient Ghana and Mali were in the Sahel and Sudanic Savannah respectively. Also the *Mossi* who comprised both the *Dagomba* states in the Guinea Savannah and *Akan* states developed within the same period. The pivots of this early civilization: Ghana, Mali and Songhai flourished through trade and commerce, technology, education and the arts- which included clothing and adornment. Accordingly, these activities brought with them interactions and inter-

empire transactions, hence, influences in art and culture. The trans-Saharan trade in 1145, for instance brought to Bilad al-Sudan camels loaded with rich merchandise of copper, red and other colours, garments, woolen cloths, turbans, aprons, assorted beads made of glass, shell or stone, as well as spices and perfumes. Around 1532, dozens of ships visited Elmina and took with them over “400 kilograms of gold each year to Lisbon. The use of skins as costume was also identified with the Sudanese people of Ghana around the tenth century, but later on around the eleventh century even commoners in Ghana wore robes made with cotton, silk, or brocade. Levtzion emphasizes that “only the king and the crown prince had the right to wear sewn clothes according to the Muslims fashion” (Levtzion 1980: 134-180).

To Phillips (1995:341), therefore the dressings of the West African sub-regions were mostly affected by Islamic costumes such as talisman, traditional smocks and adornments. It can therefore be deduced that the mode of dressing for present Ghana can be traced with towns and communities who lived along the Guinea Coast before the Europeans surfaced.

In their study Sharman and Wilson (1978:145) asset that around the fourteenth century a Malian King, Mansa Musa travelled to Mecca with about twelve thousand young slaves wearing tunics made of brocade and silk. These writers further disclosed that there was a cloth industry in Western Sudan which was presumed to have been established between the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. And that the seventeenth century recorded twenty-six tailoring shops, with about fifty to hundred trainers in Timbuktu. Also when the Portuguese came to the Guinea Coast around the fourteenth century they established a factory in Arguim and traded in cloths, houses, slaves, skins and gold dust. Later in 1471 the Portuguese established trade links with the gold portions of the „Akan forest“ which has now been identified as the Republic of Ghana and Ivory Coast.

The clothing culture of the „negroes" around the sixteenth century was also recorded by some of the early European traders and travelers to the Guinea Coast such as Barbot (1723); Ogilby (1670); de Marees (1787/1602). Barbot commented on the dressing and jewellery of the people by indicating that:

... there is one kind of dress which is very common among both the great and the small, the rich and the poor; and this is always to wear a cloth (pagne) around the waist, a cloth which passes between the thighs and whose ends hang down to the ground, behind and before, or in some instances only to the knees. This is worn in the house or when travelling. But when

they go to the streets, they take a length of Leyden, serge or... perpetuana, 2 - 3 ells in length, which they pass around neck, above and below the shoulders, like a mantle, and they take a spear (*assegaye*) or a stick in their hand

Nobles and merchants, however, were distinguished with larger and rich materials such as China Satin, Taffetas, or coloured Indian cloth worn as a mantle, to isolate them from the commoners. Both the men and women were also noted for their various hair fashions. Whiles some kept a complete shave and left a „cross the size of a thumb", others preferred a circle or several circles. Some of them also desired to plait their hair and arrange them in curl-papers. Hats were also in vogue at the time, and were either borrowed from the Whites or were locally made from straw or of goatskin, or hide of dogs. Some of the hats were decorated with glass trinkets, goat's horns or bark of "fetish trees", and the affluent in the society enriched theirs with pieces of gold or with monkey tail. Slaves, however, were forbidden from covering their heads.

Barbot further discovered adornment among the people and emphasized that their necks, legs, and even feet were adorned with: "many strings of glass beads, coral and Venetian *rassade* (coloured glass beads) [with some of them] intermixed with an abundance of their small gold ornaments". Out of the elephant tusks brought from Ivory Coast or the interior, the people made

for themselves arm and leg bracelets called *manilas* which were worn in bundles of threes or fours on each leg. Most of their ornaments were made of gold “or of contade Terre”; a bluestone from Benin which was equally expensive as gold (Hair et.al.1992:493-495).

Ogilby (1670) specified costumes of some countries, indicating that the Tunisian women wore black gowns with wide sleeves and covered their front with a mantle of the same colour, or a blue colour fastened around their necks. Their ears, fingers, legs and ankles were adorned with silver. The maids painted their faces, breast, arms, and hands. Ironically, the more noble women were rather content with their natural colour; however, they sometimes mixed Hen Dungs, saffron and colour to make a little round beauty-spot in the centre of their cheeks, plus a triangle between their brows, and an olive-leaf, or a long oval upon their knees.

The men on the other hand wore a piece of cloth hanging from the breast down to the knees, with the rest of the body naked. They tied up their hair adorning it “with animal teeth and small pieces of coral or glafs, over which they lightly put a fine hair-cloth or *lown* to appear the fairer”. Further, they pierced their foreheads, cheeks, thumbs, and calve of their legs; making various designs with the point of a needle. To make these marks more visible and attractive a black powder was thrown on them. And instead of more costly jewels they preferred wooden rings. The men also wore a type of headdress, a kind of shaft, which hangs partly in front and behind. The people were not used to elaborate clothes and rich materials such as, linen, except a “ramnant of 4 or 5 yds of cloth” worn over the shoulder and under the arms. Their legs were not ornamented and they were also barefoot.

He further reiterated that the people in Kandina village in Kenya only used a four-quarter cotton cloth which they bind under their arms and cast over one shoulder, leaving the rest to hang down to their feet. The nobles used a white wide-sleeved shirt that falls below the knee. It had an added cloak which was worn over it like a petticoat. The women wore only one cloth “about their middles” that tappers down their knees; however during outings or when they go “abroad” they throw another cloth over their heads, yet, generally both the old and the young go about naked to the waist and walks barefoot. Ogilby mentions, Sanutus, as stating that: “they go most of them quite naked, with a Goats Tail only before their Privacies, or a clean clout; but address withal, that people of account wear shirts of cotton, and over that another cloth, cast over the body in such a manner, that one end of it trails along the ground”.

The people of Mangaba, Mozambique, as noted by Ogilby also have great desire to shaving their hair. Their women used red, blue or yellow hand-woven girdles in which they hang their knives, purses, keys and ornaments. Ironically, they wear clothes in the house and instead „lay off this garment” when they go out. (Ogilby 1670:348)

de Marees (1987/1602) also echoes and complements reports of the previous writers and addresses costumes used by men, women, nobles and fishermen. He, however, mentions that paints or dyes of various colours were applied to thier hats, and in line with the adornment of the women added:

Around their arms they wear ivory bracelets, three or four on one arm. They cut these bracelets round and flat, stripped with lines and crosses... A round beads or Madrigetten of diverse the necks they hang a string of colours.

One major occupation of the people was fishing and during such expedition they tie a small piece of linen or woolen cloth around their body and between their legs to cover their private parts, without leaving some in front or behind. After fishing they remove their clothes and rob their bodies with palm oil or animal fat; which was intended to beautify them as well as protect them from insect bites (de Marees 1987:32-35).

Bredwa-Mensah's historical-archaeological investigations at the Fredriksgave Plantation on slavery and plantation life on a Nineteenth Century Danish plantation on the Gold Coast revealed among other things that, the people used assorted beads in the form of glass, prosser moulded, mandrel pressed, monochrome, drawn and polychrome drawn, in addition to buttons made of brass, porcelain and bone (Bredwa-Mensah 2002:191-196).

In *Rediscovering Ghana's Past*, Anquandah also discovers that one obvious factor that promoted urbanization and the integration of states during the Middle Iron Age in Ghana, was mineral exploitation. Traditional ancient gold mining works were identified with towns such as Jinjini and Chemraso in Domaa Ahenkro, Jameskrom and Jeda-Adanse villages and towns. Some of these sites revealed implements used in the gold industry such as crucibles for melting gold, iron hoes for digging as well as gold weights and other iron implements. It is presumed that this discovery may have happened around the early sixteenth century because according to Anquandah, within this period one writer, Duarte Pacheco Pereira, reported the existence of the gold trade of the Etsi, Abrem and Akani.

However, excavations and radiocarbon dates from Bono Manso show that by the fourteenth century there were already in existence large villages or urban sites in Brong *Ahafo*. Which point

to the fact that these discoveries may have existed around the latter date. Added to this, oral tradition indicates that between the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, at *Ayawaso* the then capital of Greater Accra, “the nuclear settlements of the *Ga*-speaking people” were mining and exporting alluvial gold before A.D. 1600. Moreover other industries were operating at the time; which includes salt, fish, textile and ivory (Anquandah1982:69).

2.3 Reasons for Clothing Choice and Use

Psychologist and sociologist have tried to identify what motivates people to wear clothes. The basic reasons arrived at was: for protection, to denote status, out of modesty and for decoration. However, Tortora & Eubank (1989:1) have argued that of these four reasons that of modesty does not seem to be generally accepted because “... what constitutes modesty differs remarkably from society to society, and what is modest in one part of the world is immodest in another”. Accordingly Barton (1969) has observed that the social functions of clothing are for: gender differentiation; designate occupation; rank; social/ economic status, and for protection.

Clothing helps in gender differentiation. Almost all the writers have stated in their various reports that one universally underlined aspect of dress in most societies throughout the world is that, clothing for men and women should be different. Pointing out why they differ on this view, Tortora and Eubank believe that there are no universal specifications on clothes for men and women. The differences in clothes for both sexes are determined by the cultural “views of the social roles appropriate to each sex”. Hence understanding the role of clothes in gender –related situations require adequate knowledge or research on the difference sexes within a specified cultural context. For instance Tortora & Eubank (1989:2) mention:

For many hundreds of years in western civilization skirts were designated as feminine dress; breeches or trousers as male dress. In some eastern countries the reverse was true; skirts were the male costume while bifurcated garments, a sort of „haven pants“ belonged to women.

This observation on gender and dressing by these two schools of thought help costume historians and researchers to pay particular attention on these diverging views in order to draw the appropriate line in their investigation.

One of the various means of interpreting a person's occupation is the way he or she dresses. In effect Steegstra (2005), Yarwood (1992), Tortora & Eubank (1989) educate readers on how a prescribed uniform or a particular style of dress is used to this effect. According to them lawyers, security services, fire fighters, nurses, some religious bodies and many other professions dress to identity them as members of a particular occupation.

The use of clothes has also helped to communicate a people's social and economic status. As a result Barton (1989), Opoku (1978), Kyeremateng (1965), Field (1961) and have stated that Africans chiefs, queen mothers and some ritual experts dress to portray their position in the society. These high officials are usually distinguished with rich clothes and unique styles not used by the ordinary citizen. To Kyeremateng (1965: 67) “...the uniqueness of the [Asantehenes] *kente* lies not only in the artistry of its manufacture but also in the manner in which it is worn and the royal dignity it confers on the wearer”. He stated further that in the past the *Ashanti* social tradition gave the *Ashantehene* the sole right to wear a specified width of the *nkyeretire* clothe. The quality, design and colours of the king's *kente* cloth must also prove his economic strength among his subjects. For instance to proof his economic viability the *Asantehene* is mostly dressed in gold or yellow colours. His social prominence is also identified

by the use of restricted designs made by special weavers. Barton (1969: 80) hold a similar view and has reported that the social status of the Roman emperors or generals around 500 BC – AD 400, was observed by wearing the paludamentum; a big white or purple cloak.

Clothing has further functioned as a protective element worn against physical and spiritual attack. According to Labi (2002), Bame (1991), Sarpong (1974), Payne (1965), Antubam (1963) and Rattary (1959), for fear of being haunted by evil spirits, people wear all kinds of protective clothes to prevent spiritual attack. The writers indicated that protective items such as cowries, strings, wire and talisman are worn as wristlets, leg bands, necklaces, and waist bands. In their respective books these elements are treated in correspondence with their properties, how and when worn, thier colour/s and respective symbolic interpretations.

In line with the aforementioned, Payne (1965:4) has recorded that: “American Indian medicine men strengthened their position in the tribe by painting their bodies, wearing special garments and accessories, and carrying bundles of objects containing magical properties”. Similarly Sarpong (1974:85) mentioned that to avoid spiritual attack from witches, magicians, sorcerers and other evil powers, a pregnant woman may protect herself and the fetus by wearing talisman around her waist or amulets which she may wear around her waist. In the light of clothes which are worn to prevent physical harm, Labi (2002: 94) mentions that in the past -during war- *Fante Asafo* companies wore helmets to protect them from the bullets of their enemies.

2.4 Ritual or Ceremonial Clothes

One distinct feature of clothing is to help differentiate ceremonial costumes from those of everyday life. Hence throughout the world clothes used for naming, initiation, marriage, burial,

funeral and some special occasions are defined. Steegstra (2005), Beckwith & Fisher (2002), Schildkrout & Keim (1990), Kyerematen (1964) Field (1961) and Rattary (1959) draw reader's attention to some African ceremonial clothes. These writers have expanded on fabric, the wearer, the period worn, the ritual importance of the clothes as well as colours and what they represent. Naming ceremonies in most African countries have required special clothing. Reporting on ceremonial dress used for naming, Field (1961:173) have stated that among the *Ga* of Ghana, white clothes are used by the parents of the child, the family members and well wishers. The baby, however, is nude.

It was also the practice of the *Akan* in Ghana to give a child its first cloth made with *baha* fibre the day it was born. Investigating the birth and naming of this ethnic group, Rattary (1959:55- 68) gives a comprehensive analysis of the rite and stated that on the eighth day on which the child is named, the *baha* is removed and replaced with its first cloth. This dress, in addition with some cloths for the mother, is presented by the father of the child to be used for the naming ceremony. Surprisingly, Rattary did not provide readers with details of the cloth such as colour and style. Instead in his description the writer used phrases like: "the infant [is] given a new cloth" and the mother [is] dressed in her best attire..." Even though Rattary was specific on the white clay smeared on the shoulders, breast and arms of the mother, her clothes and accessories did not receive the same attention. Again readers are not educated on the clothing of the ritual experts, family members as well as the well wishers. Though very accurate and educative, the present researcher finds this study on naming among *Akans* lacking costume analysis and interpretation.

Initiation as a transition from childhood to adulthood is also celebrated with specific dressing. Female initiation and the required ritual wears used in Ghana have been addressed by writers like

Steegstra (2005), Opoku (1978), Kilson (1974), Field (1961) and Rattary (1959). Rattary (1959:69-75) has reported on the *Brakor* of the *Akans* in Ghana in line with the different stages of clothing and adornment. He describes clothing and its ritual importance; why and how costumes are used from the beginning of the rite; emphasizing the need for changing costume till the whole ceremony is over.

For this same reason Field (1961: 185-195) also deliberates on the *otofo* custom of the *Ga* people. Her study establishes the different ritual wears of all the *Ga* towns that celebrate the rite. She recounts the use of cloth and how they are worn, the importance of accompanied jewellery and body decorations, as well as footwear. Thus, clothing components customarily needed to perform the *otofo* custom is treated in detail from the commencement of the rite until the last day. For instance at the preparative stages when the girls are confined, the initiates only wear a piece of red loin cloth between their thighs with a piece hanging at the back. On the final day when the *otofo* girls are shown to the public, they are dressed in elaborate and colourful costumes such as velvet or *kente* cloth. They are adorned with precious and expensive beads to signify the wealth of their family and to portray their maturity as prospective marriage partners.

Another well acknowledged initiation rite in Ghana similar to the *otofo* is the *Dipo* custom of the *Krobos*. On this subject, Steegstra has provided a systematic study of events. Her approach is very rich from a historical and anthropological stands point and gives readers insight into the relevance of clothing and adornment and how these items form an integral part of the custom. Steegstra (2005: 166) reports on the different periods within the rite and their related costume. For example she explains the clothing of the ritual expert who performs the *dipo* for the girls thus:

A priest can be recognized by the white calico (*klala*) he wears like a toga, covering one shoulder. The colour white symbolizes purity and blessing. The priestesses usually wear a single large piece of white calico as a waist cloth and often another cloth which they tie above their breast, plus a third piece as headgear. The men also tie a piece of calico around their head when they have not been fully ordained yet as priests, or when they are assistants to priests.

She further mentions that the officiating priest wears a conical hat, (*k4mipee*). This hat is made from either the *s4ni* or the *k4mi* fiber and only worn by senior priests. Due to its religious importance a priest has to be ritually clean before he can wear the hat. Moreover, Steegstra has provided pictorial records of all the costumes of the *dipo* girls as well as some of the ritualists. Readers also will observe that Steegstra's book is very educative and fascinating because she does not only describe the clothes, but she also uses it to establish colour and its relevance, rank, sex and occupation. One exciting aspect of Steegstra's investigation that this present researcher also finds commendable is the writer's means of providing botanical names for all the material fibers. To anyone who would want to examine the *Dipo* custom, this researcher will not hesitate to recommend Steegstra's book.

Marriage ceremonies the world over have attracted prescribed dressing. In their research on African clothes, Bechwith & Fisher (2002) dilate on some ceremonial clothes used in countries such as Ghana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ivory Coast, Togo, Mali, Namibia, Senegal and Nigeria. The writers have dealt with a spectrum of tribal ceremonies – baby naming, initiations, weddings, harvest blessings, coronation, healing exhortations, and funerals. They manage to take readers on an ethnic travel through the beautiful and symbolic costumes of each of these countries. Among these extensive and exquisite works, very commendable is these writer's report on the marriage rites of the people of Ndebele, Pretoria, South Africa. They stated that prior to her marriage the

Ndebele bride is dressed in beaded leg and waist hoop and a stiff maiden's apron (shown on page 130) which indicates she is available for marriage. The hoop (*golwani*) is made from hanks of twisted grass wrapped with strands of glass beads. The apron is known as *ipepetu*. It has a square dimension and its purpose is to „insure chastity". These ritual clothes are worn only by girls who have fulfilled their initiation rite into womanhood. The writers finally concluded that, when the wedding ceremony is over the bride is given a nuptial apron, *lipotu*, and the “five- paneled apron, *ijogolo*, which is reserved for women who have completed the marriage cycle by bearing children”. They stated further that (as shown on page 130), in Kenya a *Turkana* man's beaded headband and painted clay hair bun portrays him as an eligible marriage mate (Bechwith & Fisher 2002:186).

Funeral clothes used in most countries have also gained recognition by a lot of writers (Sarpong 1994; Foster 1995; Antubam 1963 and Evans 1950). Quoting Rosencranz, Foster (1995:23) observed that the use of black for mourning, though, first discovered in France during the reign of Philip of Fair, was probably copied from Spain. And that the Egyptians used yellow as in withered leaves and grey was worn by the Ethiopians during mourning. Whilst the women in Rome used white to represent purity, their men wore black to signify incorruptible. Evans (1950:44) has also stated that when Charles VIII of France died in 1515 the Queen introduced the use of black cloth in place of white. Foster (1995:24-25) mentioned further that during the nineteenth century, widows clothed themselves from head to toe in „bombazine and crepe". They covered their faces with the flowing veils that were attached to their small crepe bonnets, and wore handkerchiefs and gloves that upheld the funeral message. The widows were also obliged by custom to refrain from wearing any bright costume until after one year. The writer again

stated that in America, close relative of the deceased wear the appropriate mourning dress during funeral, but they will return to their normal clothes the very next day. Thier accounts again revealed that Americans, Romans, French, Egyptians and Ethiopians have mourning costumes with symbolic interpretations.

In related accounts Bame (1991), Opoku (1978), Antubam (1963) and Rattary (1959) assert that Ghanaians have special clothes to celebrate the death and funeral of the deceased. And that *Akans* have common mourning clothes which include *Kɔbene*, *Brisi* and *Kuntunkuni*, used in relation to specific deaths and funerals of close relatives. People who bathe the corpse also protect themselves against the *sasa* of the dead by wearing strips of cloth of the deceased. These strips are worn around the head, neck, wrist and waist. White clothes with little spots of black are used during the funeral of the old, as well as (*sodoɔ*) parents who have lost a child for the first time. Wearing such clothes during funeral denotes victory over death and the use of *Kɔbene* shows the gravity of the loss (Rattary 1959:153). Further, Rattary (:171-176) describes the customary clothing components of an *Akan* widow. His narration begins with the widow's clothes worn on the day her husband dies till the end of the mourning period- which may take a whole year. For instance the writer draws readers attention to the type of protective clothes used by the widow, how they are worn, parts of the body adorned as well as their ritual significance. His findings reveal- on page 145- that to protect a widow from the *sasa* of her late spouse:

Wreaths of a plant the *Ashanti* call *asuani* are passed over the shoulders and crossed, passing under the arms; similar wreaths are worn on the head... They are stripped to the waist and are wearing skirts of a russet brown *Kuntunkuni*. Above the elbow joints are bound strands of *edowa* (palm fibre) and as they dance these float behind „Had we wings we would fly to him was the interpretation given to these streamers.

A similar account by Bame (1991:136) covers the mourning costume of the Hottentots of Namibia in South Africa. It is reported that as part of their death-related ceremonies performed some weeks after the death of a person, “his relatives regularly visit [the deceased]s] grave site in mourning, nude, to pray to his ghost”. The present researcher finds this information very valuable because the idea of nudity as a clothing culture seems to attract some debate among some scholars (See also Bonfante 1989:543-570).

Forster (1995) and Marmon -Halm (2001) have also indicated in their separate thesis the different types of mourning clothes and the symbolic impressions each cloth conveys. Whilst Forster relates the different *Akan* mourning clothes, their interpretation in relation to colour, and wearers, Marmon-Halm has reported on the *Ewesiado* used among *Ashanti* widows. The latter has described the construction of the *Ewesiado* with the various processing stages such as designing, modeling, casting and finishing.

Commenting on the artistic and other cultural aspects of the H4m4w4 festival of Accra, Nortey (2008) describes among other things hairstyles, clothes, body marks and body designs used by the chief priest and priestess. Details in the thesis impressively include the design, religious implication and colour, however, mention is not made of costumes of priests, chiefs, queen-mothers and other courtiers who were obviously present.

2.5 Clothes, Adornment and the Costumier

The costumier or costume designer is a person in the theatre who researches into the performer's world to design appropriate clothes for a production. To this end Wilson (2001), Cohen (2000) and Lurie (1981) discuss how costume as a silent language help to reveal the psychological,

emotional and cultural stance, as well as the geographical location and ethnic background of every individual. Therefore in the theatre, Wilson (2001:361) expects the costume designer to produce clothing and adornment that will inform the audience about the:

... historical period of the play and the local in which it occurs;
help establish the style of a production; indicate the nature of
individual characters or group in a play; where appropriate symbolically
convey the significance of individual characters or
the theme of the play; and indicate the geographical location of
each individual: their religion, ethnicity, occupation and status in life.

To successfully accomplish this, it is recommended that the costumier should read the play or script to reveal every aspect of the life of the character. As a result Cohen (2000: 135) has stated that a production of *Julius Caesar* would be thoroughly investigated to re-create the clothing worn in Rome in the first century. A. D. A *Hamlet* and a *Romeo and Juliet* must also be designed to reflect the clothes of Medieval Denmark and Renaissance Verona respectively. Such extensive research helps the designer to provide sketches of the costumes and also attach swatches of material which will reveal the texture and colour of fabrics to be used for the individual character (See also Wilson 2001: 369).

Commenting on abstract ideas and symbolic characters, Wilson (:365) again advice costume designers to create costumes with which their audience can readily or easily identify. He has noted that special costumes are needed to portray abstract ideas or represent fanciful creatures. In effect the costume designer must create the kind of costume which easily identifies itself with the exact imaginative and symbolic qualities that suggest ideas. For instance an outfit of an animal skin indicates a beastly character and a costume made with metallic fabric can convey an adamant trait or “a hard, mechanical quality”.

Further, Sieber & Herreman (2000), Barbier (1988) Frings (1999), Gold (1978) and Doten & Boulard (1939) examine the costume designer's resources and mention among the elements: line, shape, silhouette, colour, fabric and accessories and how these enhance both the creative and productive processes. They have also defined the different kinds of makeup and how their application highlights the psychological disposition of wearers; indicating ceremonial and illustrative functions.

This school of thought moreover, dilates on how to make all kinds of costumes in the theatre. Their illustrations cover: pattern development, alterations, fabric dying and painting, wigs, hats, footwear, hairstyles and accessories. Sieber & Herreman (2000:55) for instance discuss hair in African Art and culture, focusing on the variety of coiffures worn by peoples throughout the African continent. In this study readers get a glimpse of the different styles of hair do, hair treatment, the political and social functions of hairstyles and their ritual significance. They demonstrate construction techniques such as using glue, clay and papie mache in building costumes. This present researcher appreciated these works because they contribute immensely to costume design and construction and provide a reliable guide when developing costumes for all productions; on stage, in video or in film.

2.6 The Socio-Political significance of Body art and Adornment

Body art and adornments have been an integral part of the dress tradition. They are used for social, political and religious purposes, playing important and symbolic roles in recognizing systems of meaning within a cultural context. Body adornments have been identified with the use of makeup, ornaments like gold, silver, bronze and beads. These elements have been explored by

Wilson (2003) Ross (2002), Schildkrout & Keim (1990), Kyerematen (1964), Opoku (1978) Field (1961) and Antubam (1963). These writers have recounted the social gratification and the eminent role of adornment. One commendable investigation on bead making in Ghana by Wilson for instance educates readers on types of beads and their cultural importance. She reported on the ritual significance of beads and explained for instance that among the *Manya Krobo's* of Ghana, a queen mother is selected by (a ritualist) putting a string of *Koli* beads on the head of the candidate.

Similarly writers like Opoku (1978), Rattary (1959) and Field (1961) have indicated that chiefs, priests, priestesses, initiates and mourners wear beads to portray their status, a transitional stage in life or to show grief. Reporting on the social status or rank of traditional leaders like chiefs, Field (1961:9) has noted that *Ga* priests/priestesses wear a string of round black beads mixed with white flat beads as their priestly insignia. In the same vein Opoku (1978:1) has mentioned that among the people of *Aburi* officiating priests at their Yam festival wear a string of three precious beads tied below their knees to register their position.

Schildrout & Keim also reveal museum collections from North Eastern Zaire which give an epoch description on hair coiffure, body decorations and their representation. For instance these writers have shown a portrait of a woman stating that her “long finger nails were an indication of her elite position as a principal wife of a chief”. This intriguing book expand further, the symbolic impressions conveyed by adding cowries, eagle and parrot feathers to the hat of royals. Material components such as copper alloy, vertebrae, duiker horn and porcupine tails are also worn by the royals as decorative charms (Schildrout & Keim 1990: 67).

Gold jewellery is not only considered decorative pieces or bodily things or adornment but as conveners of visual metaphor. In her study on gold of the *Akans*, Ross (2002) observed that among Akan royal adornments, gold is used for sandals, crowns, rings, wristlets, anklets and other clothes. Sandals ornamented with silver and gold are only worn by chiefs of highest rank. As a result Ross quoted Bowdich (1817) as stating that: “the *Asantehene*’s sandals were embossed with small gold and silver cases of sapphires used as charms against evil spirit”. The shapes of the slippers also carried with them symbolic messages like *asantrofi* or night bird, which addresses the dilemma inherent in decision making. In addition the author emphasizes the idea of nobility and protection from harm which is characterized by the chief’s ankle charms (*abirempon naaseɛ*), as well as the crown (*abotire*) which is adorned with wood ornaments decorated in gold and worn during ceremonial occasions. The crowns are also identified with religious symbols that convey relative proverbs which communicate the chief’s message. Another approach worth emulating is that, Ross has provided the names and meanings of all the dress components or regalia of the *Asantehene* (Ross 2002:272-279).

Labi (2002:82:-83) has similarly indicated that the general adornment of chiefs is not only to dress him but also to “distingly set him apart from the public in terms of beauty and design”. Therefore during ceremonies or any gathering of the sort, no sub-chief or person is expected to be similarly adorned or dress better than a chief, and that is why he has a special person who designs his regalia. Even though in the past Akan chiefs were wearing wooden sandals with raffia straps, presently thier sandals are studded with gold and “various symbols of the history, culture and proverbial sayings” that depict their wealth.

The socio-political significance of body art among the *Fantes* in Ghana has also been impressively investigated by Davies Araba Sommers (1986). In her thesis the author addresses types of body art such as body design and body marking; the later comprising incisions and tattoos. Body decorations are examined on religious, ceremonial, medicinal and aesthetic basis as well as their varied functions such as a pledge and allegiance to a deity or group; protection; identification; curative and preventive purposes or victory in war. Further, Davies (1986:81-99) mentions the different forms and shapes of some of the body designs which are achieved with colours like white, red, green and black. Pointedly these colours are either for beautification or for symbolic significance. Birth, naming, initiation, death and funeral, enstoolment /distoolment are accordingly reported to have association with specific body decorations. Thus, the author stated that: “before his [*Fante* chief's] first public appearance, a member of the royal family smears red clay on his body... urging him to be bold and impartial in his ruling”. Also when the training period of a priest or priestess is over he/she is smeared with white clay by the trainer. The trainee is marked with three straight lines of white clay on the wrist, several similar lines running from the ankle to the toes, one dot on the forehead and two dots on the corners of the eye. Why? After a long tiring training, the candidate is successfully being incorporated into the traditional priesthood. Victory is finally won.

Similarly, the author discusses body markings such as incisions, and links them with their socio-political functions. Both the body decorations and body marking are noted to perform the same functions as discussed already. For instance the quality and grouping of incisions have some spiritual relevance. Numbers such as 3, 7 and 9 appear quite often in incisions because they are believed to have social connection among the *Fantes* (Davies 1986: 146). Such discoveries and

many others are what the writer has discussed for readers perusal, and this present researcher appreciated its strength and intellectual impact in helping her build her own questionnaire. It is a well informed thesis that needs commendation.

2.7 Imagery in Costume as a means of Cultural Expression

Concerning the history and politics of *Gas*, Osei-Tutu (2000); Field (1940) have reported on the *Asafoi*, a socio-military group, which according to oral evidence dated from the eighteenth century. Defining among others the structure, role, custom and jurisdiction of the groups, Osei-Tutu points to the „imagery of their flags as both verbal and non-verbal art forms of communication. Flags were consequently designed with the purpose of inspiring and strengthening the groups during wartime (Osei-Tutu 2000: 133), and he was certain that:

The *asafo* flags of the various quarters appeared to be living archives that give some insight into the history and the political geography of, as well as the underlining conflicts within indigenous Accra society.

In effect, the flags of the *Gas* and *Fantis* had “unique aesthetic creations whose appliquéd symbols and imagery carried political and cultural meanings”. Scenes etched into the flags reflected local proverbs, poetic expressions, and the natural environment. Each flag was created in isolation to the other, articulating the superiority and heroic nature of the individual groups. Most of them had icons that reported specific incidence of the past, or were plotted in sequence to tell a story. They were made with different colours “of imported shiny cotton and polyester fabric”, and in accordance with their traditions, these flags were held in reverence and therefore kept in special rooms. Flags were also classified into two groups; contentious and non- contentious. For instance the red flag of the *Gbese* group in Accra portrayed a man slightly bent

forward and pointing his left thumb to his buttocks, meaning; „kiss my ass". According to oral sources, this imagery was able to scare their enemy and eventually stop an impending war. The *Tsuru* group also used red flag while the *Dun* adopted a dark colour, yet both groups (all in Accra) had a common image of a monkey with strong paws sitting on a branch of a tree, holding a ripened fruit. One of the paws is raised; perhaps to symbolically draw attention to its power and strength (Osei-Tutu 2000:136- 137; Field1940:130).

2.8 Colour Symbolism in Clothing

The vocabulary of colour can be described as the visual reaction to the wavelength of sunlight interpreted as red, blue, green and so on; possessing physical properties of hue, intensity and value as well as portraying the psychological and emotional stance of a person (Cayton 2002; Schneider Adams 2002; Greider1996; Jackson1980; Appiah 1979). It is the most universally appreciated element that helps to give form and meaning to a piece of art such that pleasant colour rhythms and harmonies fulfil our aesthetic desires. Colour may also be arranged or employed to interpret a person's emotions, symbolize ideas and create mood. According to Cayton (2002: 165) "... blue can import a state of dignity, sadness or serenity, reliability, fidelity, loyalty and honesty". Red may suggest bravery, sin, passion, danger or violence. Globalization or shared experience among nations or countries has also helped to associate abstract qualities such as virtue, loyalty and evil with colour. Consequently phrases such as: "true blue" , "dirty yellow coward", "red with rage", "seeing red", "virgin white", "pea-green with envy", "gray gloom" seem to be universally adopted.

However, colour meanings and symbolisms throughout the world depend on the culture and ethnicity of the people. For instance during the early Roman civilization, purple colour signified

royalty. This was so because purple dye was so expensive that it was only the Roman emperor who could afford it. (Barton1969:76). Apparently even when the dye became affordable the tradition and its representation were still observed. To the Chinese too red symbolize good luck, purity, power, protection and wealth; hence red is mostly used in their marriage ceremonies. Certain colours are also believed to have some psychological and varying associations in indifferent cultures. Yellow or gold for example is a sacred colour to the ancient Chinese, a symbol of power to the Egyptians and Greeks, however, the early Christians looked down on it because of its connection with wealth. (Kwakyie -Opong 2001:22). To reinforce the power of colour and a person's psychological disposition Cayton (2002: 167) has this to say:

Light, bright colours make us feel joyful and uplifted; warm colours are generally stimulating; cool colours are generally depressing. Medical facilities, trauma centers, and state correctional facilities are often painted in light blues or "institutional greens" because of the calming effect.

Inferably, these various symbolisms make colour a living reality that also define nature's gifts such as leaves, plants, flowers, blood, insects and animals (Jones 2005:56-58). Colour application and appreciations have invariably been informed by such means, and has resulted in impressive masterpiece (Dzamedo 2009:76-79).

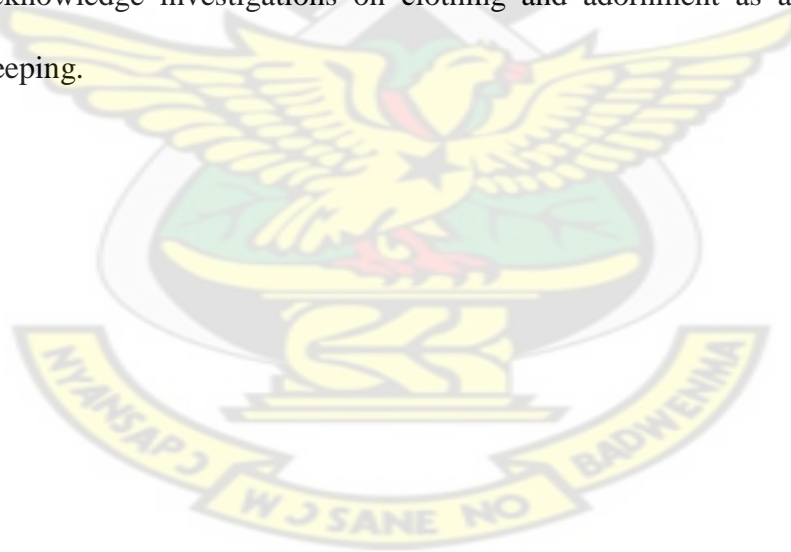
According to Antubam (1963) traditionally, colour symbolism among Ghanaians (including *Gas*) does not depend on scientific analysis but rather on philosophies embedded in their abstract and spiritual values. Commenting further in his book *Ghana's Heritage of Culture* Antubam (: 78 – 80) discusses the notions of colour within the Ghanaian culture. He mentions that black, grey, blue, vermilion, crimson, tomato and terracotta red, silver, gold, white and brown are colours traditionally known and used by Ghanaians. Gold for instance represent royalty, continuous life, warmth, maturity and glory. As a result the *Akans*, *Ga* and *Ewe* chiefs use gold ornaments to

denote their royal position in the community. Hence at a certain time in the history of the *Bono* of Ghana queen mothers were forbidden to use gold; they used white, blue and silver. Also during state functions the *Korontenhene* or *Tufohene* of the *Akan* who is “ranked next after the paramount chief” was also restricted to silver ornaments to separate him from the chief. Moreover, when a chief of *La* selects his future wife, certain portions of the body of family members are designed with yellow preparation. And to ensure continuous life, all *Tano* fetish priest add a piece of gold (*pokowa*) to their “fetish preparations”. Antubam mentions further that white symbolizes purity, virtue, virginity, joy and victory while black reflects the idea of vice, deepened sadness and malicious spirits such as the devil and death.

Appiah (1974:64) holds a similar view and mentions that symbolism has an eminent role in African art as well as metaphysical qualities that express the ideologies of the people, therefore the colours used by a chief on an occasion is associated with meaning than elegance. It is deduced from all the various writers that colour concept and symbolisms are culture based; since they reflect the ideas and values of the people in focus.

In reference to the evidences mentioned in the related literature, it can be concluded that clothing and adornment are a part of a people's culture; indicating class distinction, social status, group identification, age, and sex. Costume and adornment also help to isolate the geographical, historical and ethnic background of a community as well as acting as protective device against both physical and spiritual elements. As a result majority of the writers underscore the relevance of the social and cultural significance of dressing as a means of national as well as ethnic identity. They mention the values of clothing, body decorations and body marking as having important ritual functions within a community. Though most of the cited works revealed scant

information on *Ga* clothes, the available records were a great impetus to this study. For example, published and unpublished works have provided relevant insight into the history and customary practices of *Gas*. Margeret Fields report on *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* (1961) and *Social Organization of the Ga People* (1940); *The Asafoi (Socio-military groups) in the History and Politics of Accra (Ghana) from the 17th to the mid-20th century* (2000) written by John Osei-Tutu and Samuel Nortey's thesis on *The Homowo Festival in Accra-Its Artistic and other Cultural aspects* (2008) are some of the works that has enhanced the researchers understanding of the social organization of *Gas*, including the structure, mythology, history and concepts of some costumes, and the gaps that needs to be filled. Further, other archaeological and anthropological interpretations gathered, provided information that help readers and researchers understand and acknowledge investigations on clothing and adornment as an integral part of historical record keeping.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter focuses on the different procedures employed in establishing reliable data in the light of costumes among *Gas*. The methodologies applied in the study included primary and secondary data collections. These dual approaches were to ensure that information concerning the aim of the study were well recorded and examined to make informed analysis of the various conclusions; establish substantive results and subsequently draw relevant recommendations and references. The primary data focused on information gathered through field studies, observations and interviews, while the secondary data centered on sources obtained from textbooks, journals, articles, the internet and other relevant documents. The chapter highlights the following: research design, library research, population for the study, data collection instruments, types of data, administration of instruments, data collection procedures and a data analysis plan.

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research methods, but the former method gained more prominence. This decision was arrived at because Ruderstam and Newton (1992:31) have asserted that qualitative methods are “especially useful in the generation of categories for undertaking human phenomena and the investigation and meaning that people give to events they experience”. The researcher saw it appropriate then to apply this method in order to arrive at the needed in-depth information and knowledge that would enrich the study. Again, in line with the qualitative research approach which expands on meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbolisms and descriptions, analyzing *Ga* traditions on dressing

were made easy. (Osuola 2005:170; Berg 2004:3). How? Rudestam and Newton (1992:29-31) have further stated that “qualitative implies that the data are in the form of words as opposed to numbers”, and thus, offers ways that provide perspectives; enabling respondents and researchers the opportunity and space to recall abandoned facts, imageries and situations.

Consequently the qualitative method enriched information and provided quality data as against quantitative research methods which relies on statistical data in interpreting issues and circumstances. For instance the participant observations and interactions with the respondents, especially the elders, enabled the researcher describe and translate her findings as well as provide relevant illustrations where needed. In the light of the historical method, the researcher was able to evaluate, narrate and describe the fashion trend of the past vis-a-vis that of the present; providing a clearer picture, as it were, on the research topic. However, when Ghanaians /*Gas* expressed their views on *Ga* costumes through the questionnaire, the qualitative approach was handy in helping to interpret in parentage, the state of the art in order to validate a point among the research questions that sought to know; “How knowledgeable are Ghanaians including *Gas* concerning the historic clothing trends in the *Ga* tradition?”.

3.3 Library Research

The first major approach was to embark on a comprehensive research from libraries, archives and museums, however, the bulk of the study centered on library research. Libraries visited in the University of Ghana, Legon Accra include; Balme, African studies, Department of Home Science, School of Performing Arts (Theatre Arts and Music Departments) and the Department of Archeology and Heritage Studies. Others which are also located in Accra are the George Padmore Research Library, Accra Polytechnic Library and the Ghana library Board. The

Department of General Arts Studies Library, and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology main Library, all in Kumasi as well as the Department of African Studies Library, Fordham University, USA, was also visited.

3.4 Population for the study

The population or universe of research may be viewed as the total number of all units of the phenomenon to be investigated that exists in the area of investigation, that is, all possible observation of the same kind. It represents the portion of the universe accessible to the investigator, and covers the total set of individuals, objects or experiences with familiar characteristics (Kumekpor 2002; Twumasi 2001). For this study then, the targeted and accessible population took forty percent (40%) of the people, based on information gathered with regards the number of respondents from the various categories of people, in addition to time compression and the availability of research assistant. Considering forty percent (40%) of the population conforms to the view of Nortey (2008:42) who has quoted Agyedu asserting that if the population is few hundreds, then forty percent or more sample size will be appropriate for quality research. In effect a population with similar traits is needed in establishing the historical clothing trends, the cultural significance, the possible effect of modernization and acculturation that this research seeks to address.

The population for the study therefore considered three categories or strata of people including (a) chief priests, chiefs, priests and priestesses, king makers, queen mothers and other older men and women. (b) lecturers, teachers, cultural officers, research fellows, heads of schools and students in both secondary and tertiary levels and (c) fashion designers, media personnels, cloth sellers, tailors, beauticians, dressmakers, barbers and the youth in general. The people in the

various categories are: Category A – 300, Category B – 180, Category C – 120; totalling 600 people.

3.5 Sampling

The sampling strategy incorporates the population, the universe, the acknowledged sample and data; where the universe establishes the possible respondents of that proportion of the number of units, chosen for the investigation. It involves a careful survey of a chosen proportion of the units concerning a phenomenon, so that knowledge gained from the study by the part will be extended to the whole. Sampling therefore, is the use of definite procedures in the selection of a part for the express purpose of obtaining from its description or estimates certain properties and characteristics of the whole (Kumepkor 2002: 132).

To proportionally represent the targeted population, the stratified random sampling method was used; where the population was sub-divided into smaller groups of three. In this regard forty percent (40%) of the population, constituting two hundred and forty (240) respondents were sampled out of the potential overall population of six hundred (600) people. Therefore two hundred and forty (240) people become the targeted and accessible population.

Even though the sample was taken from a homogenous population the categories of three strata are not the same. In that, as custodians, historians and traditionalists, chief priests, priests/priestesses, queen mothers and elders form one category because of their knowledge in the historical trends in clothing and adornment. Lecturers, research fellows, assistant lecturers, teachers, cultural officers and students who are empowered through research work are categorized into one group. The third category of fashion designers, cloth sellers, barbers, tailors,

dressmakers, beauticians and so on were grouped because of their common interest and anxiety to follow fashion trends in order to satisfy their numerous clients. The relevance of this grouping buttressed the minimal literature and also helped in gathering views concerning the historical facts, the present state, as well as the future of *Ga* costumes. The selected sample of 240 when shared among the three categories is tabulated thus;

Table 3.1: Percentage of Stratum selected sample

Status	Number in sample	Percentage of total
Category A (Stratum 1)	300	50
Category B (Stratum 2)	180	30
Category C (Stratum 3)	120	20

Table two on the next page indicates how the potential population of 600 respondents was selected by means of the stratified random sampling method.

Table 3.2: Schematic Overview of Stratified Sampling Design

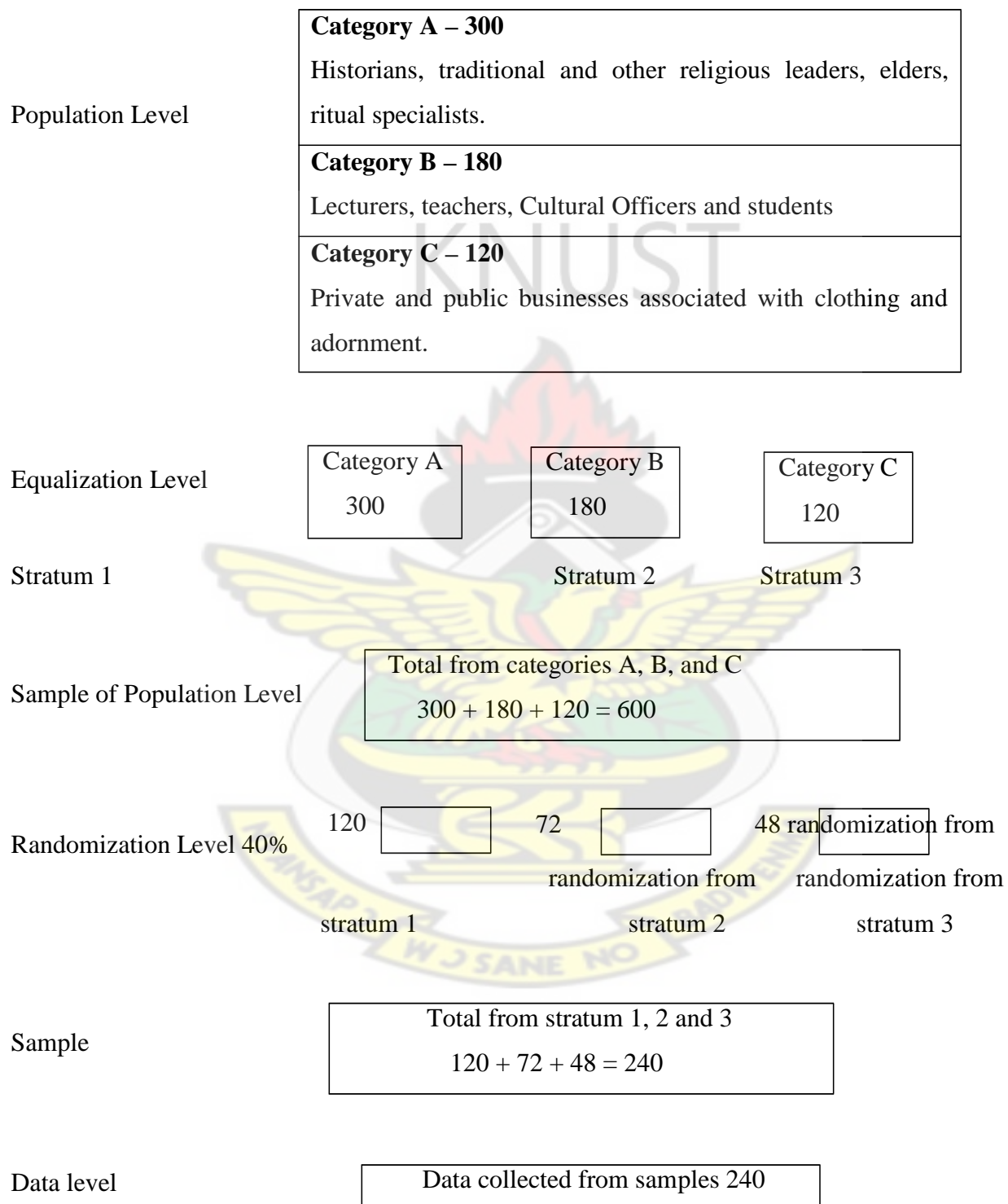


Table 3.3: Categorization of population and number of targeted interviewees

Item	Category of Population	Number of Population	Target
(a)	Category A Chief priests, priests/ priestesses, chiefs, kingmakers, queen mothers, elders (men and women).	120	20
(b)	Category B Lecturers, teachers, research fellows, cultural organizers and students.	72	25
(c)	Category C Fashion designers, cloth sellers, tailors, beauticians, barbers and others.	48	8

The population of the study was made up of mostly *Ga* indigenes. As indicated in table 3.3, a targeted total of about fifty-three people were finally selected; among whom were about thirty- five females and fifteen males of different ages. Their ages ranged between eighty-two and twenty and the rationale for the selection was to find out if the clothing culture in the community is passed on from generation to generation and that irrespective of age, *Ga* people are really conversant with their clothing tradition. Their educational background with regards formal education varied; whilst the highest qualification was a first degree in the university, the lowest was a Middle School Leaving Certificate or a Basic Education Certificate. The study area was chosen for the following reasons:

- i. Although Kilson (1974:5) describes *Ga* as a “fishing hamlet turned into a densely populated multi-ethnic residential community of marginal elites and manual labourers

and traders”, Parker (2000) and (Field) 1961) have both reported that the real *Ga* indigenes can be located at La, Teshie, Nungua, Tema, Accra and Kpong. Based on this assertion, it was inferred that the historical and demographic background information of these towns will best inform the thesis.

- ii. Proximity: Since the research area was where the researcher lives, personal observations, participation and access to data in the community and from respondents, will be quite easy.
- iii. It will not be difficult to arrange for follow-ups, because informants could easily be located. Furthermore, the researcher could also be reached by the respondents without much difficulty during emergency situations.
- iv. The fact that the chosen towns represent over eighty percent (80%) of *Ga*, the researcher anticipated a fair coverage.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The collection of data for the study was done using a questionnaire (see appendix A), an interview guide (appendix B), a personal observation guide, photograph taking and collection and also participation in several ceremonies between 8th July, 2008 and 30th August, 2009. However, certain follow-ups were made between 11th August 2009 and April 2010. Two questionnaires were initially designed and tested on about five people, and the aim was to find out:

1. Which of the two will provide the study with the necessary information?
2. Whether the questionnaire was too long.

3. Whether there was any need to restructure the questions.

After pretesting, one of the questionnaires proved very reliable. It was then redesigned and administered on about 120 people in the selected areas. Initially the questionnaires covered some aspects of *Ga* costumes with emphasis on colour and how the clothes were worn. The pretesting, however, provided a wider range of information which included questions on clothing items used during the training period- in the case of the kings, queen mothers, initiates and priests/priestess-, kinds of hairstyles and their symbolic meaning, as well as influences, changes in style, colour, fabric, accessories and makeup.

The structured questionnaire allowed for both open and close-ended responses. This approach facilitated enough flexibility for the researcher to note and gather information on unexpected areas of the study as well as allow data management (Kumekpor2002:171 & 172). The interview guide, however, was designed on only open-ended questions, purported to generate further questions from the interactions when needed. And to explain issues better, all interviews were conducted in the *Ga* and *Twi* languages, tape recorded and later translated into English language for transcription. This type of communication was applied because the researcher speaks only the *Twi* language which most of the respondents are familiar with. In the few situations where the researcher faced language barrier, – especially when respondents could not communicate in *Twi* – the researcher spoke in *Twi* and allowed responds in *Ga*. This interaction was later recorded and with the help of interpreters, it was later translated and transcribed into English

Notes were also taken during the interviews. Issues that came up during interviews were noted and as these persisted, the researcher paused for further investigation- if found relevant to the

study. Interview guides were not rigidly followed. It was guided by a system of flexibility where respondents were permitted to dictate the pace of the interaction, especially when they find it necessary to dilate on issues concerning their migration. In such circumstances, the researcher did not impose her own concerns but used tact to draw respondents back to the focus of the study. For clarity and confirmation, respondents were revisited on several occasions. The questionnaire and interview guide were designed on the following basis;

1. Using objectives of the study, questions were generated around the following;
 - i. The major historical trends in *Ga* costume, accessories and body markings from the seventeenth century to the present.
 - ii. Clothing and adornment used by *Gas* during the rite of passage, politics and religion, festivals, economic activities and traditional dance performances.
 - iii. Ritual costumes and accessories used during confinement, as well as the design and style, fabric, texture, changes in form, the symbolic significance and their relationship with the wearer.
 - iv. Continuity and changes in *Ga* Costumes v.

Reasons for the change if any.

2. With regards on – the – spot observations at all the functions; an observation guide was created to direct the researcher on what to focus on in order to:
 - a. Validate findings
 - b. Get in-depth survey of the changes in dressing.
 - c. Generate new data on areas of the research that were not adequately covered in the questionnaire.

Participant observation mostly dominated the research. The fieldwork basically involved the researcher's participation in some rituals, festivals and ceremonies. Some of these included the H4m4w4 festivals at Teshie and Ga Mashie on August 2008 and August 2009 respectively and the Y111yeli festivals at Teshie and Abokobi. At Tema Sakumono, the researcher attended the *Kpledwo* annual festival of the gods. Other observations were the installation of an Osu chief, about four naming ceremonies, ten marriage solemnizations, eight burial and funeral ceremonies, four night vigils and several traditional dance performances.

Another aspect of the field work included cultivating several friendly relationships with the people; some of whom were also knowledgeable and had a firm hold on the *Ga* culture. With such people - who were not among the selected respondents - a lot of informal interactions on *Ga* costumes were held and with excellent results. Moreover respondents had to be motivated with presents. For instance some money was given to the respondents to show the researcher's appreciation and also as a means of cultivating that close intimacy that could generate access into „prohibited areas“.

3.7 Types of Data: Primary and Secondary

3.7.1 Primary data

Video recordings and photographs were taken. However, a day before each ceremony, permission was sought with the chief priests, chiefs, priests and the elders in the various towns for the necessary rites to be performed on behalf of the researcher. A larger proportion of the photographs were also collected from the chief priests; priestesses and some elderly men and women. Few pictures were gathered from photographers, seamstresses, tailors, museums, shrines

and Television Houses. Explanations and interpretations on all these data collections were sought in order to establish their exact meanings, authenticity, cultural importance, and the appropriate way of using them. Oral tradition was another impetus to the study. Care was, however, needed because of the differences in their delivery. The different versions sometimes gathered necessitated further investigation with more respondents, as well as further comparison with written records. After cross-examining the various oral traditions with other knowledge, observation and participation, the researcher correlated the different oral renditions in the study to draw substantial conclusions.

3.7.2 Secondary data

The study consulted other sources such as written documents. Books on the history of costume, pattern drafting, techniques on dressmaking and fashion of clothes were employed to establish the period, style, colour, rhythm, change and progression of *Ga* costumes. Others on the culture of *Gas* and some Ghanaian ethnic groups, as well as those concerning other African countries helped to draw similarities and also contrasting views with costumes of *Gas*. It further helped in identifying the impact of migration, immigration, identity and survival as impediments to the *Ga* dress code. The written records also provided dates for the study. Some confirmations were also drawn from archival sources, articles from magazines, brochures, news papers, newsletters and journals. Unpublished works and the internet were also consulted.

3.8 Administration of Instruments

Having identified the specific sites to collect data, the researcher drew an action chart which determined when each quarter will be visited. In this respect, respondents got a firsthand knowledge about the meeting and adjusted their time accordingly. On the first visit the Interview

Guide was given out to prepare the minds of the respondents on what is expected of them as well as arrange a convenience day for the interview. Several follow-ups were made after the first interview and the outcome was a structured questionnaire prepared and distributed to about a hundred and twenty people of various categories. These were distributed within one month by the researcher, her assistant and a Cultural Organizer in the Accra Metro.

3.9 Data Collection Procedures

Recipients were given a month to respond to the questions. After the stated period, two weeks were assigned to the collection of the questionnaire, but that was not feasible because most of the people were not met on the first and second visits. The time for collection therefore needed to be extended to about a month, within which about ninety-five of the questionnaire; constituting about eighty percent (80%) of the respondent, were retrieved. Few ones sent via electronic mails were also retrieved by same means.

3.10 Data Analysis Plan

The study has examined a variety of clothing elements to determine the era of existence or period of creation, symbolic connotations, user's status, continuity and change. Pie charts, tables and Bar charts of frequencies in conclusive figures and percentages were used to interpret the pre-coded questions. To easily reduce the whole bulk into analyzable units, data gathered for the un-coded questions were arranged in sequence. They were then grouped in accordance with similar responses, and finally coded in words. After the research data had been grouped into its constituent parts, the nature of the material was studied to identify its relevant features and their correlation. Then discovering the pattern of responses, the researcher expanded on its social implications and used it to highlight the research problem; discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE SURVEY OF CLOTHING AND ADORNMENT AMONG GA PEOPLE: 17TH – 21ST CENTURY.

4.1 Overview

Apart from aesthetic appeals, there are also principles, symbolisms and concepts embedded in the clothing and adornment associated with the *Ga* people of Ghana. However, few of such information have been documented. This lapse coupled with acculturation and modernization, and the fact that the present generation continues to adore foreign clothes, pose the danger that *Gas* and Ghanaians as a nation, might soon lose record of the *Ga* clothing culture. The clothing fashion among *Gas* can therefore be best examined and documented on the basis of what was worn in the past and that which exist today. This exploration can only thrive by delving into the socio-cultural contents within which clothing and adornment among the people functions.

Consequently, this chapter seeks first, to document findings on the historical trends of *Ga* costume, starting with the earliest discoveries by some historians and archeologists, around 1700, as well as from oral tradition. Some forms of clothing copied from the Western World has flourished alongside *Ga* traditional costumes, hence the study tries to examine these fashion trends, with regards the nineteenth century to the present time.

The second part seeks to report on clothes and accessories used during the rites of passage; and the researchers concern here is to highlight the use of all clothing elements used in the customs, as one of the pivots that inform the (1) aesthetics, (2) spirituality and (3) dynamics that give completeness to these historic stages in life's journey. It further addresses costume components of *Ga* chiefs and their courtiers, traditional religious officials, clothing within some socio-

cultural activities such as festivals, fishing, and traditional music and dance forms, in relation to modernization. And finally refer to similar clothes used by other Ghanaian ethnic groups and African nations. Pictures and sketches also bucktress the discussions.

4.2.1 Archeological Discoveries, and the History of Early *Ga* Costumes 17th – 18th Century

One of the authentic ways of assessing the strength and dynamics of a piece of art is to examine „her" earliest beginnings. In this perspective, a researcher or reader gets a glimpse of the „life" or chronology of that creative work; in order to accentuate its origin, progress or deterioration, and thus, draw very tangible conclusions and suggestions. Hence, its past coupled with its developmental stages point to either a state of progress or that of retrogression and therefore acts as “the speculum and measure-tape” that portray the true shape and resilience of the art. The history of *Ga* costume is presumed to have its beginning from 1700 or earlier. It can be traced through archeological discoveries together with artist impressions as reported by some early European travellers to the Guinea Coast.

4.2.2 Archeological findings on Adornments concerning *Gas*

Radio – carbon records obtained in field investigations conducted on *Gas* in the late 1970"s indicated that the settlement was founded probably in the fourteenth centuries but flourished in the 1500s (Anquandah 2001). One of the earliest settlements of the “*Ga Wo* was Wodoku which is sited 5° 38' North and 0° 10' West in East Legon, Accra”. It is the first of the *Ga*-speaking group to arrive at the present site of the Ningo people (*Manga* people) presumed to be the early settlers along the coast. Other sites include Korle Gonno, Oklu, Opo, Ajenkotoku and Abochiman (Davies 1976; Tawiah 1988; Field 1940; Dakubu 1987). The reasercher has found it

necessary to mention these sites because most of the writers were emphatic on clothing items retrieved by historians and archeologist from some of these places.

To Anquandah, a major determinant of *Ga* cultural identity-including clothing -can be traced to ancient *Ga* pottery discovered from ruins in *Ayawaso* around the fifteenth century. This pottery revealed the morphology and the life of pre-urban *Ga* around the time, and stressed “flowing profile, round base, hematite body and coating, plastic decoration in the form of stamping, ridge designs as well as incisions found on the neck, shoulder and body of vessels (Plate 4. 1).



Plate 4.1: Some *Cherekcherete* pottery designs that revealed the life of pre-urban *Ga*

Source: From the Journal Archaeological Evidence of Early Ga History 1400-1800

The seventeenth century saw a new form of innovation or creativity such as cylindrical pedestals with inverted foot rings; believed to be fashioned after imported brass vessels and sophisticated-relief appliqué designs that portrayed motifs such as plants and reptiles, as well as patterned and stamped designs (Anquandah 2006:9). The pottery had a “reddish brown and sometimes black

fabric... fine-grained and occasionally coarse, and contains quartz fragments and small peaks of mica". Other discoveries on the Shai Hills at Ladoku and Woduku included hornblende; a shiny blackish mineral, as well as shreds of lateritic concretions of fabric that has appealing and glossy appearance. The pottery were observed with a variety of designs predominantly single as well as in multiple grooves, with most of them patterned horizontally, vertical or in some cases a blend of the two. Some of the single ones were roulette grooves with comb, cord roulette, rim-lip notches, squarish and embossment stamps, while the multiple designs combined "grooves and crescentic stamps, incision and roulette, incision and finger impressions, incisions and dot stamps, incision and comb stamps, dot stamps and triangular stamps, incisions and crescentic stamps, dot stamps and embossment" -Boachie-Anshah 2006:60.

Archeological excavations also conducted around 1982 and 1990 in some sites on Adwuku Hill, (14th-15th century) including a probable *dipo* or puberty-rite shrine revealed some indigenous clothing items such as eighteen beads in bauxite /shell; twenty-seven brass ornaments of rings and reposes designed bracelets and three ivory carved ornaments. Other foreign imports also found included twenty-eight beads-venetian rosettes, prosser, tumbler and twelve cowry shells (*Cyprea Meneta*). A similar one conducted at Woduku around the same period also brought out objects of copper alloy consisting two pieces of ornaments presumed to be a bracelet and a piece of brass sheet, while that of Ladoku revealed two brass bracelets designed „with circumferential incisions at the termind". Again, at the later site, hordes of beads retrieved consisted of five-layer hot-tumbled chevron translucent beads with alternating white, brick red, green and blue set-in stripes; four-layer hot-tumbled chevrons with set-in stripes of brick-red, light grey and blue; instating chevrons hot tumbled with alternating red brick and blue strips on sea blue core as well

as blue green and brown tumbled seed beads. Boachie-Ansah (2006:55-59) again referred to an observation by Peter Francis Jnr, Director of the Centre for Bead Research, Lake Placid, New York, indicating that, some of these beads could be traced to Venice and Amsterdam, appearing “in the first or second quarter of the seventeenth century”. And that the striped beads could possibly originate from Venice and dates between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while the blue seed beads could be associated with Amsterdam and may be placed between 1560 and 1650 or presumably, at a later time.

4.2.3 Early Historical Evidence of *Ga* Costumes

Historical accounts of clothing among the people who lived along the coast of Modern Ghana has already been digested in an earlier chapter- when reviewing related literature. As was observed, the earliest European visitors who travelled to the Guinea Coast around the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries such as Barbot, de Maree, and Ogilby gave an artists impression of the “negro”s” dressing (Plates 4. 2a-c). It is very obvious that as Ghanaians, those clothe fashion



Plate 4.2a



Plate 4.2b

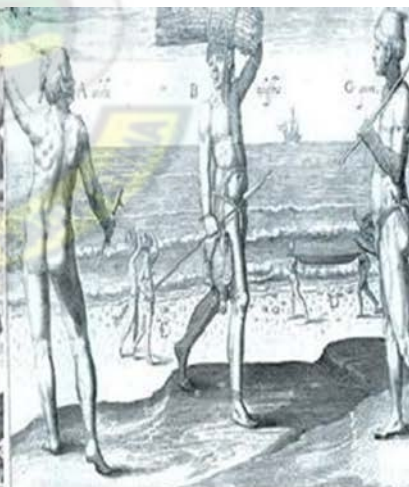


Plate 4.2c

Plates 4.2a-c: Early 17th Century costumes used by Men (4.2a), Women (4.2b), Commoners (4.2c) in the Gold Coast

Sources: From the book, Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kindom of Guinea (1602)

pointed to *Gas* as well. And interestingly some of these writers were emphatic on *Ga* costumes.

Expanding further on the general observation, Bosman (1967:117-121) said about the inhabitants- most probably referring to *Gas*- :

The fashion of adorning their heads are very various; some wear very long Hair curled and platted together and tied up to the crown of the head; others turn their hair into very small curls, moistening them with oil and sort of dye, and then adjust them in the shape of roses; between which they wear Gold „*Fetishes*“ or a sort of coral here called *Conte de Terra* which is sometimes of quadrupled value to Gold, as also a sort of blew coral, which being moderately large, is so much valued, that its generally weighed against Gold. They are very fond of our Hats.....

The people desired jewellery so much so that gold and the above mentioned corals were worn on the leg, arm, neck and waist. Bossmann, again emphasized the diversity of clothes and how they were worn among the rich, poor, nobles and the youth. He reported on a particular type of dress called *Paan* which consisted of “three or four ells of either velvet or silk cloth, (*perpetuana*) or some sort of stuff; and several [of the „negroes“] have this sort of habit... made of fifty sorts of stuff”. This type of cloth is worn around the body, then rolled up, into a „small compass”; leaving the ends hanging in front, and exposing half of their legs.

As previously noted, the poor people or commoners such as wine-tappers, fishermen, and their like were identified with „an ell or two of sorry stuff”. Some of them only used a girdle worn between their legs, and then wrapped around them just to cover their nakedness (Plate 4.2c).

Nonetheless, these fishermen complemented this style of dressing by wearing hats or caps. The young ones (*maceroes*) were spotted in very simple clothes, and their chiefs (*cabocero*’s) chose to keep the same low profile, by wearing “only a *Paan*, a cap like that of the old Israelites, and a string or chain of corals about their heads; and this is the dress they daily appear”.

Contrary to the men's outfits, the women were more modish because their clothes were comparatively expensive; hence, Bossman was very convinced "the fashion in the Netherlands and all European over seems to have established its throne among the female sex". With regards their adornments, he assets:

Ladies plait their hair very artfully, and place their *Fetishes's*, Coral and Ivory, with a judicious air, and go much finer than the men. About their necks they wear gold chains and strings of coral, besides ten or twelve small white strings of *Conte de Terra* and gold about their arms and legs also they are plentifully stored therewith; and they wear them so thick about their waist, that their nakedness would be sufficiently covered...

Their extravagant clothes, coupled with their seductive mode of design drew attention to them and established their motives because:

on the lower part of their bodies they wear a *Paan* which is three or four times as long as that of the men. This they wind round their waist, and bind it on with a fillet or red cloth, or something else about half ell broad and two ells long, to make it fit close to the body, both ends of the fillet hanging out on their *Paan*;

which in indies of quality is adorned with gold and silver -lace on the upper part of their body they cast a veil of silk or some other fine sort of stuff...

He emphatically concluded that the women were fashionably equipped such that they „know how to dress themselves up sufficiently tempting to allure several Europeans“. Barbot's (1723) accounts about *Gas* also complement Bossman's dress discoveries. According to Barbot, the attire of the *Ga* men was similar to the *danta* which was worn by the *Akans*, as well as a big loin cloth which "serve as blanket at night and as a lounge dress in the morning usually worn by wrapping it round the body so that one arm was left uncovered". It is asserted the *Ga* men found it appropriate, convenient and healthier to uncover their upper torso when the weather was extremely hot. Cloths were therefore worn from the waist down to their knees (Plate 4.2a, right). The *Ga* women similarly used loin cloths which were held by a narrower belt, in addition to a

large cloth wrapped around their hips as skirts. Another larger cloth more gorgeous than the skirt was used as a shawl to cover the upper part of their bodies (Plate 4.2b). Concerning their makeup, Barbot further stated that they wore red or white „colouring on their faces”; with some on their eyebrows and cheeks (commonly called eye shadow and rosy- cheeks respectively) as well as small cuts on both sides of the face. Others were also fashioned “in raised marks (tumears) and pinking (de"coupires) done on their shoulders, breast, and belly [most probably, tattoos] and dressed in pink materials”. Ceremonies were also celebrated with enormous bracelets or ribbons „loaded on the neck, arms and legs. And some group of women called *etiguafo* who identified themselves as prostitutes were distinguished by their rich expensive clothes as well as their long nails. Obviously, Barbot was describing the costume of *Gas*, because he mentions “Ningo, Labbadi, and Tema” and concluded:” I saw some at Acra so attired...” (Hair et. al. 1992: 439-495).

The appearance of the people of Accra in early 1800 was likewise witnessed and documented by Rask Johnnes (1754). Reporting him, Selena Winsnes (2006) in her paper for a colloquium presentation on *Accra Before colonial Times*, reiterated that the women used a lot of hair decorations among which was a small bone comb which had three or four teeth. As a sign of acknowledging the respected social position of the elderly or nobles, the women removed the comb from their hair before greeting such people. It was also the custom of *Gas* to honour a fishmonger during her first pregnancy. At this stage the other women throw dust and sand over the pregnant woman and also loosen her hair locks. After washing off the dust and sand at the sea, her closest friends shave her hair in a special pattern and braid it again. On the other hand during the last four months of pregnancy of the wife of a merchant (*mercador*), she wears about

six to seven strings of glass bead around her waist, with her upper torso bare. Even though a deerskin was the commonly used cloth, a sheep skin was sometimes used and worn around the lower abdomen in addition to a straw whisk which was worn from the wrist to the elbow. Until the wife delivers her baby, the husband does not shave his head or beard, and to show her appreciation to the husband, („for making her a woman“), immediately the wife delivers she makes a cap of either the deerskin or sheepskin for him. During enstoolment, their nobles (*kabaseers*) were decorated with gold and aggrey beads used as crown, necklace, wristlet and anklet; valuing about “100 Ragsdale”. Additionally, the king holds in his hand a sword and “wears a green wreath on his head”, presumably, the *nyanyara* leaf. Dead bodies were also adorned with gold and wrapped with about three to four pieces of cloth.

In respect of the H4m4w4 festival, Winsnes reported that there were on display all kinds of fashionable as well as traditional costumes. Hairstyles, jewellery and body paintings were in „ridiculous fashion“. Some of the people smeared their bodies with *malaget* dough; either on the whole body or in very compact stripes on the neck, shoulder and breast. Others also wore their stripes from the fingers to the elbow as if they were wearing gloves, while some displayed the fashion of the Roman boots; by making their stripes from the toe to the middle of the calf. The facial make up of the women also consisted of striped red earth interspersed with white chalk spots, and in the middle of each cheek were “white chalk marks as large as an 8-shilling piece” (Winsnes 2006:111-120). *Gas* were peculiar with their dressing, therefore they made sure their outfits were comfortable, consequently, they wore light clothes or dressed partially when the weather was hot. Nonetheless, not even the weather could dictate the women's code of dressing because on ceremonial occasions such as parties the women wore expensive as well as gorgeous

clothes, to the extent that some European men could not resist being attracted. For instance, when Barbot honoured the Danish agent in Accra's invitation to a play, the clothing and adornment of the Accra women nearly „choked" his European guests (Hair et. al.1992: 498). This was because the *Ga* women had combined both their traditional fashion and those of the Europeans, such that marriage ceremonies could either be performed in traditional clothes. Or if the couple desired a church wedding, they could go for a flowing long gown plus veil and a three- piece suit, to be worn by the bride and groom respectively (Plate 4.3).

The men also wore their hair in various styles, and Barbot describes and supports this observation with samples of six heads (Plate 4.7) including a man from Cape Coast and Accra in 1679, wearing plaited hairstyles as well as an old man with a single tuft crown (Plate 4.7e). Around this same period, there was a wedding in Accra where the bride was adorned in gold ornaments on several parts of her body, in addition to the red and white marks designed on her face by her bride's maids. He also show two female heads; the first was a woman of „Corso" and Accra and the other, a fashionable woman with her face painted red and designed with white lines and patterns (Hair - et - al 1992: 497- 498).

As part of their clothing components the fisher men wore caps made with animal skins and rushes, which served as a protective dress in both sunny and raining seasons, as well as a type of bark cloth known as (*quaqua*), also worn as a waist – cloth. (Bosman 1967:120; Jones 1983:69). Most *Ga* men covered only their loins and pubis, leaving the rest of their bodies bare (Plate 4. 2a).



Plate 4.3: Costumes worn at a wedding ceremony in the 1800s.

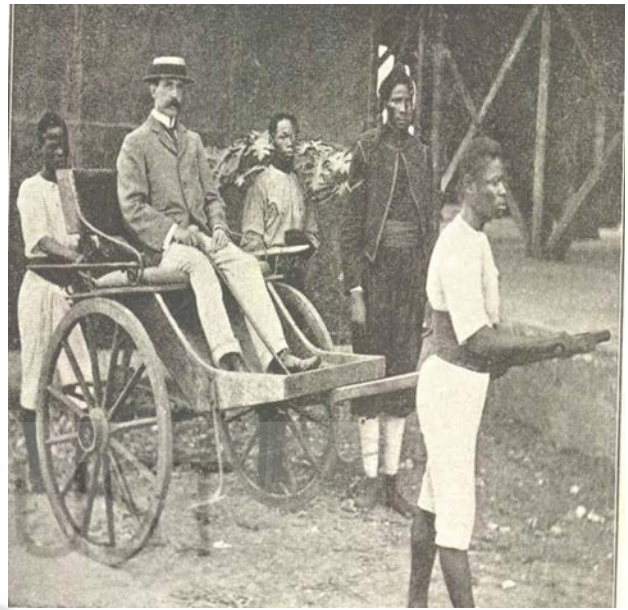


Plate 4.4: A policeman (top right) and a guard (down right) in costume, Accra , 1800s.



Plate 4.5: 1800s costumes of some priestesses

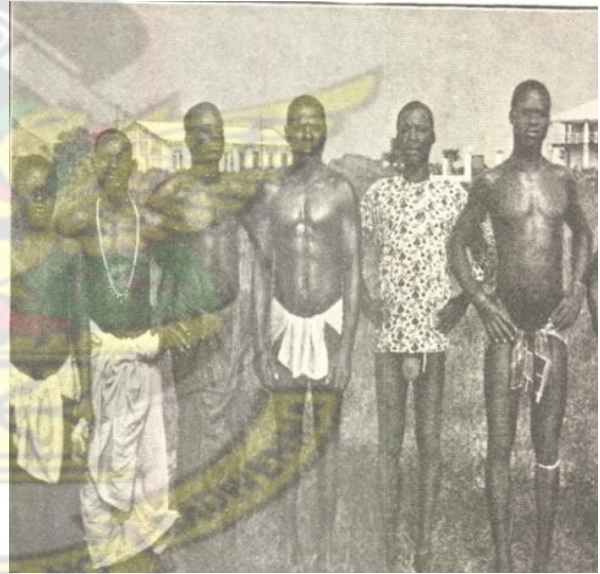


Plate 4.6: A group of men in loin clothes in the 1800s

Sources (Plates 4.3-4.6): From the book, Gold Coast Past and Present.

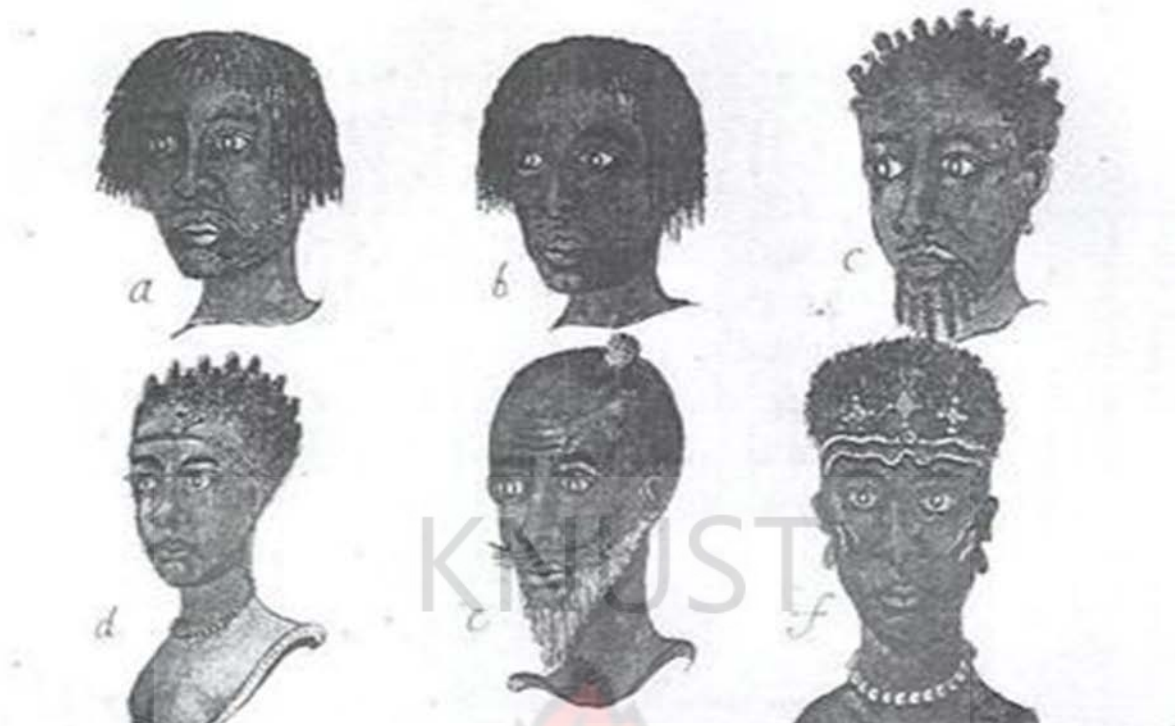


Plate 4.7: Male and female hairstyles of 17th century Gold Coast.

Source: From the book Barbot on Guinea: The Writings of Jean Barbot on West Africa 1678-1712

Commenting on Ga military attire worn in the 1980s Osei Tutu (2000) echoes Isert indicating the use of a loin cloth (Ga Tekle), as well as a woven raffia, hoods of animal hide and a variety of magical amulets to cover the private parts (See also Jones 2000:63). As mentioned in the preceeding paragraph, there was another code of dressing that seems to flourish alongside the traditional fashion; referred to as the “European Fashion”. This style was copied from the mulatto people of mixed African and European breed whose clothes were either imported from Europe or sewn by local tailors and seamstresses (Daniel 1852:6-7). To this end, while the traditional artists embarked on bark cloth production and jewellery, the skilled tailors and seamstresses worked on the European clothes. However, Labi has quoted Wuff's account in the middle of the nineteenth century on the transformation of Ga dressing as “being generously adorned with strands of beads made of iron rings on their arms, fingers, feet and toes. And that the wealthy wore large rings made out of the finest gold (Labi 2006: 130).

According to oral tradition in the early parts of the twentieth century, the first cloth of a *Ga* female child was a string of waist beads worn before and after the child is named. This constitutes her only form of clothing until she is six years when she is partially adored with *1tam*, a strip of cloth tucked in the waist beads from the front to the back; to cover the genitals. In some situations, when found necessary more of the beads were added to the original one. When the girl attains the puberty age, she is given her second cloth which is a loin cloth made of the bark cloth *ky1nky1n* (*Antiaris* species). As an adult costume the *ky1nky1n* cloth was made by removing the bark of the *ky1nky1n* tree and soaking them in water to soften. The cellulose was later beaten with wood mallet until it produced the required softness convenient for use (Plate 4.8). It was then dried and worn around the waist at knee length or slightly below the knee. To reinforce its hold on the wearer- so that it does not fall off-, the cloth was wrapped around the waist once or twice and rolled at the waistline, leaving the upper torso with the breast uncovered (See fig. 4.3-right). Apparently until the female child was married she was clothed as such, but immediately she got married she was distinguished with a second cloth tied around the bust and knotted at the back to cover the breast; however, leaving the stomach uncovered (Fig. 4.3-left). With time the unmarried girl was given one lion cloth which was worn around the bust and used as the main dress on all occasions (See fig.4.1& plate 4.9).

In contrast with the clothes of girls the fashion of boys was more elaborate and enormous. At the prime of their years, between one and seven, the male child wore *danta*- a piece of loin cloth produced from the bark cloth (*ky1nky1n*) which was passed between the thighs to cover the genitals and firmly tied around the waist. Costume changes were effected when the boy was between the ages of seven and ten. In this regard he was given a piece of loin cloth which he

wore around the body and extends to the knee. It was passed under both arms, with the two ends crossing at the chest and eventually knotted on the nape-the two arms are thus left unclothed. This form of attire known as **k44la** (Fig. 4.2) became the child's major costume until he became an adult. And like his female counterpart, this mode of dressing was the major attire for all occasions (Plate 4.9). Adulthood was then honoured with a bigger cloth/jumper or jumper and *adasa*.



Plate 4.8: The bark cloth (right)

Source: From the National Museum, Accra.

Fig. 4.1: A girl wearing a loin cloth around her bust.

Sources (Figs 1&2): Drawn by the researcher



Fig. 4. 2: The k44la style used by boys in the 1700s

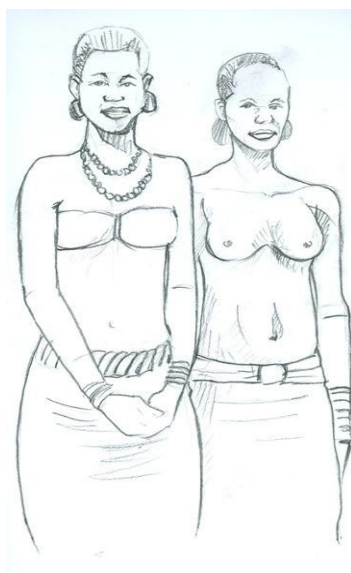


Fig 4.3: Wearing a loin cloth to cover the breast (left) and around the waist with breast uncovered (right).

Sources (Figs 3 & 4): Drawn by the researcher



Fig 4.4: The *kaba* style knotted on one shoulder.



Plate 4.9: Children wearing cloth in school in 1800s

Source: From the book, *The Gold Coast: Past and Present*

4.3 Contemporary Clothing Fashion among Men/Women/Children; 19th - 21st Century

Apart from *Gas* patronizing their customary clothes, (which will be discussed later) since Ghana's independence in 1957 to date, contemporary clothing fashion - used among *Gas* and also as pertained to all Ghanaians- seems revolving. Over these years, there has been either a slight variation/modification or alterations in women as well as men's clothes that emphasize the

saying that „fashion is cyclical or revolves". And better still there is nothing new under the sun (Ecclesiastics 1:9). This „revolution" in fashion, as found in fabrics, jewellery, dress styles, hairstyle/headdresses, body marks and footwear can be traced from Europe, but were gradually – through contact or by viewing them in movies and fashion magazines – absorbed into Ghanaian, including *Ga*, traditional clothing styles. This trend of dressing became more pronounced after the Second World War, around 1946, when the world saw sudden and rapid changes in clothing fashion, with the pivots pointing to the European representatives and their wives who travelled to the Gold Coast. It is fascinating to acknowledge that the repetitive nature of fashion has culminated from fashion designers adding or reducing aspects of existing fashions focusing on the size, depth, length, volume, as well as width of necklines, cuffs, sleeves, pockets, openings, fastenings, waistbands, and also attaching accessories to some portions of the dress (Compare plates 4.14 with plates 4. 21, 4. 25& 4.29).



Plate 4.10: A group of women in *kaba* and cloth and different headdresses in the late 1950s

Source: From the book *Ghana@50*



Plate 4.11: A woman wearing a *kaba* style cut to fit at the waist line. (1960)

UNIST

Plate 4.12: A woman in a sleeveless *kaba* style (1960s)



Plate 4.13: A young lady in „guarantee“ shoes (1970)



Plate 4.14: A lady in the „one hand“ sleeve style (1973)



Plate 4.15: The researcher in a smocking blouse with strapped sleeves (1975)

Sources (Plates 4.11- 4.15): Pictures taken from the researcher's library, Legon.



Plate 4.16: A woman (left) wearing Afro wig in vogue in the 1970s

Source: The Spectator, Aug. 8th, 1970



Plate 4.17: A woman in puffed sleeves in 1990s



Plate 4.18: The researcher in embroidered trouser and caftan (1990)



Plate 4.19: A lady wearing „baggy“ trousers and hat (1990s)

Source (Plates 4.16- 4.19): Pictures taken from the researcher's library, Legon

These ideals coupled with the use of imported cloths as well as locally made fabrics such as *Kente*, *adinkra*, *batik* and tie-dye cloths (plates 4.101, 4.96 & 4.42), dictate the fashion in vogue. In this regards types and designs of *kaba* (loose jumper) and slit, fabrics, gowns, shirts, trousers, hairstyles/head covering, body paintings/ marks, jewellery and footwear were influenced. The initial and original *kaba* style (shown on fig. 4.4) was knotted at one shoulder with the other bare, but this has metamorphosed with the years. Between 1940 and 1960, *kaba* were worn over one loin cloth wrapped around the waist and knotted behind (Plates 4.10& 4.11). According to Owusu-Ansah (1999:24-39) this form of women's wear is called *asitan* and perfectly described the traditional clothing fashion of the *Ga* woman. However, the needed change of women from the role of housewife's to „working mothers" necessitated a move. The changing effects of the First and Second World Wars saw women assuming duties reserved for men, therefore the urge to move and work at factories came with changing clothes that would commensurate their jobs. This was a period during the C21st when the USA improved in their textile manufacturing with special focus on women clothes- because of its rapid patronage.

The women then needed clothes that would compliment their „jobs" and also make them smarter at work. Hence, the wrap around style became a sort of impediment or obstruction to their movement. Therefore the need for a looser and simpler form of dressing became apparent. Women suddenly developed the taste for „muscularity, thus costumes should fit and give freedom of movement. Their loose loin cloths were therefore made into skirts with a slit or two at the side/s- which assumed the name „slit". After the First World War when morals were degrading, hobble skirts which were so tight at the bottom and thus, disrupted movements were the existing fashion. Yet around 1920, dresses were straight but loose, extending to the knee or a

little above it. However, soon after the 2nd World War, between 1930 and 1950, a new fashion surfaced; involving the use of slacks for women working in war industries. Long skirts were used around the 1940s, but, these were shortened in the 1950s, with the additional use of straight-tight- fitting dresses and short hem lines, similar to the very short miniskirts from the United Kingdom that affected the whole world (Tortora&Eubank1995:353). *Ga* dressmakers and tailors were also caught up with these changing trends but interestingly though, the designers made sure the local fabrics were not neglected in the face of fashion. Impressively, modern fashion has improved the creative works and the confidence of *Ga* dressmakers/tailors resulting in the production of catalogues in various styles of dress, skirt/top, wedding gowns, and loose as well as fitting *kaba* and slit designs (Plates 4.21-4.32). For instance around the middle of 1970, *kaba* was designed in loose style with puffed sleeves; which were observed in either pleats or gathers. Then towards the end of 1980 and till now *kaba* is created to fit at either the waist line or hip; known as “hip-yoke”.

Between the 1960s and 1970s young ladies were attracted to miniskirts and short dresses, in addition to halter necks (Plates 4.23a-d) as well as strapless dresses, all of which have suddenly „resurrected” in this 21st century, assuming different names (Plates 4.24a-c). For instance blouses with strapped sleeves are presently nicknamed „spaghetti” while miniskirts are referred to as „Acapulco”. The women’s head coverings/hairstyle has over the years been „partners” to the changing forms, and as said earlier on, it is the same creative art that keeps to and fro. Noticeable then is the use of wigs; especially the afro wig that specifically points to the 1970s, but is still in use today (Plate 4.16). As noted by Yarwood (1992:63), the use of wigs which has existed since the 1600s has assumed diverse transformation and recurrence. Head covering in the form of *gele*,

(fashioned after Nigerian clothing style), the use of scarves, cover cloths/shawls, together with low hair-cut, plaiting, braiding and perming of hair have existed since the 1950s and till now (See plates 6.3-6.19).

Trousers and knickers originally associated with men have become popular with women. In this regard, trouser styles in form of the *tunabu*, bass/bell bottom, baggy and skinny, were accordingly observed in 1970-1980, 1990 and 2000. Since the early part of 2009 to date, young women are seen in trouser styles known as jeagings and leggings that are very tight to the skin of wearers (Plate 4.48). These styles exist together with another trouser fashion which is bulky from the waist to the knee level, and gets narrower at the base. It is presumed to have taken after the dressing of a character *Aladin*, in a televised programme known as the “Aladin Catoon Series”.

Commendably, young women are now attracted to wax prints made into dresses that are joined at the waist line with a „pencil“/ gathered/ flared skirt, or designed into *kaba* but worn over a jeans trouser. A larger belt worn around the waist or under bust on a shirt or *kaba*, used in 1990s and nicknamed „abortion belt“ is similarly worn today and referred to as „Azuma title (named after a renowned Ghanaian boxer). –Plate 4.31. Flying ties are also worn around the neck or waist (Plate 4.22). Young women also dress in very short knickers/skirts/slits that reveal either the upper part of the thigh (Plate 4.30) or buttocks, sometimes showing their „G-stringed“ underpants or expose the lowest part of their abdomen revealing the pubic hair (See fig. 4.5& plate 4.20). This „shameful and disgusting“ fashion, assumed the name „I am aware“ because wearers claim they do so intentionally. Others wear clothes with low neck lines (Plates 4.24b) that show their oiled sparkling breast, nicknamed „anointing“, which is peculiar to the Seventeenth Century low neckline of the Shakespearean period (Payne 1965:362-364). Tattoos, single to several rings or

chains are also worn on the eye browse, ears, nose, navel, toes and around the head (Figs. 4.5&6.1).



Fig 4.5: A young lady wearing tattoo, short skirt and blouse, and a ring in her navel and on the ankle.

Source: Drawn by the researcher



Plate 4.20: Ladies in „I am aware" fashion, revealing some private parts.

Source: .www.mega.com



Plate 4.21: A dress gathered at the waist line and designed with „stone"accessories



Plate 4.22: A girl wearing a mini skirt, a flying tie and the water curls hairstyle

Sources (Plates 4.21& 4.22): From the magazine, Posh Designers Delight, 2011



Plate 4.23a

Plate 4.23b

Plate 4.23c

Plate 4.23d

Plates 4.23a-d: Young women wearing different forms of the halter neck style.



Plate 4.24a

Plate 4.24b

Plate 4.24c

Plates 4. 24a-c: The fashion of wearing sleeveless *kaba* styles, commonly called „bub“.

Sources (Plates 4.23a-d & 4.24a-c): From the magazine, Posh Designers Delight, 2011



Plate 4.25: A *kente* dress designed with black satin material.



Plate 4.26: A woman in a long skirt (slit) with an appliqué design (left), a woman in *Anago* style, from Nigeria. (right).



Plate 4.27: A lady wearing *kaba* and slit, and holding a „fan“ made with the same fabric.



Plate 4.28: A flared skirt in three tiers, nicknamed three sisters.

Sources (Plates 4.25, 4.26(left), 4.27 & 4.28): From the magazine, *Posh Designers Delight*, 2011
(Plate 4.26(right)): Picture taken by the researcher



Plate 4.29: A lady wearing a strap sleeved dress.

Plate 4.30: Dressed to reveal the upper thigh.



Plate 4.31: A young woman wearing the „Azuma-title-belt“ and sun glasses.

Sources (Plates 4.29-4.31): Posh Designers Delight, 2011



Plate 4.32: Commercial Bank workers in the bank's (Friday wear) cloth.

Source: Crystabel Suapim's library, Legon



Plate 4.33: Ladies wearing Ghanaian football fans' clothes during the 2006 World Cup.

Sources (Plates 4. 33): From the book Ghana@50



Plate 4.34: A young lady (Banker) wearing a skirt suite for work.

Source: From Crystabel Suapim's library, Legon



Plate 4.35: Using the Ghana flag as a beach dress.

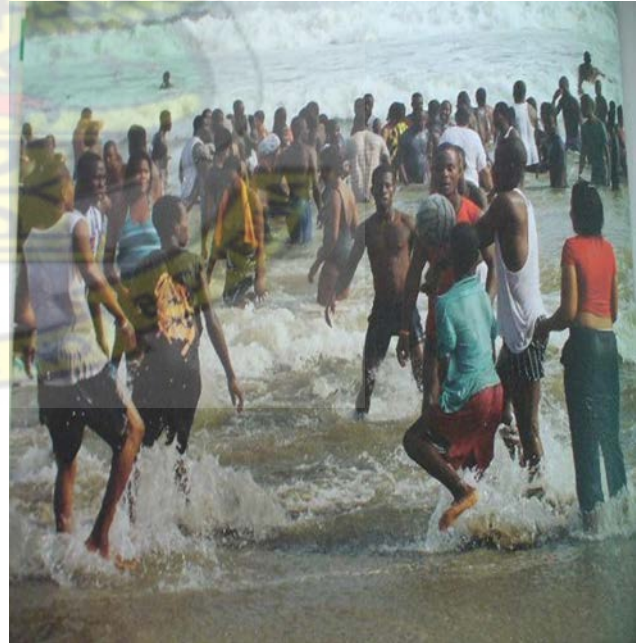


Plate 4.36: A group of people wearing different swimming costumes.

Sources (Plates 4.35&4.36): www.mega.com

Men's clothes in the form of trousers, skirts and suits have also suffered the changing impact, and like the female clothes the changes are realized by removing or adding on pleats, pockets, belt straps or either reducing or increasing the sizes of the attire.

In the researchers own observation the fashion of men's trousers in the late 1960 was a plain faced style without pleats and tapered narrowly to the ankle, making it very difficult to remove. This fashion emerged around 1980 with the name *tunabu*, however in the 1970s and 1980 the same trousers saw a new dimension known as „bell bottom," because the base was designed as large as the shape of a bell. Another trouser style which was known as, "oxford", existed alongside the former one, and fitted from the waist to the thigh, gradually opening into a bell shape from either the knee or ankle (Plates 4.37&38).

These various types of trousers were accompanied with different types of tops including long and short sleeved shirts, polo shirts, „T" shirts, jackets, and pullovers (Plates 4.42-4.45). Suits of the same material were made into two or three pieces and worn with an inner long sleeved shirt, a vest and either a flying or bow tie. However, in recent times suits can be worn with long- sleeved shirts, or „T" shirts, without the use of ties. Political suits fashioned after former President Kwame Nkrumah's style emerged around the 1950s, and has since been patronized. It has a short sleeved shirt with a trouser of the same material and a „Chinese neck" style.



Plate 4. 37: A group of young men wearing the bell- bottomed trousers of the 1970s.



Plate 4. 38: A young man in the oxford trouser and the „afro" hair style of the 1970s.



Plate 4.39: A young man wearing the „platform" slippers (1970s)

Sources (Plates 4. 37- 4. 39: From the researcher"s library, Legon.



Plate 4.40: A school teacher in his uniform in the 1960s



Plate 4.41: A man wearing a cloth and handkerchief (1960s).

Sources (Plates 4. 40& 4.41): From the researcher's library, Legon.

Around the 2000s and till now some young men wear „T“ shirts or polo shirts. A similar one nicknamed „body“, made with a light Lycra material that clinches to the body of wearers, is sometimes worn with a tight or large- sized trouser (See plate 4.47), and big belts with big reflective fasteners made with silver. Another note worthy fashion that has recently caught up with the youth is a type nicknamed „Otto-Pfister“, where young men display their underpants by wearing their shorts and trousers below the waist line, almost to the hip-line.

Other styles from Nigeria such as the use of mens" *agbada* of two or three pieces made with the same material, is designed into a pair of trousers with either a tunic or a tunic and an over coat/or long gown, plus a cap (Plate 4.48). The women"s style commonly known in Ghana as *alata*, has elaborate headgear and a short tunic over a wrapper worn around the waist and tied at the side (Pate 4.26-right). Smocks, originating from Northern Ghana have also been used by both sexes.



Plate 4.42: A young man wearing a shirt made of batik material.

Plate 4.43: A young man in a lacost shirt and jeans trousers.



Plate 4.44: A man clothed in a long sleeved captan.



Plate 4.45: A man wearing a long sleeved shirt and a flying tie.

Sources (Plates 4.42- 4.45): From Benjamin Mills- Lamptey's library, Legon.



Plate 4.46: A young man in baggy trousers and a long sleeved jumper.



Plate 4.47: A man wearing the „body-body“ top and braisess

Sources (Plates 4.46&4.47): From Benjamin Mills- Lamptey's library, Legon.



Plate 4.48: Dressed in a two- piece *agbada* (left) and a three- piece *agbada* (right).



Plate 4.49: Wearing a cloth and a jumper made with the same material

Sources: (Plates 4. 48& 4. 49): Pictures taken by the researcher.

Fabrics in vogue around 1970 were the crepe material, followed by another one with a towel texture, (referred to as towel material) in 1980. The linen material followed suite and has since existed together with cotton, silk, organza, velvet as well as embroidered cloths. Their colours vary, but the hot ones are more patronized, especially by young men who use lemon-green, purple and pink colours, which were previously more associated with females.

From 1900 to date one of *Ga* men's hairstyle has been bushy hair known as „afro", which is parted at the centre/side or not (Plates 4.38&4.40). The „flat-top" hairstyle came in vogue around 1975. In this fashion, the top part of the hair was cut flat while the sides of the head remained bushy. (See plate 4.37). This fashion was followed by another one called „back-bush", which was designed by keeping very short hair on the top of the head but leaving heavy or bushy hair at the back. Bad boy, TI, Fade and Crazy hair-cuts, are among the numerous styles existing today (Plate 6.15-6.18). However, the *sakoora* hair fashion which is clean-shaven to the scalp has caught up with the young and old. According to *Ga* oral tradition, this hairstyle has existed ever since the pre-historic period.

Over these periods foot wear for both men and women have included: „guarantee", Suede, Stiletto, Wedge, and Wellington boots which can be designed as shoes or slipper. They come in all kinds of colours and also have low, high or blocked heels. (See plates 6.24-6.33). The stiletto used by women around 1950 resurfaced in 1980, declined afterwards, came back this 21st century and has since been used alongside the other styles mentioned above. Meanwhile, apart from the „guarantee" and the „platform" shoes used by the men around the 1970"s, many changes have not occurred, except the slight changes such as pointed or flat tips, shown in plates 6.32&6.33.

Some workers from both public and private sectors are associated with prescribed clothes. Even though most teachers in the basic schools presently wear no specified clothes, around 1940s for instance the men wore white shirt and black shorts (Plate 4.40) while their females used cream dresses. Others in nursing, law, immigration, military, navigation, and other professions, have uniforms used in accordance with rank. Those outside this category wear their own clothes but workers in corporate institutions, especially banking, wear suits (Plate 4.34). In both instances outfits are sewn into blouse and skirt/trousers, as well as shirt and trousers (sometimes with a flying or bow tie) for the women and men respectively. Interestingly however, some private and public firms presently have local textiles made into slit and *kaba*, and shirts, accordingly worn by the women and men on Fridays as „Friday Wear" (See plate 4.32). Students in second cycle schools wear uniforms made with plain polyester, „check" material or local textile while those at the tertiary level do not normally dress in uniforms.

The clothes, accessories and hairstyles of children are dictated by that of adults (Compare plates 4.23&4.56), yet devoid of all the indecencies. The boys wear shirts, „T" shirts, knickers, trousers and neck-ties, as shown on plates 4.52, 4.53 and 4.55. In addition to *kaba* and slit the girls wear western clothes (Plate 4.51). Their hairs may be plaited or braided and decorated with hair accessories such as ribbons, bun or beads as indicated in (Plate 4.54). Foot wear for both boys and girls include canvas, (nicknamed *cambu*) low slippers and shoes (See plates 4. 51, 4.53 &4.45). A brown and beige uniform (shirt and knickers, and dress/pinnaford style for boys and girls respectively) used by all schools around 1980s (Plate 4.52), is presently worn alongside „traditional" ones existing around 1940s. For instance schools for the Presbyterian and Roman Catholic churches accordingly dress in uniforms that are blue and yellow colours.



Plate 4.50: A group of youths in casual clothes:the girls are wearing „leggings“

Source: From Kwabena Kodua"s library, Legon.



Plate 4.51: A young girl in a frock nicknamed „Already-made“

Source: From Opoku"s library, Ablekuma.

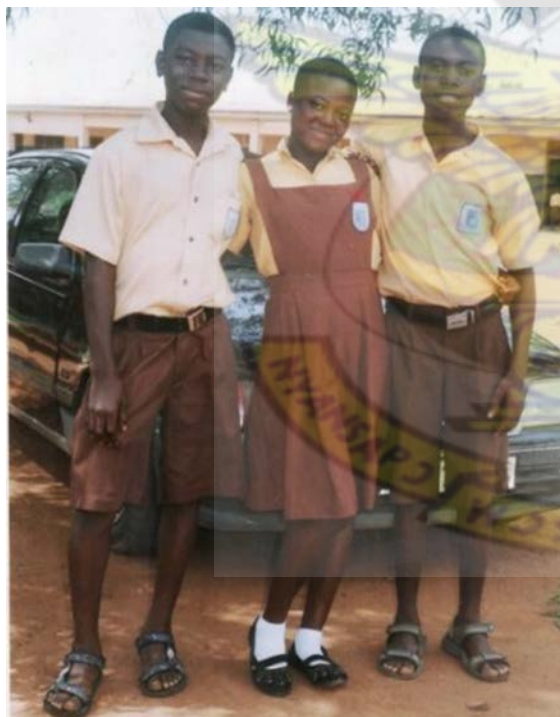


Plate 4.52: Children in brown and gold school uniform used from the 1990s to date

Source: From Kodua"s library, Legon.



Plate 4.53: A boy in shirt, knickers, flying tie, white socks and black shoes.

Source: From the researcher"s library, Legon.



Plate 4.54: Some 'Nursery' children in their school uniform and canvas

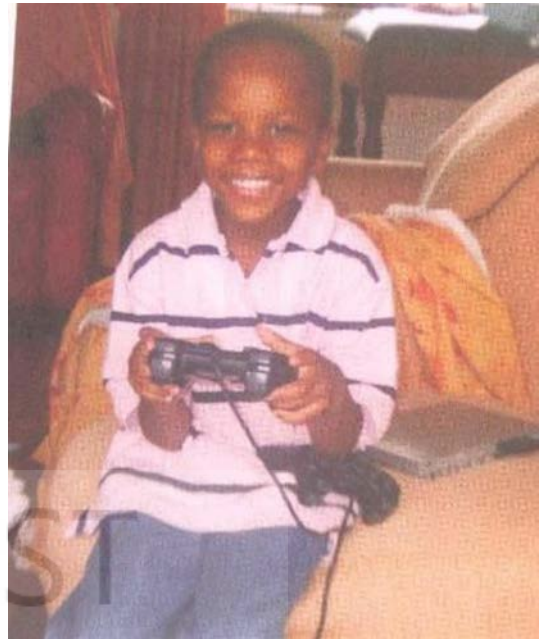


Plate 4.55: A boy in a lacost „T"shirt and jeans trousers.



Plate 4.56: A little girl with plaited hair and wearing the halter neck style.

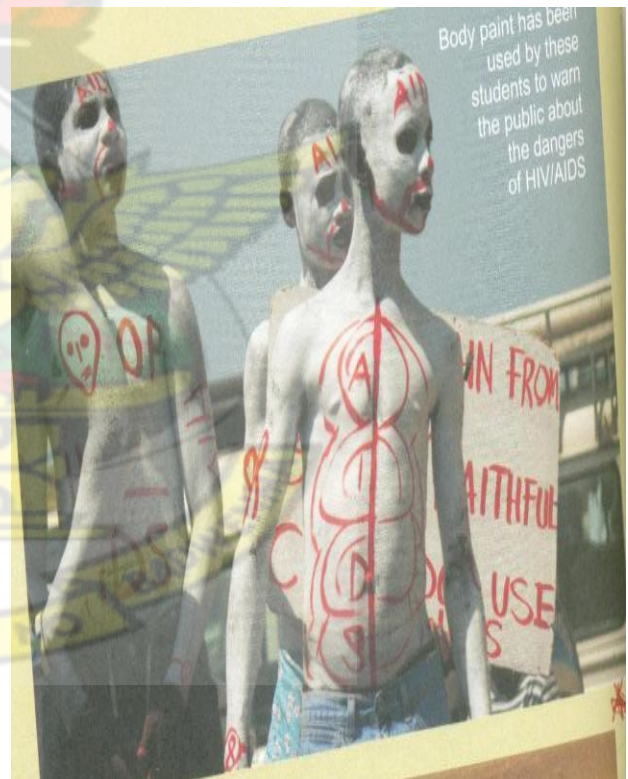


Plate 4.57: Some children wearing body designs that create awareness about the dangers of the HIV disease.

Sources (Plates 4. 54- 4.57): From the book Ghana @ 50

To sum up, clothing among *Gas* is not only the loin cloth, *kaba* and slit, and jumper and *adasa* which were or are used by women and men respectively. Western influence or „affectations" in clothing fashion has become an uninvited and inevitable part of the *Ga* clothing tradition, enveloping men, women and children.

4.4.1 Traditional Costumes: Past and Present -19th to 21st Century

In every culture the world over, countries, towns, communities and groups have traditional dress codes some of which remain unaltered, while some have been affected by acculturation and/or modernization. Discussions here therefore, concentrate on such issues in terms of style, silhouette, colour, fabric and texture as well as their roles, historical facts, cultural symbolisms, changes and adaptations associated with the socio-cultural activities of *Gas*.

4.4.2.1 Clothing Elements Aligned with Rites of Passage

In Africa, and all over the world, significant ceremonies “with varying degrees and intensity” are observed at the three crucial turning points of a person's life, known as rites of passage or life's cycle (Opoku 1974:70). When quoting Arnold van Gennep, in a work entitled *Les de Passage*, Rattary (1959:48) explains: “He treats of rites on passage through a portal or crossing over a threshold;... rites in connexion with adoption, initiation, ordination, with the changes of the seasons of the year;... most important of all, of rites practiced at birth, puberty, marriage and death.” This aspect of the study, however, centers on the involvement of clothing and adornment in the last-named turning-points (birth, puberty, marriage, and death) of progression from the spiritual world, through the living state, and back into the spiritual realms as observed by *Ga* people to ensure a strong cohesion and reinforce the flow. Some of the pertinent questions that arise are (1) what are the customary clothes associated with these rites, and whether they are still

adhered to. (2) If foreign religions such as Christianity and Islam, together with literary education and Western fashion have influenced these costumes.

4:4.2.2 The Role of Clothing and Adornment in Pregnancy and Birth Rites

In almost all African societies the fundamental reason for marriage is procreation. Belief in the continuity of human life and the preservation of the family name and heritage are so cherished that barrenness and sterility are considered an impediment to the continuous existence of humanity (Opoku1978; Rattary 1959; Field 1961). As a result, *Gas* protect the pregnant woman against both physical and spiritual ailments. While establishing this fact, one of the respondents, Madam Victoria Tettefio, a priestess as well as a traditional birth attendant, from *Agreɲanɔ*, *East Legon*, Accra, stated that the pregnant woman does not dress gorgeously at this stage; as this may attract evil eyes. She also avoids using jewellery as well as black colours which symbolize death and grief and since her present situation is a stage between life and death, anything white is also avoided, because victory has not been won yet. Among other things such as healthy dieting and the observance of certain traditional norms, protective amulets, charms and incisions are prescribed by a family *jemawɔn* (god); and these items may be worn around the neck, wrist, waist and ankle of the pregnant woman (Opoku:104; Field:162-168; Rattary 1959:54).

Like their *Ga* counterparts the *Ashantis* and *Maprosis* from Southern and Northern Ghana respectively, prepare protective charms made with cowries, twine and beads for their expectant mothers. *Fantis* similarly safeguard both the fetus and the mother with the *kunkuma akam*; comprising nine incisions worn around the navel and three others on both sides of the waist (Fig.6.2) - Davies 1986: 122. This practice is also not alien to most African countries. For instance, apart from family members petitioning God in prayer to protect the unborn child and

the mother, the *Nandi* people from Kenya also prepare protective charms that are carried by the mother (Mbiti1990: 112). Below is a table of some protective clothing items worn by the *Ga* expectant mother, including where, (specific parts of the body) and how they are worn.

TABLE 4:1 Some Clothing and Adornments used During Pregnancy

Items	Body Part	Technique
Girdle	Waist	Tied around the waist
Silver ring	Finger	Worn on the finger
Black powder	Navel	Applied into incision
Concoction prepared from green herbs	Whole body	Bath
Myrrh	Whole body	Smeared on the body
Black ointment	Whole body	Rubbed on the body

In view of the aforementioned, the safe delivery of a child means victory for the mother, father, and family and of course, the entire community. Yet in as much as *Gas* rejoice over the birth of a child, it is not accorded proper recognition until after the seventh day when the infant is presumed as human. In this regard *Gas* refer to the infant as a *gbɔ* (visitor) because it is uncertain whether it has come to stay or may decided to go back (Odotei1989). Therefore the infant is not richly adorned, but similar to Rattray"s account about *Ashantis*: "it is given any kind of clean old mat or old rug to lie upon; it is not dressed in any endearing terms..."- Rattary 1959:59. Madam Ama Kronama from Koforidua (who is over a century old) reported that before use, the cloths were washed several times with hot water to rid it of any contaminations. According to Madam

Tettefio, immediately after delivery, some *Ga* mothers apply myrrh to the baby. It is a greenish material agent and a highly scented preparation believed to have the potency of driving evil spirits. This symbolic-protective adornment is a body art of three vertical lines made on the forehead of the infant. Again since it is believed that *Gas* embraced a lot of the *Akan* clothing tradition, the use of *Baha* fiber (a product of *Musa sapientum*) as the first cloth used in the olden days for an *Ashanti* new born baby, might presumably have been used by *Gas* as well. This fiber was believed to possess some charms that protected the infant from being snatched by the „spirit mother" into the world it came from (Rattary1959:59).

This clothing culture which existed in times past, probably around 1800s is not in vogue anymore, due to „civilization" and probable health risks. Presently the first costume of the baby, nicknamed *welcome*, is made with cotton or polyester material of assorted colours such as white, light blue, pink and green. Selection of colours are gender based such that, the white and pink dresses are usually chosen for baby girls whiles the white or blue ones are reserved for the baby boys. These clothes are usually unisex, and are designed with openings at both sides, that are held with straps. Others rather open at the back and fastened with straps or pressed- buttons, and worn together with a white loin cloth, (cot sheet) wrapped around the baby to keep it warm. It is believed that the baby at this stage is very fragile therefore, the openings created on the dress are meant to facilitate easy use -in order not to force the dress on the infant and possibly break its bones. Woolen caps and socks are additionally used for the baby in cold weathers. This clothing fashion is usually observed between the first days of birth to about one month, after which clothes are determined by sex; where a frock and shirt plus shorts/knickers is respectively worn by the baby girl and boy. A needle was previously used to create a hole in the ear lobe of the

baby girl and adorned with a black thread, knotted to secure it. Even though today some people adopt this method, most midwives in public and private hospitals use a small copper earring to make and adorn the hole.

4.4.2.3 Adornments in Relation to the Birth of a ‘Special Child’

Another remarkable ritual recounted to the researcher concerned a sacred rite performed for special children such as twins and some sibblings born after them. When such a child of rank is born, its maternal grandmother receives it into her arms as soon as it is delivered. Then without bathing it she sends the father's sister to ask the family priest to consult the gods about the wishes of the child; from what family in the sky it came, and whether any special ritual must be performed for it (Field1961:51; Opoku1978:106). When this information is ascertained, the priest may order some herbal wash for it. Special charms and amulets designed as necklace, bracelet, anklets as well as waist bands are made for the infant to spiritually fortify it; and until all these rituals are performed the child remains naked.

4.4.2.4 Hairstyle and Makeup of the *Gbobaɔ* (He/She who has come from the dead)

Worthy of note are the body marking and hairstyles of the *gbobaɔ*. It is a belief among *Gas* (and *Akans*) that if a previous offspring of a couple dies young, then it is assumed, it is the same child which commutes between the human and spirit world. Such incidents are considered being caused by virulent spiritual influences, hence, the child is called by *Gas* as *gbobaɔ*, literally meaning, he who has come from the dead. To stop further occurrences the family device several measures; one approach is to give the child a derogatory (unisex) name like *Daade Asa* (proverbially inferring that there is no land for its burial), or *Akpana* (Vulture), *Adaka* (Box) and many others, which are not *Ga* lineage names. Another technique used to disguise the child

has to do with „mutilation“ of the face. The child must be marked; in fact defaced in order to hide its original identity from any evil spirit or ghost that might try to take it back. Therefore, three deep marks resembling crow's feet are made at the corners of each eye of the child (Field 1961:177-178) -See fig. 6. 4. According to the elders the child's hair is also allowed to grow and later treated with *nyanyara* leaves which help the hair to form tassels. Parents affix all kinds of charms and this depends on the instructions of a particular family *jemawɔn* (god). To permanently maintain the tassels as well as spiritually fortify it, the hair is occasionally washed with *nyanyara*. *Ashantis* call such children *bagyina* and give them names such as *D4nk4* (Slave) and *4tantan* (ugly) among others (Opoku1978:105; Rattary1959: 65). Similarly among the Bantus, some tribes use derogatory names. People from Venda and South Sotho use derogatory or unflattering names, and among the latter group this is done where the deaths of previous children are believed to be caused by a sorcerer. “The child is given a name such as dog or human excrement” and intentionally neglected to look unkept in order not to arouse the attention of the malignant spirits (Davies1986:28).

Details of rituals that take place immediately after a child is born, varies from one culture to the other. Yet the most prominent and almost universal occurrences are the days of seclusion for both mother and infant. Seclusion “symbolizes the concept of death and resurrection,” as if both mother and baby has „resurrected from death“. Nevertheless, the number of days differ among some ethnic groups because, in *Ga* (and all *Akans*) the mother and child are kept indoors for seven days whiles in Gikuyu, Kenya, the mother and child are kept in seclusion for four days if the child is a girl, or five days if it is a boy. And the underlying reason for this confinement is the spiritual protection of the mother and child (Mbiti 1990: 114). Within these seven days, in the

case of *Gas*, the nursing mother is not expected to wear any white dress, jewellery, or any gorgeous hair dress or makeup. This period is a time of great anticipation because as already noted, *Gas* do not consider the infant as “human” if it dies before the eighth day, but if it survives then it is accepted, recognized and ceremonized by a naming rite, *kpojiem*⁴, which incorporates it into the *Ga* society (Odotei1989:39). But whether the baby survives the stipulated days or dies before it, the unfortunate *Ga* mother is not expected to mourn her child but rather as a symbol of „mockery” over death, she wears white printed cloth, made into *kaba* and two loin cloths of the same material. In addition to this, she wears a pair of white earrings, small white beads as necklace and wristlets together with a pair of white slippers. According to the elders the belief and significance behind these costumes are that if the mother mourns the child by wearing dark clothes which are associated with death, she may not bear children again, hence, the use of those symbolic items which ironically hoot at death, but psychologically and spiritually stabilizes the mother and prepares her for another conception.

On the contrary among the people of Gikuyu, Kenya, the nursing mother goes through some spiritual observance when the period of seclusion is over and as a symbol of „death and resurrection”; the hair of the mother and child is shaved (Plate 4.58c). The hair represented her pregnancy; but since this stage was over, “the old hair must be shaved off to give way to new hair, the symbol of new life... and thus allow the stream of life to continue flowing”. Another aspect of the shaved hair indicates that the child does not belong to the mother alone but to the whole community, thus, the child is now “scattered like her shaven hair...” (Mbiti 1990:115).

4.4.2 5 Clothing and Adornments associated with Naming Ceremony

The spiritual aspect of *Ga* names is portrayed in *Kpojiem*⁴ or outdoor/ naming custom. As noted earlier on, this ceremony which is performed on the eighth day after birth (as in any *Akan* culture) is the only means *Gas* give social recognition to the existence of the child; thus, the child is given a lineage name. According to Field (1961:171), the child “is believed to have survived seven dangers and is worthy to be called a person.” The ceremony usually starts at dawn, about four o'clock, whilst the moon may be still up. (Odotei 1989: 40). Two women dressed in white clothes, are sent from the family of the child's father to the mother's home to bring the infant. When the rites commence an elderly person, usually with a commendable character in the lineage, either male or female depending on the sex of the child, asks for blessing from God and the ancestral spirits with rum and lifts the child upward three times. The child is laid naked on the ground and as a symbol of rainfall, water is thrown on the roof three times which trickles down on the child (Field 1961: 173). The reason ascribed to this custom is that, in its nude state (Plate 4.58a) the child receives direct blessings respectfully from mother earth and God. Then the „godparent“ gently kicks the child three times with his/her leg asking it to emulate him or her. Libation is poured and with a bottle of schnapps the child's name is announced and all present drink to the success of the custom. The ceremony ends with merry-making where corn wine and other refreshments are served amid singing, and anybody who has a gift for the child does so through the *otsaam*¹ (spokesperson) for the ceremony (Odotei 1989: 40).

It was very interesting to further learn from Madam Tettefio that in the olden days *Ga* naming ceremony was not identified with specific costumes. Also the mother of the child was not part of the ceremony; therefore apart from the white beads worn as wristlet and necklace, no special

clothes were required. In no special dressing then, the women who brought the child returned it to the mother immediately the rites were over. But the situation is different today because the mother is part of the whole ceremony, and adorns herself to express her joy.

The *Yoroba* of Nigeria have a similar custom called *T-komo-jade* which on the contrary, is observed on the seventh day in the case of a girl and on the ninth day for a boy. The *Babalawo* (priest) also throws consecrated water on the top of the roof and the mother, with her child has to run out of the house three times to receive the water falling from the roof (Opoku1978:106).



Plate 4.58a: A group of women and a nude baby at a naming ceremony.

Plate 4.58b: A baby in her first jewellery; a blue bead necklace

Plate 4.58c: Shaving a baby during the *Gikuyi*, Kenyan naming ceremony

Sources (Plates 4.58a & b): From Madam Victoria Tetteyio's Library, Teshie

(Plate 4.58c): From the book *African Ceremonies*

In the light of changing times when women initially, became part of the custom,- probably in early 1900s- clothes associated with the nursing mothers comprised a white printed cloth of *kaba* and two loin cloths, a white scarf, earrings, bead necklace and bracetlet, in addition to a flat slipper of any colour. On the other hand the modern *Ga* woman (21st century) including those

present at the ceremony may choose to wear a white printed cloth, a white *kente* cloth, or a white lace material made into either *kaba* and slit or a *buba* (jumper with big sleeves worn over a cloth). Headdress may include braids, wig, or an elaborate head-gear known as *gele*, (p.236) together with white beads, silver or gold ornaments, a white hand bag, plus either a flat/ high /blocked heeled slipper or shoes. The outfit of the father of the baby as well as the male participant is usually a white printed cloth made into jumper and togas (*adasaa*) or trousers as shown in plate 4.59, which sometimes come with a cap made with the same cloth. Or he may choose to wear a big white printed, lace or *kente* cloth with or without a plain white jumper. Others may simply wear a white jumper over a white or black pair of trousers. Gold or silver necklace and bracelet, as well as sandals/ slippers/ shoes, in colours such as white, brown or black compliments the dress code.

As said earlier on during the performance of the naming ceremony, the principal focus of the *Kpojiem*⁴ which is the child wears nothing. According to Madam Tettefio, it is after the end of the rite that the child is given a small blue bead string worn around its neck (Plate 4.58b). Depending on the arrangement of the parents and family members, merry- making may continue immediately after the customary rite or later in the day. In this instance the female child is clothed in white items such as a lace dress, socks, shoes made with fabric, as well as a gold/ silver wristlet, ring and necklace with a big pendant. In addition to these accessories, the males are dressed in light blue or white lacost shirt with shorts. Until very recently, the baby boy or girl wore the female clothes. In the olden times such activities which were short lived followed immediately after the ceremony. However, presently the trend is that later in the same day between 2:00pm – 6:00pm- the „actual celebration“, probably the second phase- is organized

with music, dance and partying. At this point costumes remain the same, however, the baby and mother may change into different white clothes.

In contrast to this observance, today some people think that the ordeal a child goes through, all in the name of „naming“ seems outrageous and „fetish“. Consequently, some Christian parents have preferred to perform the naming ceremony at church; (Plates 4.59&4.60) where it is believed the child will receive blessings from God. The ceremony normally takes place in the morning (depending on the time of worship) at the particular church. In symbol of the joy in receiving another congregation member, all in attendance including the baby are clad in white clothes, similar to those used with regards the merry making in the traditional rites.



Plate 4.59: Parents and their baby in white clothes at a church naming ceremony



Plate 4.60: Family members and friends in white costumes during a church naming ceremony

Source (Plates 4.59& 4.60): From Thomas Darkwa"s library, Accra.

TABLE 4.2 Items of Clothing used during Naming Ceremony and their Symbolic Meanings.

Users	Items	Techniques	Symbolic meaning.
Mother of New-born Baby and Females in attendance	1. White printed cloth, lace or <i>kente</i> made into <i>kaba</i> and slit or with two loin cloths. 2. White earrings, beads & silver jewelry 3. White flat slippers	Wear <i>kaba</i> on top and wear cloth around waist with one over the other. Slit is also worn under the <i>kaba</i> . Wear as earrings, necklace, and bracelets. Wear as footwear	White means victory purity and out-of-danger
New-born Baby	1. Charms 2. Myrrh 3. Incisions	Wear around ankle Smear on body. Wear at the center of the forehead	Items indicated that the child is protected by a particular god and anyone who „tries“ it answers to the god.
Father of New-born Baby and Males present	1. White printed cloth, lace or <i>kente</i> made into a jumper and togas or a pair of trousers. 2. Black/brown, silver, or gold jewellery. 3. White/black/brown sandals slippers or shoe.	Wear jumper over togas or trousers. Wear as wrist-watch, necklace or bracelet. Wear as foot wear.	White symbolizes victory for the man. White symbolizes victory
Gboba14	1. Incisions 2. Amulets, talismans, cowries and sea shells. 3. Coins and beads	Wear between three to four marks (like crow feet) at the corners of each eye. Tie around the ankle. Fix to hair.	To disguise, scare and protect child from ghost mother who might want to take it back into the spirit world.

4.4.3 The Import of Costumes in Puberty Rites

There are many different types of rites cherished and demanded by custom for *Gas*. Nonetheless, some though, not for their insignificance to the society, but for some unknown reasons seem to have gone down the drain. However, one remarkable rite that has stood the test of time is the puberty rite that is performed for the girl child to symbolize her initiation into womanhood; a custom observed to “mark transition from social immaturity to maturity” (Kilson 1974:49). This custom symbolizing rebirth, as argued by Opoku (1978:112) has in it standards of womanhood which society wishes to inculcate into the young adults who undergo the rites. It is a period of time during which the instructions and the entire experience given to the girls, help to bring about physical, emotional and psychological changes. This second significant stage of the *Ga* girl-child's life, and the initiation rites associated with it, continue the rituals of the naming ceremony and „transforms“ her into a fully developed person, competent to accomplish her responsibilities as a full member of society. And the researcher intends to highlight the relevance of clothing and adornment as a bounded cultural identity and artistic creativity that characterize the rites, pertaining to *Ga* towns such as;- Osudoku, Tema, Kpong, Teshie, Nungua, Otublohum and Abola quarters of Accra, that celebrate the custom.

As already noted, due to the different fragments of towns that coalesce to form the *Ga* chiefdom, the puberty rites come in different forms, however, with some similarities. Such as the custom of applying red oil on the body of the initiates and a string beads plus a white or red lion cloth (*boe*) worn to cover their private parts during confinement, as well as a day of public display where the initiates are gorgeously adorned. According to Field (1961:185) the best known and most fiercely cherished set of rites are the *Dipo* rites performed by the so-called “*otofo* people” of

Osu people who worship the *Nadu* deity. Popularly known as the *otofo* custom, this rite permeates all towns in which the *Nadu* deity appears, and the most distinguishing feature of the rite is the priests' hat which the girls wear". Madam Tetteyfiio asserts that, presently, the *otofo* girls' custom celebrated in Osu seems to be the best performed with more vigour and grandiose than that administered in any other *Ga* town. She claims the *otofo* ceremony serves as a protective wall surrounding the girl because it is a taboo for a woman to conceive a child before the rite is performed for her, and in times past the custom was so rigid that defaulters were banished (Opoku 1978:118).

Secondly, its objective is to present the girl to attract eligible suitors from the community. It was noted that previously, this rite was performed for girls of marriageable age, but recently the trend has changed such that, young girls of three years are also initiated (See plate 4.61). In those days, the rite could be performed for a single girl, but today owing to its expensive nature, groups of girls up to twelve in number, can go through the rite at the same time. Unlike *Akans*, the time of the performance of *otofo* for a *Ga* girl is not determined by her first menstruation (Steegstra, 2005:4). In her narration to the researcher, Madam Victoria Naaki Tetteh, who had herself undergone the *Otofo* custom stated:

We were in a group of about twelve girls and between the ages of eighteen to twenty-five years. We were confined for two weeks. Then in a red loin cloth worn between our thighs and tucked in a string of beads, we were taken to *Tɔkwɔ* (special place) amid singing and dancing. Libation was poured at a particular spot and a stone emerged from the ground. We were all asked to sit on this sacred stone to determine our chastity. It is believed that if you are pregnant the stone will burn you and expose your guilt. But when you are „clean“ the stone will be cool. When found „clean“, the whole group returns home and each father buy a goat for his child. Each girl slaps her goat with her left hand. This gesture symbolizes „purity“. After this ritual we were confined in a room for three months and we learnt

songs as well as how to work hard and take care of our families. At the end of the three months we were dressed gorgeously and „outdoored“.

During the period of confinement, the girls are visited only by old women, under whose tutelage the girls learn how to serve and care for their husbands and children. They also learn special songs and dances which will be performed during the final ceremony. As mentioned earlier on, described by Field (1961: 188) and confirmed by Madam Tetteh, cloths worn during the period of confinement include a piece of red cloth which is worn between the legs, tucked into a single waist girdle of beads, with a long piece left to hang at the front and back, leaving the upper torso bare. Red oil is applied to the whole body in addition to a symbolic hat (representing the god Nadu) which is made out of grass and woven into the shape of a plant – pot. The girls are not allowed to use footwear or jewellery.

There are various celebrations performed within the rituals. For instance there is a day's parade through town where corn wine is shared. A special food called *Kuyme* which is made of boiled wild spinach, corn and palm-oil is also prepared and given out on another day. There is a day for dancing in public in each quarter; a day to learn how to grind corn on a special grindstone and finally a ritual of going with the old women to the seashore to learn the rite of selecting nodules of gravels. Another interesting custom occurs where each girl is offered a goat. With a blow of her fist in the spittle, and spitting on its forehead the girl casts all the bad luck of her married life. And in all these activities her dressing does not change. Cloths, ornaments, money, the hole topped with the gold-hung *otofo* hat which is meant to be worn on the last day for dancing, are among the gifts given to the girl by her parents.

The end of the training begins with a public ceremony which is intended to portray the girls as marriageable. They first receive congratulations and blessings from their gods- Afriye, Nadu and Bake. Then according to Field;

They bathe in herbal water in the god's yard, and are then marked with the mark of the god [Page 182] and blessed. Their nakedness is then alleviated by enormous masses of heavy waist-beads, neck, arm, and leg-beads and a string of black and white beads which are normally the prerogative of priests, *wɔyei* and persons dedicated to the gods.

A final ritual to test their chastity is done at the final public display-dancing, where almost all-the community converge to witness this. And in addition to Field's description noted above, they wear the *otofo* hat, which is decorated with a red parrot feathers and the inflated and coiled intestine of a newly slaughtered goat- precisely, the goat on whose forehead they spat. In place of her oiled body, are different types and patterns of lines, circles, dots and rectangular designs of aesthetic excellence. The material used is myrrh (*klɔbɔ*) and water, and as usual the *otofo* girl is barefoot. Afterwards each girl comes forward in turn and performs the special dance for the ceremony; a dance with graceful movements swaying and swinging of the arms. And as stated by Field (1969:190) "a girl's clean conscience is determined by her timely response to the rhythmic pattern of the music, but the one with a guilty conscience will bungle some steps". After the custom the newly outdoored *otofo* woman may live in her finery for about a month, and to attract suitors, she is decorated with very wild and beautiful yellow patterns made with myrrh. If no prospective suitor emerges within the period, then the family is extricated, and thus, receives no blame.

A group of *asafokun* usually involves a company of boys who normally march through the town in procession while the girls' custom is being performed at home. Custom requires each girl to

be represented by a youthful boy, who must not necessarily be the very people to whom the girls are betrothed. They are usually brothers of the girls whose involvement in the rite symbolizes the presence of the individual suitors. During the final outdoor (the final dance) the role of these youths is acknowledged as they are offered a very honourable seat in the front row. The significance of involving the *asafoku* in the rite is portrayed in the way they are dressed (Field 1961:189). According to Madam Tetteyfiio their costume comprises two multi-coloured loin cloths- dominated by gold or yellow patterns- worn around the waist, an umbrella as well as a type of headdress which is made with two or three colourful *odasob4w* scarfs, woven into a long thick band (See plate 4.65). They do not use foot wear or jewellery. Their yellow or gold clothes represent their wealth and economic viability, while the use of the umbrella also signifies their capability of protecting these future „wives“.

At Tema and its surrounding villages, the *otofo* rite is distinguished from the others in two ways; (1) the use of a decorated elephant tail, and (2) their special hairstyle; *akukuli*. This hairstyle is symbolic to that of the Sakumo chief priest at Tema, and since the worshippers of this deity were probably the first to perform the *Asi* rites, it is obvious they set the precedence in using this type of hair-do that has come to stay (Field 1961:186). The girl could be married or single, however, she must perform the rite before giving birth. The ceremony begins with the girls clothed in strings, entering almost all houses to announce the impending rites. Then early the next morning- dressed as before-, they proceed to the bush to collect *t1r1tso* (*Cola nutida*) leaves. When they return home the leaves are baked to dry and then ground to powder. The next day's activity is to make the powder into a paste, and used to mould the girls' hair into five big fantastic knobs. One knob is placed on the crown of the head with the rest of the four surrounding it (Plate 6.6, right).

Today, however, in designing the mould the hair is stuffed with synthetic hair piece. In contrasts to the red cloth, they use a plain white cloth for the next two weeks of confinement. The basic activity for them is to sing and dance every day. Finally to climax the rite, the girls wash off the *t1r1tso* paste, plait their hair and decorate it with a string with two parrot feathers (See plate 4.62). Then after the public ritual the girls are supposed to be in this costume for about three months. (Field1961:187).

The people of Kpong also celebrate the *otofo* rite, though with some difference. Before the rite begins, the girls' fathers present the chief with rum to declare the family's intention of celebrating the rite. With his approval, a type of cord known as *Sun m4n*, is knotted and tied around each girl's neck. Then the girls are sent to the respective gods of their families where the *otsaam*¹ (spokeman) slaughters a goat on their behalf. To declare their chastity, the girls strip before the god and then proceed to the *otofo* rock which they have to mount and plunge from; and if a girl is guilty she cannot mount the rock (Field 1961: 189). The hairs of the girls are shaved and they wear grass hats which are worn so tight that their growing hairs are not seen - especially by any young man. It is a taboo for a girl to become pregnant during this six- week servitude. In the past if a girl nullifies the ritual and brings misfortune to herself, the boy who impregnated her was severely dealt with.

Presently the culprit is fined a whole case of gin together with a cow, and the girl and her *Otofo* old woman attendant will go to the *Otofo* rock where the blood of the slaughtered cow is poured on the rock. The girl still wears her clothes as before and the boy wears only *adasaa* and together, the guilty pair is made to jump into the sea to wash away their sins. To signify the end

of the *Otofo* rite and the successful conclusion, a final ritual is performed by an old woman who uses her knees to knock the base of the spine of each girl three times (Field 1961:190).

The celebration of the puberty rite in Teshie is the *Asi* which is quite different from the rite of the other towns already discussed. Here, the girls are confined in a room and engage in singing and storytelling each evening for a week. If a girl does not go through the *asi* rites, but marries and gets pregnant she is believed to have offended the gods and ancestors and thus, the husband must take steps to drive away the evil which threatens her. The pacification requires among others, a piece of white calico and corn wine in two pots wreathed with *nyanyara* to the shrine of the chief priest, where the wife washes herself with a *nyanyara* concoction to cleanse herself of every evil. She is then given a knotted *hun* which she wears as necklace. This symbolic necklace serves as a protection against the return of any evil forces connected to the neglect of the *Asi* custom.

In Otublohu in Accra the girls perform the puberty rites instituted by the *Akwapims*. Oral tradition noted that these people were not celebrating the rite until they learnt it from the *Akwapims* who later settled among them. The rite is done as soon as the girl sees her first menstruation. The custom is performed by each individual, therefore it is devoid of the massive publicity that the other girls enjoy. The Abola quarter of Accra celebrates the *Bladzo*, which involves a small ritual in which the girl is dressed in new clothes. This custom signifies that the girl has pelted with *fotoli*-the ritual meal- and hence can eat *fotoli* and take part in public worship (Field 1961:191)

The puberty rite celebrated in Nungua is called the *tun* or camwood. This custom has a special interpretation, and therefore confined to women of rank, priestesses and *jara n4 yei* (priestly servant to a tutelary god). The neglect of the rite at Nungua denotes a woman's unworthiness to enter the *gbobukun* (The sacred forest of the Gbobu god), because the custom is almost set apart for women of position and those inclined to have ceremonial duties in the *gbobukun* (Manoukain 1950:91). To undergo the puberty rite the girls' hair is shaved, leaving small portions in which gold coins and cowries are attached. Wearing the *tun* hair tradition also applies here. The girls are later sent to the house of the *gbobu* chief priest where they are blessed, and then clothed in a bead skirt and a cam wood hat, they are outdoored by the *jara n4 yei*. If a girl is married the *tun* is removed from her head by her husband's younger brother but if she is not, her own brother is assigned that responsibility. And he does so by knocking the girl's head three times with his fist to break the mold of the *tun*, after which the girls dress for the public custom. Married women go through the same ritual but on a more elaborate and expensive scale (Field 1961:190).

Ashantis, *Krobos* and *Ewes* in Ghana have similar customs referred to respectively as *Bragor*⁴, *Dipo* and *Gbato*. *Bragor*⁴ comes with a rich cloth worn under the bust of the girl- revealing the breast- and lots of jewellery, signifying her maturity and eligibility to be regarded an adult *Ashanti* woman. *Dipo* of the *Krobos* also adorns the girl like that from *Osudoku* (Steegstra 2005:142-155). *Gbato* is also found in some parts of the Volta Region, where initiates dress in rich cloths, headgear, elaborate beads worn around the neck and waist, as well as body designs in green myrrh. Two significant properties of this rite are: a walking stick and a smoking pipe used by the initiates to sensitize them on the significance of their present status into womanhood and the responsibilities attached (Dzamedo 2009:138; Opoku 1978:121).



Plate 4.61: The dressing of *otofo* initiates in 1940s that adorned the girls with raffia strips on their upper legs

Source: From Albertina Alloteys library, Osu



Plate 4.62: The olden days *otofo* girls wearing parrot feathers in their hair

Source: From the book Religion and Medicine of the Ga people



Plate 4.63: A modern day *Ofofo* initiate adorned with several beads and cloths

Source: From Gladys Amartey's library, Ajregano,

4.4.4.1 Marriage and its related Clothes and Accessories

The next major ceremonial event after the puberty rite is marriage. In all African societies marriage is a religious entity which a person is obligated to participate in. It is the pivot of human existence that involves the whole community - the living, the ancestors and those yet unborn. This integration between a man and a woman as described by Mbiti (1989:130),

... is a drama in which everyone becomes an actor or actress and not just a spectator. Therefore, marriage is a duty, a requirement from the corporate society, and a rhythm of life in which everyone must participate. Otherwise, he who does not participate in it is a curse to the community, he is a rebel and a law-breaker, he is not only abnormal but "under-human".

This statement, therefore, underscores the fact that anybody who fails to marry has renounced society and society rejects him as well. This is because society sees marriage as a means by which both husband and wife are biologically reproduced in their children, therefore, eternalizing the succession of the human race. Hence, Mbiti (:130) concludes: "This is a sacred understanding and obligation which must neither be neither abused nor despised". The onus therefore lies on every African to anticipate marriage immediately after initiation, because as noted by Rattary (1959:76): "It [marriage] is considered a very important transition stage in the journey through life" (See also Kilson 1974:50).

Unlike the other rites previously described, the actual marriage custom is comparatively brief, simply because the ritual in itself is ultimately simple. Nonetheless, its simplistic nature rather helps to highlight costume because the ceremony does not require any specific customary or ritual clothes. Granted, *Ga* marriage ceremony involves prayers and supplication, yet, it is a civil ceremony in which the use of clothing and accessories assume a major role. The bride, groom,

the “lucky families” and people in attendance all dress to solemnize the occasion. And it is worth mentioning that the custom involves, allows and combines all colours such as green yellow, purple and what a person desires.

4.4.4.2 Costumes of the Bride, Bridegroom and Others at the Marriage Ceremony

As told by Madam Kweifio of Ga Mashi, Accra and some other respondents from Teshie and Tema, in the past *Ga* marriage was contracted between the two families without the knowledge of the woman; thus the bride to be. After a satisfactory background check on each other, the man's family presents a bottle of schnapps, two multi-coloured loin cloths with gold background, and two shillings cash as the bride price.

Today, the traditional marriage rite has advanced beyond the former practice. Items demanded from the man as bride price (Plate 4.64) include: seven pieces of assorted cloths, six scarves, gold and silver ornaments, waist beads, six under pants and four foot wears. If the marriage is an „ordinary” one or a royal marriage these items still hold, but the man can decide to add on if he wishes. There is a dramatic change from the former custom because in almost all the marriages performed today, the woman has to consent to the proposal. Madam Kweifio emphatically said that, “Marriage today is the woman”. Being the core of the ceremony, therefore, the bride is gorgeously clothed and adorned and the focus is more of aesthetics than religious. She may wear a wig, style her hair and add fillets, or wear *gele*. Clothes may also include a colourful *kente* cloth, a lace material or a printed cloth which is made into *kaba* with two loin cloths and slit, or *buba* and slit. In addition she is adorned in gold jewellery which is worn as necklace, and bracelet, and her footwear could be a pair of flat /high-heeled slipper or shoes.



Plate 4.64: A group of women in different clothes carrying the „bride price“

Plate 4.65: The costume of the little bride (right) and the little groom (left) in a traditional marriage rite.

Sources (Plates 4.64& 4.65): From Richard Ossom"s"s Library, Legon.



Plate 4.66: A bride in *kente* cloth during a traditional marriage custom.



Plate 4.67: Bride"s maids wearing a similar cloth in a traditional marriage rite.

Source (Plates 4.66&4.67): From Thomas Darkwa"s library, Accra.



Plate 4.68: Family members and well wishers wearing multi-colour clothes at a traditional marriage ceremony.

Source (Plate 4.68): From Thomas Darkwa's library, Accra.

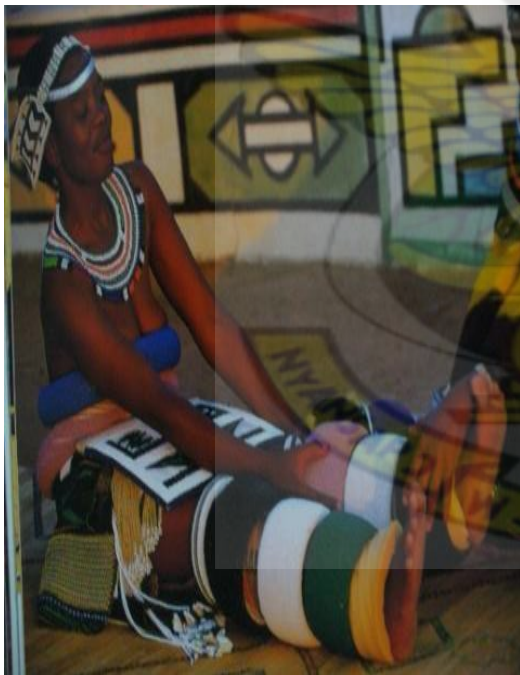


Plate 4.69: The *Ndebele*, South African bridal wear: the *liphotu* and *ijogolo* bead aprons

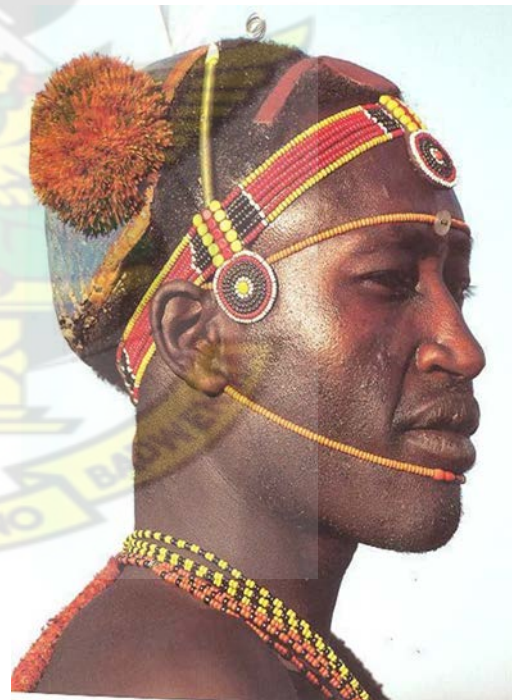


Plate 4.70: The *Turkana*, Kenyan man wearing the beaded headband and painted clay hair bun associated with marriage.

Sources (Plates 4.69 & 4.70): From the book *African Ceremonies*

Some marriages may continue the traditional rite with a church (White) wedding and this moment comes with distinctive costumes. In most of such weddings the researcher attended, the bride wore a long white dress that tapers to the ground. It was made with white or broken satin material. She also used a white veil, a white pair of gloves made with lace material and worn from the elbow to the wrist. The gloves do not cover the bride's fingers. This style is intentionally created so that the groom can fix the wedding ring on the central finger. Silver necklace, earrings and a white pair of shoes were also worn and in addition, she held in her left hand a bouquet of well arranged beautiful flowers selected in conformity with the wedding colours (Plates 4.71&4.74). An additional aspect of this „white" wedding is the use of a best man, page boy, maid of honour and flower girl. If the couple decides to use any of such persons, their clothes accessories and colours are chosen by the couple and usually complement the “wedding colours”, yet their dressing should not compete with the couples" (Plates 4.72, 4.73, 4.75& 4.91).



Plate 4.71: A bride and groom exchanging rings during a church wedding

Source: From Thomas Darkwa's Library, Accra.



Plate 4.72: A little bride with an umbrella

Source: From Obuobi's Library, Accra.
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Plate 4.73: A „flower girl" holding a bouquet

Source: Picture taken by the researcher.



Plate 4.74: A wedding ceremony of a soldier; where the bride and his colleagues are wearing military costume.

Source: From Thomas Darkwah's library, Accra.



Plate 4.75: Little groom, petal girls and a page boy wearing a couple's „wedding colours"

Source: From Obuobi's library, Accra.



Plate 4.76: Bride's maids in a church wedding wearing a similar fabric sewn into different styles.

Source: From Thomas Darkwa's library, Accra.

There are, however, isolated cases where the bride's clothes may depart from white to the use of other colours during a church wedding. This issue raises two questions. (1) When should a bride use white clothes? (2) Why is it not appropriate for a bride to wear white? In the researcher's own observation, and as confirmed by the respondents, any *Ga* woman (or any Ghanaian woman) who has a child before marriage, should not use white clothes. This is because in an earlier discussion it was recorded that white symbolizes sacredness and purity, but since the bride could not maintain her chastity before wedlock, she is defiled and, therefore, forbidden to use white items. Inferably, a white wedding dress is exclusively reserved for a woman who has maintained her chastity. If the former is the case, then, the bride could settle on any colour of her choice, and colours that are usually used are pink or lighter shades of green, purple and blue.

As noted already, in the past, the groom was not part of the traditional marriage ceremony. However, today, similar to the position of the bride, the groom is allowed to participate in the custom. He may choose to wear any colourful *kente* cloth, or any multi-coloured printed cloth, lace or a plain linen material sewn into jumper and *adasaa*. Haircut usually depends on what is in vogue at the time. But there are exceptional cases where a person may not be fashion conscious and will want to stick to a particular hairstyle. In both situations, however, the groom's hair is shaved "clean". Other accessories may include beads or gold jewellery used as necklace and bracelet; *4heneba* slippers, or a black/ brown sandals or shoes are also worn. (Plates 6.20-6.33).

In a church wedding, the groom usually wears a three-piece suit, and the choice of colours are usually grey, off-white or blue-black which comprises a coat, an inner vest and a pair of trousers. He also uses a shirt and a tie which usually matches the colour chosen for the wedding. Additionally, depending on age and taste the groom may decide to use a *kente* cloth and a jumper

or a lace material made into a three piece *agbada* – a long-sleeved jumper, with trousers worn as an inner dress with a sleeveless long gown worn over as an outer garment (Plates 4.48&4.49). Hairstyle, accessories, and footwear used are the same as described during the traditional marriage ceremony.

The females in attendance including family members of the bride and groom, may wear *buba* with a cloth or slit, a mini or a maxi dress. Accompanying accessories include beads, silver or gold jewellery. Footwear is any of the following: a pair of flat or high-heeled slippers or shoes. Fabrics used range from *kente*, lace or velvet material and printed cloths, and headdresses comprise a scarf, *gele*, wigs and braids as shown in plates 6.11-6.14.

Costumes for the men could be any of the following: a *Kente* or velvet cloth with *adasaa* a lace or linen material made into jumper and trousers; a three – piece *agbada* with cap; a three – piece- suit with shirt and a flying tie, or a pair of trouser and shirt. Beads, gold or silver jewellery are also used. Additionally, sandals, *4heneba*, or shoes are worn accordingly. Hair-cut still remains the same as already described in the preceding paragraph.

Religious leaders may be present at the marriage ceremony especially when there is a church wedding. In this vein some Christian denominations like the Presbyterian, Anglican and many others have prescribed costumes (Plate 4.79) for their leaders and such clothes are worn in accordance with specific functions, such as marriage.

Except for a special role given to children during the marriage rites as indicated in plates 4.72, 4.73 and 4.75 all the children in attendance wear smaller sizes of the adult costume. For such special children however, the researcher discovered at a traditional marriage ceremony that

customary clothes for the boy included a twisted head-band made with a plain scarf, a piece of multi-coloured loin cloth about 7.4cm long and worn as shown in plate 4.65 (left). He also wore a long bead necklace and wristlet; however, he was barefoot. The girl on the other hand used a colourful headdress made with two scarfs woven together. In her case, dress was scanty and as shown in plate 4.65 (right), she used a long velvet cloth worn like the *Otofo* girls" costume, with enormous beads worn on her wrist and neck. She was smeared with and also walked barefoot.

4.4.5.1 Clothes Identified with Death and Funerals

All over the world, funeral ceremonies take diverse forms in accordance with the culture of the deceased. A review of the material on African funeral rites including those of the *Ga* in Ghana, the Hottentoes of Namibia in South Africa, and the Bantus of Western Kenya in East Africa by Bame (1991), established that all the above mentioned societies believe that the dead embark "on a journey and that death does not end life". Moreover, there is widespread belief in Africa that, until the appropriate rites and ceremonies are performed, the spirits of the dead may be forbidden to join the ancestral spirits. Therefore, as recorded by Rattary, (1959); Antubam, (1963); Sarpong, (1991), the belief provides a fundamental rationale that characterizes a whole array of African funeral rites and ceremonies. As a result of such beliefs, in *Ga*, when a person dies the family and the communities take pain to perform the necessary rituals that help in "transforming and transporting the deceased's spirit from the human world to the spiritual ancestral world"- Foster 1995:2. And among the series of rituals performed to fulfill these beliefs, clothing and adornment are used.

Clothing is believed to be one major tool used to create symbolic impressions at funerals, and Forster (1995: 1) further mentions that specific colours of clothing items are used by different groups of people for mourning at funerals all over the world. Consequently, the research revealed that, among the *Ga*, there are three main funeral cloths used by the deceased's relatives, which also conforms to funeral cloths of *Akans* (Opoku1978; Antubam 1963). These are (1) *Kuntunkuni* (a dull black cloth which is locally dyed), (2) *Birisi* (a plain black cloth usually imported) and (3) *k4bene* (a plain red or maroon cloth). Such cloths are relative to specific types of funerals. Giving her accounts to the researcher, Madam Tettehfio related that among the *Ga*, there are three types of funeral symbolized by special colours of cloth.

For the elderly who died between the ages of eighty and above, a white cloth with a little touch of black is used throughout the funeral celebrations. Black clothes are used for the funeral of a person who passes on between fifty and sixty years. And red or maroon cloths celebrate the death of a person between ten and thirty years. The *Kɔbene*, *Birisi* and *Kuntunkuni* are only used by close relatives of the deceased but could be kept and used at a later time. For instance people wear *Birisi* during the funeral of a very close friend. However, friends and sympathizers use any multi-coloured dull cloth. Madam Tettehfio stated further that in the *Ga* community as in any Ghanaian community, a funeral ceremony depends on the kind of death and the status of the individual who passed away. Opoku (1978:135) has also reported that the splendor, complexity, the cost of a funeral, and people's dress and grooming at funerals, depended on age, status, wealth, popularity of the deceased and the cause of death. In confirmation to the above observation, Madam Tettehfio also said that funeral among the *Ga* falls within these categories:

- i. People of rank and those who have been successful in life, or relatives of such people.

ii. Poor people from poor families

iii. People who die shameful deaths, such as, death by suicide, drowning, etc., and iv.

Children.

Again, there are defined costumes that clamour the funeral rites of religious leaders like the *mantɔ*¹ (chief), *wɔyei* (priestess) and the *wulɔmɔ* (chief priest).

4.4.5.2 Burial Clothes for the deceased (men, women and children)

According to Madam Tettehfio, in the olden times immediately a death was announced, the old women of the deceased's paternal and maternal families were called to wash and shave the corpse. These women brought with them pieces of wood fibre commonly used as washing – sponge. Adding to this oral tradition, Field (1961:198) has reported that the parents of the deceased sent another bunch of sponge which was used to wash the body, and from which a small portion was used to wash the head of the corpse three times. The significance of this ritual as confirmed by „Madam Maaku" also of Ga Mashi, Accra, is that all the relatives (both maternal and paternal) want to wash the deceased so that the spirit would intercede for them in the ancestral world.

In the past, as it still happens today, before the body is washed, its – fingernails and toenails are cut very short and the belief is that, it might use the uncut nails to “scratch people so that it might have companions in its new state”. Then the hair and the nails are put together and buried three days after burying the corpse. She continues: “the hair and the nails will be put in a small box and buried in the deceased's father's house if he is a man. And if she is a woman the pot is kept in her mother's sleeping -room.” The reason given by *Gas* is that “The spirit of the dead will know where it belongs and will always return there”. To protect relatives, especially young and

delicate children from fear of the deceased, small portions of the hair are sometimes kept, tied in a twine and worn around their knees (Field 1961: 199). Then after bathing the body it is clothed and adorned according to its sex and status.

The research disclosed that clothes and accessories put in the coffin to “accompany a female corpse on her journey” include fourteen multi-coloured loin cloths taken from the deceased's wardrobe. Seven of these cloths are worn around her waist as under garments. Then she is clothed with a white *odasobow* scarf as a head dress. Also on her waist are three bundles of *Koli* or *topap* beads (Plate 6.35) in which is tucked a red piece of rectangular cloth (*lanta*) about 0.7cm long and 0.3cm wide. In addition, she is dressed with any kind of a single bundled bead around the wrist and knee. No footwear is used, and the reason ascribed to this tradition is that, the spirit of the dead person might use the slipper to disturb the living. The actual final outer dress used to cover the corpse as it is laid-in-state, and which is placed over the undergarments, is either a long dress made with any colourful printed (not black) cloth, or made into *kaba* and two loin cloths.

Nevertheless, the researcher was informed that most of these rituals are obsolete, hence, not practiced any longer. For instance the shaving of the deceased's hair and cutting of its nails are not condoned by some Christians. Rather, the hair of the deceased is either braided or plaited with black threads. However, apart from a few items like white pants and a white brazier, which have been added on, all undergarments remain unchanged. Also depending on the age and religious background of the deceased, some families may prefer a *kente* cloth sewn into *kaba* and two loin cloths, or a white long dress-shroud- which is made with satin material. The shroud has an opening at the back and the purpose is to avoid difficulty when putting it on the deceased.

Wigs are also used, but they are removed and replaced with a white *odasobow* scarf before burial. The use of footwear is again not encouraged for the same reason mentioned in the preceding paragraph. Moreover, instead of beads, gold jewellery owned by the deceased, or one that belongs to her family and kept for that purpose, or one that is borrowed is usually used to adorn the corpse. Finally, one of the remaining seven cloths is stripped and given to the children of the deceased to be worn as bands; either around their heads or on their wrists. Then the remaining six are shared among the women who bath the corpse.

In the olden times burial clothes for men included an outer garment: a multi-coloured men's cloth worn over either an *adasaa*, or over a jumper and *adasaa*; or a piece of multi-coloured cloth, about 3.4cm, could also be made into jumper and togas. Undergarments included: three sets of jumper and togas selected from deceased's clothes. A head dress made with a scarf could be added as depicted in plate 4.65 (left), or the hair might be completely shaved. Neither beads nor footwear were added to his outfit.

Today, costumes used on a male corpse includes one white pant, two boxer shorts with a white background, one pair of white knickers, a pair of white socks, a white singlet and a pair of trousers – which are all worn as under garments. The outer garment could be similar to what was used in the olden times, especially, in the case of older people about ninety years and above. Some of the deceased have been dressed with a three-piece-suit – quite often made with a woolen material, with colours ranging between white, broken- white and grey. Sometimes white gloves are also used. Similar jewellery, (described under the female burial clothes) is also used to adorn the male corpse, and his hair could be shaved or styled according to the deceased's hair-style whiles he was alive.

On the basis of their sex, recently, children above the puberty age are buried in the same clothes used in the case of adults. However, the bulk of jewellery used for the adult is reduced in the case of the child. Children below the adolescent age are buried in white clothed; the males wear jumper and *adasaa*/trousers while the females are costumed in frocks. Oral sources indicate that in the olden times the body of the young male child was dressed in a multi-coloured jumper and *adasaa*. The female child was also clothed in a multi-coloured frock. It is worthy to state that these costumes do not apply in all situations because there are isolated instances where some children may not receive such burial clothes, and this will be considered later in the discussion.

4.4.5.3 Burial Clothes Associated With the Chief, Queen Mother and Chief Priest

As will be related later in the discussions, in the past costume for every *Ga* chief was a piece of white cloth; therefore, when the chief died he was buried with the same clothes. Clothing and accessories used in burying the chief therefore included a white cloth the *nyanyara* „leaf and a” lot of beads worn on the neck, arms, waist and legs. Footwear was not used. However, the trend is quite different today. How? The researcher was told that people of rank, for example the chief is now buried with a rich *kente* or velvet cloth and *adasaa*. The dead body is also adorned with plenty of beads and gold jewellery as in crown, necklace, anklets, bracelets and rings (Labi 2001:50-51). A pair of *4heneba* slippers adorned with gold is also placed on the feet of the corpse as it is laid in-state, however, before the coffin is finally covered for burial, the slipper and most of the ornaments are removed except one gold necklace and a few beads that he takes along to the other “world”. Costumes can be changed two to three times before the final burial. Clothes worn under the outer garments are the same as has been described for a male corpse; the difference, however, is in the rich texture of the *Mants’* (chiefs) underwear.

The *Ga Many*¹ (queen mother) was originally dressing in white clothes like the *Ga Mants*¹. Similarly then when she passed on, she was dressed in white costume. In addition she was adorned with the *nyanyara* leaf and a lot of beads on the neck, arms, waist and legs. A recent change in the use of costume of the queen mother has resulted in changes in burial clothes such that, today, a *Ga Many*¹ could be buried in *kente*, velvet or any other rich cloth. The body is also adorned with beads and gold jewellery crafted into bracelets, anklets and wristlets. The hair is either held at the base with a strip of *kente* cloth or a twisted-scarf band. A wig, as well as *4heneba* slipper could be used, but these and most of the gold ornaments are removed before burial. The wig is replaced with *odasobow* scarf. Comparatively, there is no significant change because the regalia which were used in the past to bury a *wul4m4* are the same costumes used today. Since all clothing items for him were/ are white, when the body is being prepared for burial it is clothed in a white jumper and *adasaa*, with beads worn on the neck, arms and legs. No footwear is allowed. The only difference between the white cloth used in the past and the one used today is the texture of the cloth. Whereas *klala* (calico) was used in the past, a white lace, velvet and linen materials have been in vogue presently; and these are the types used in burying the chief priest.

Of late the coffin, bed, and the room where the deceased is laid in state is decorated with fabrics such as white lace, white satin, and/or a multi-coloured *kente* or velvet cloth selected according to the age, sex, and status of the deceased or the economic standing of the bereaved family. If a family is financially sound they may engage the services of a „Funeral Home“ who takes care of these concerns and in addition carry the coffin into the hearse. In one such situation, the

researcher realized that the bearers of the coffin, comprising six young men, were all dressed in white long sleeved shirts, white gloves, and black clothes such as a bow-tie, suite and shoes.

4.4.5.4 Traditional Mourning Dress Used By Men, Women, Children and Special People

According to oral tradition, wake-keeping and funeral customs performed in the past were not accorded the same extravagance and time as witnessed today. In those days, tradition required every woman to wear a black scarf as „head cover, a black cloth made into *kaba* and two loin cloths, a pair of small black earrings, and a flat black slippers. The use of accessories was scanty. For both the wake-keeping and final funeral rites observed today, women usually use any dull multi-coloured cloth or a black blouse with two loin cloths. In addition to the above, mourners wear a black scarf, a black pair of slippers or a pair of black high-heeled shoes, black earrings, and either a beaded or gold necklace. Furthermore, recently some women wear sun glasses or leave their hair uncovered and either wear braids, wigs or decorate their hair with fillets (See plate 4.81).

Men's mourning clothes in the olden days for both wake-keeping and funeral rites consisted of a black or brown men's cloth, a black or brown jumper and togas, and a pair of black slippers. On the other hand, in recent times the men may choose to wear any dull multi-coloured men's cloth, a black men's cloth, or a black or multi-coloured jumper and togas. Added to such clothes is black slipper (*4heneba*), black sandals or shoes. Even though accessories were not used by men in the olden times, some today wear a gold necklace and bracelets during funerals.

Formerly, children were not allowed to attend funerals. But as noted by the researcher, children are now part of almost all funerals. In fact some children stay at the funeral grounds till all

ceremonies are over. This tolerance, the researcher learnt, is to allow the children to be part of the whole ceremony so that they would learn *Ga* traditions. Children, therefore wear a miniature of the adult clothes. However, children of the deceased wear *birisi*. Their hair must also be completely shaved, but according to the elders the children can wave off the ritual (redeem their hair) by paying a specified token of money to the clan head. To portray kinship ties with the deceased, and to also show that the children and the deceased are separated for ever, the children wear strips of cloth as mentioned previously.

The researcher again observed with interest the isolated instances of special mourning clothes. For example at a funeral that she attended, traditional priests and priestesses, twins, mother of twins and widows, wore clothes with a white background. Madam Tettefio explained that such men and women are revered as „deities“ and therefore have to wear white to symbolize their purity. To show a group's affiliation with the deceased, there were also in attendance women/men of special religious statuses like knights, singing groups, professions and many more, who were dressed in their (society's) costumes which were not necessarily designed for mourning. Family members, children and grandchildren of the deceased also wore special cloths that readily identified them as such (Plates 4.78).

4.4.5.5 Mourning Clothes for a Widow and Widower

Costumes for widows in the olden times were distinguished with a special hair-cut known as *nk4mm4*. As related to the researcher by Madam Silvia Tettefio of Teshie, this hairstyle is worn with the temples of the widow shaved, leaving a small portion of hair at the top; a little smaller than the hair style of the *otofo* girl portrayed in plate 6.7. Madam Victoria Naa Ode Kweifio, another respondent from Ga Mashie also mentioned that, in the olden days and to date, from the

day the death of the spouse is announced, the living spouse starts wearing black or dark clothes. The widow wears any dull cloth made into *kaba* and two loin cloths, and discards all jewellery. According to her, widows in the olden times, were not allowed to use foot wear because both jewellery and footwear were considered items of beauty, therefore, avoiding such accessories were authentic means of expressing grief. It is, however, worthy to mention that there is a relapse with some of these traditions. For instance, presently the widow's hair is no longer shaved and also a black flat footwear like *tsalew4te* (flat rubber slipper) or something similar can be worn by the widow.

From the day a man loses his wife to death he is also expected to show his grief accordingly, and he does so by way of wearing a mourning costume. Such had been the tradition established in the olden days and also imbibed today. The following constitutes the costume of the widower: he is clothed in a black shirt over a black pair of trousers or a black jumper and *adasa*, a very low hair-cut, no accessories nor footwear. Unlike the widow, custom does not require any special hair-cut for the widower, but according to the respondents one major means for a widower to portray his deepest affection and bereavement, is to also shave his hair. In line with *Ga* tradition the surviving spouse performs the *kura* (*Akans-kuna*) which starts with a seven-day confinement in the sleeping room of the departed (Manoukian 1950:92). Accordingly, Field (1961:201) has reported that during this period the mourner wears or "clasps the garment or blanket of the dead which is believed to contain the spirit of the dead spouse". At dawn, on the eighth day, the dead and the living are symbolically separated and this ritual involves casting off all the clothes and beddings of the dead to the old lady in charge of the *kura* rites. Afterwards, the mourner baths in herbal preparation prescribed by the old lady, and later, the widow/widower is sent to the sea for

a ritual washing. This is done to cleanse the *kra* (soul) of the living spouse. Besides the precautions already noted, *kl4b4* is smeared on the body, and all these are antidotes believed to prevent the *sis*a (spirit) of the dead spouse from harming the living spouse. During the final funeral performance the widow wears a *Birisi* made into *kaba* and two loin cloths, a black scarf, no jewellery and a black flat slipper. The widower uses *Birisi* men's cloth, wears a low hair-cut, no jewellery and a black flat slippers. Then three days after the burial of the spouse, the widow/widower is again sent for a ritual cleansing in the sea. The smearing of the *kl4b4* on the body is repeated for the same reasons already reported.

Finally, Madam Kweifio concluded that customarily a widow/widower wears the mourning clothes for a year. Then, after fulfilling that "covenant" a special ritual is performed, which liberates the living spouse from the black clothes to the use of white ones. The researcher learnt with dismay that widows adhere to custom and mourn and dress in their dark clothes for the stipulated one year. However, a man in a show of hegemony could respect this for about two months only. Similarly, *Ashanti* widows observed the widowhood rites and dressed as described on page 46 (in the related literature) and shown below.



Plate 4.77: Clothes associated with *Ashanti* widowhood rites in the past.

Source: From the book, Religion and Arts in Ashanti

4.4.5.6 Funeral Costumes of *Ga* :Chiefs, Priests/Priestess; Ot4fo; the Aged; the Poor or their Relatives; Deaths during Delivery; Suicide; Tragic Deaths, Deaths caused by Spirits; and Children

According to the elders, when a *Ga* chief dies it means a big blow to the people, therefore red items of clothing which symbolizes intense sorrow or loss is used for all the funerary rites. The other chiefs including the rest of the community are obliged by custom to wear red clothes. In the olden times foot wear was not allowed during such moments, however in recent times low slippers can be worn, but apart from top-ranking men in the society such as government officials, all the others file past the corpse bare foot, to pay their last respect.

Red and white items of clothing are also associated with the funeral of a priest or priestess. During the wake-keeping, members of the fraternity use red clothes but they wear white costume and smear their hands and faces with white clay for the funeral celebration. On the day of burial “white clay is mixed with water in a big basin and the mixture is smeared on [the faces and hands] of all the relatives and sympathizers” (Davies 1986:43). According to Nuumo Ahongua a priestess from Teshie, when one of them dies the funeral calls for special and extra rituals because there are two spirits to be bidden farewell. Thus: the spirit of the deceased and the possessing spirit which entered and used her as mouthpiece”. Field (1961:203) and Manoukian (1950:93) describe this ceremony of parting from the possessing spirit, *Abofu*, which is performed between three to six weeks. Dominant at the ritual celebrations are other priests and priestesses who are drawn from neighbouring towns and villages. For both the deceased and fraternity groups, costume and accessories used are white calico, white *kl4b4* and their full customary adornments. All other mourners in attendance dress as described in black. When it is time to wash off all contacts with the departed spirit, all the priests/priestesses walk in a

procession (in the same costume) to the sea. Then the deceased's white stool is plunged into the sea to wash away all contact with the dead priest/priestess and the possessing spirit (Field 1961: 204).

Burial and funerary rites of *ot4fo* are marked with white costumes. The wandering spirit of a person who dies premature or through an accident or through any violent means is referred to as *otɔfo*. As noted by Manoukian and Field such spirit is dangerous and vengeful for being snatched away to the other world too early (Manoukian 1950: 102). As a result it always groans and whistles other *ɔfo* for help, so the only way to fight them is the use of white items. Continuing her report, Field (1961:203) stated that the *ɔfo* greatly dislike white items and can be kept away by using them to dress the corpse, therefore clothing items used for their burial and funeral rites are basically white. It is also believed that the application of the white clay help cure or remedy any injuries sustained in the incident. Relatives and sympathizers at the funeral apply white clay on their faces and hands, however, the close relatives continue with the adornment until one week after the burial.

As has already been mentioned, *Ga* people wear black and white clothes for the funeral of peoples, eighty years and above. Children, spouses, relatives, in-laws, and sympathizers all use white clothing and jewellery. However, the children may wear dark clothes or *brisi* for the burial and change into white ones afterwards. In line with Opoku's (1978:138) parallel account, Madam Kweifio indicated that an old person is believed to have been victorious over life's challenges and had accomplished his/her goal to live long. Therefore among other things white clothing items are used to express joy at this moment.

The funeral of poor people or their relatives do not entail grand preparation. As indicated by Miltaa (1970:14) publicity is usually low and this automatically affects the attendance. For funerals of such nature, therefore, mourners normally do not wear elaborate clothes. Costumes used may not necessarily be the appropriate garments like those already described. The family may be so poverty stricken that any old dark clothes could be used. Sometimes the emphasis may shift from what is culturally right to “anything goes”. Consequently, there is no the choice of colour. In addition, very few accessories are observed, and footwear may range from *tsalew4te* to what suits a person (See plate 4.80).

The funeral celebration for a *Ga* woman who dies during childbirth can be best described as non-condoned (a taboo) and therefore not mourned. Victims of suicides, deaths caused by spirits, deities and accident are believed to have been punished for a crime committed in secret; consequently, such death does not attract the normal funeral ceremonies. The deceased is not laid-in-state.

Among the *Dagarti* in Ghana, in order to avoid such future occurrences, neither funeral rites nor mourning is held for the deceased (Miltaa1970:15). As narrated by all the respondents, *Gas* also have the same belief and, therefore, observe the same tradition; as a result, funeral and mourning rites are vehemently prohibited and no mourning clothes therefore come into focus.

Similar to death during delivery, a person who commits suicide is traditionally declared wicked and his spirit is greatly feared. Such people, according to oral tradition, were suspected to have been harbouring some devious deeds, and its revelation was imminent, therefore, they decide

totake their lives to cover up their sinful acts. Inferably, suicides were and still are an abomination among *Gas*, and victims are not mourned. Hence, no specific clothes are required.

Tragic deaths and deaths caused by spirits or deities such as people who died through car, train or plane crash, drowning, by falling from a tree, by accidental gunshot, and those struck by lightning and the like are not mourned. In the same vein, a person who was hunted down or “caught or arrested” by a divinity, or is accused of being a witch, is to be revenged with death and does not have to be mourned. To this, Madam Tettefio also reported that any *Ga* who die by such means is not accorded the same funerary honour that celebrate respectable deaths.

Nonetheless, Sarpong has isolated the funeral of soldiers of war from this category. His reasons being that, such brave deaths at war rather enhances the soldier's status and instead of defaming him, his funeral should receive a superior or the same, funerary honour as the one described earlier on. If the death is believed to be caused by a deity, the priest or keeper of that shrine who on behalf of the family enquires the cause of death, use specified costumes and adornment. For instance among *Fantis*, before carrying out the *ebisatsir*, (the religious custom of investigating the cause of death from the deceased) *Egyabosom* Emisa requests its priest/priestess to smear his/her face and chest with charcoal (Davies1986:41).

Table 4.3 Traditional Mourning Costumes and their Symbolic Meanings

	Items of clothing	Symbolic Meanings
1	White printed cloth	Indicates the burial of a person who passed on prematurely, either by accident or during child delivery. To “prevent” death from attacking the people this way, white which expresses happiness and victory is worn to “shame” death – they are not affected by the death the least.
		Twins, priestesses, priests and mother of twins also wear white cloths because they are revered as „deities” who are pure and clean. Such people are not to come into contact with anything dark; hence, they have to put on white clothes.
	Any ordinary cloth that is not too dark	Reveals the death is not of any important loss but instead a relief. The significance is to prevent such people from reincarnating into the community.
	<i>Kuntunkuni</i> and <i>k4bene</i> (Black and red cloth respectfully)	Signifies a heavy loss like the death of the chief and since there is no beauty in dull black cloth, <i>kuntunkuni</i> is the ultimate choice. Also red means danger and aggression, and wearing it befit the loss of a mighty man or the pillar of a community. This shows the seriousness of the loss.
	Strips of white printed cloth worn as headband or on the wrist.	Indicates that the mourners are related to the decease; such as family, children or grandchildren. This is worn by these people to symbolize the “separation “between the living and the spirit of the deceased. It also helps identify the bereaved.
Nk4mm4 hairstyle	Shaving hair at the temples with a small portion left at the top of the head.	Symbolized that the person is a widow, and wearing this particular hairstyle means that the widow has lost the one she shares her “love talks” with.
Bare-foot		Footwear in the older times was regarded as items of beauty, therefore, to show their grief, mourners were forbidden to use them.
White Clay (Kl4b4)		Indicates, the deceased is a priest or priestess, and to wash away its spirit, white <i>Kl4b4</i> is used by the entire priests and priestesses and all sympathizers at the funeral.



Plate 4.78: Family members in similar cloth standing by a deceased in a coffin.

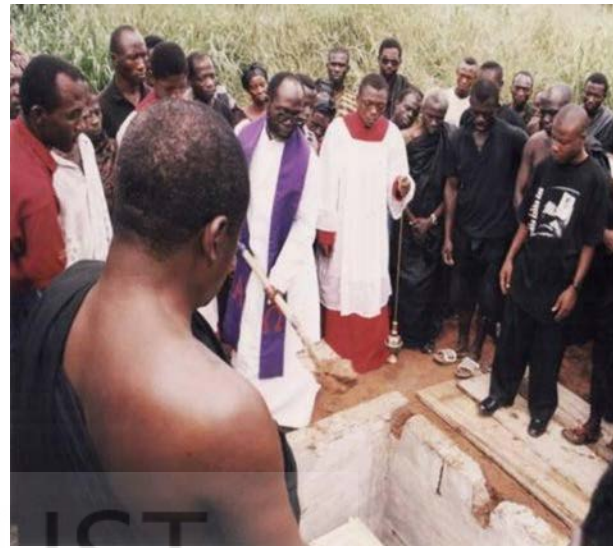


Plate 4.79: A group of mourners including a priest and his servers in costume at the grave side.



Plate 4.80: Mourners in multi- colour clothes on their way to bury the dead.

Source (Plates 4.78&4.80): From Maaku Tetteh's Library, Ajregano.



Plate 4.81: A group of mourners in black clothes.

Source (Plates 4.79&4.81): Kwame Asmah's Library, Legon.



Plate 4.82: Wearing red clothes during the funeral rites of a chief

Source : Kwame Asmah"s library, Legon.

4.5.1 Clothing components of Traditional Institutions.

Among the different dimensions of *Ga* holistic organization are two distinct structures; traditional politics and religion. While politics sees to the traditional ruling of each town, religion promotes and reaffirms belief in traditional African worship. In both activities, traditional clothes and accessories have roles that help enhance as well as bring the prestigious position of the institutions into the spotlight. The meanings, importance, and symbolic interpretations of these clothing items are explained in their uses, colours, the way the clothes are worn as well as taboos concerning their misuse. On occasions such as seclusion and installation of *Ga* chiefs, queenmothers and chief priests, clothing and adornment play significant roles in fulfilling the rites as well as bringing the changes in the above stages easy to comprehend.

4.5.2 Costumes Used within Chieftaincy Institution

The customs of the six *Ga* towns may have slight variations; and the research showed that the institution of chieftaincy has a common structure, however, there are slight variations with regards costume. Traditional governance among the *Ga* as recorded by Quarcoopome (2008:395)

is predominantly motivated by the *Akan* system of State formation (See also Parker 2000: xxiv; Field 1961:3). Therefore, almost all forms of art associated with *Akan* traditional ruling including costume are embedded in *Ga* politics. The focus here is to try and describe costumes and adornment used in *Ga* traditional political establishment in various positions as:

<i>Wul4m4</i>	- Chief Priest
<i>Mantse</i>	- Chief
<i>Manye</i>	- Queen mother
<i>Asafoatse/ Asafoanye</i>	- War lord or captain <i>Otsaam</i> ¹ - The chief's spokesperson
<i>Afonasofo</i>	- Sword Bearer
<i>Asafo</i>	- Military Company
<i>Onukpa</i>	- Elder

4.5.3 Clothes of the Chief Priest

Among *Gas* the *Wul4m4* is the political as well as the spiritual head or chief priest who rules on behalf of the town's god, and therefore acts as the mouth piece. Appointment as a chief priest is consequently done by the god (Akrong 2006:202). The candidate selected for this honourable position, is the sole prerogative of the deity, and as told by the elders the divinity accomplishes this with the use of the *k4mi* Bead. To show the god's approval and confirm his selection to the community, the deity commissions a ritual specialist to throw the *k4mi* fiber around the neck of the candidate as portrayed in plate 4.83.

Narrating his experience to the researcher, Nuumo Yemotey VI, a former *wul4m4* of *Lakpa* in La said he was immediately confined in a room as soon as he was selected. He continues: “for about three weeks I was kept in a room where I was taught the rites concerning this position. Among the rituals I was given a white jumper and *adasaa*, and all my hair including pubic hair were shaved”. According to him this ritual shave was intended to cleanse him of all „contaminations” and to present him pure before the deity and for that prestigious position. All clothing items needed for the fulfillment of this ritual is the responsibility of both the paternal and maternal families, and this include a white jumper and *adasaa* which is provided by the paternal family while his mother's people present *kr4bo*, powder and pomade.

Unlike the chief, the chief priest does not wear body marks, and from the day he is selected till death the candidate must not use any footwear. On the third day, he is adorned with the symbol of his rank, the *afili*; off-white string of beads worn as wristlet on the right hand (Stokes1999:24). When the seclusion period is over the chief priest dressed in the same cloth, is sent to the sea to wash off all possible conterminations. Afterwards he is sent home and dressed in white jumper, white *adasaa*, colourful *kente* cloth, the *afili* and a lot of *adiagba* beads worn as wristlets. He also wears a kind of beads, *shishε*, on his left ankle and a spiritually fortified string is tied around the knee and connected further to his toes, as shown in plate 4.84. His hair is shaved and a small portion is left at the back. Then he wears a cap decorated with red parrot feathers known as *ako- tsele* (Parrot Hat). This kind of hat as told by the *wul4m4*, gives him the supremacy among several *wul4mie* (Plate 4.89). Another means of expressing his dominant position is the use of *afili* worn on both the left and right wrist. Custom also requires the *wul4m4* to plait his hair with black thread but for convenience and comfort, Nuumo Yemotey VI has

instead decided to braid his hair (Plate 4.87). As the spiritual head and ritual expert, the role of his costumes is very eminent and symbolic in the discharge of his duties. His presence on festive days is very crucial because the numerous clothing and adornments of the chief priest build (1) “confidence, faith and assurance which psychologically aid the people during the treatment of sicknesses and during the solution of their peculiar problems (Nortey 2008:140). In this respect all the clothing elements of the chief priest and the other priests are believed to safeguard him and the community against malevolent spirits.

His costumes also functions according to the occasion and its demands, during which his outfits (2) help to project his office and jurisdiction, therefore clothes used for specific occasions differ from those used for his ordination. For instance when he performs the ceremony for the ban on drumming which precedes the H4m4w4 festival, he plaits his hair, apply *kl4b4* to both hands, and wears the *adiagba* beads on his neck, wrist and knees. Among the bracetlet is the *Banka*, which differs from that of the priests because of the additional three precious stones and their symbolic meanings.

These stones come in blue, yellow and red colours, signifying, the sea; wealth accrued from the earth and heaven respectively, consequently showing his status and elevating him to act as (3) the intermediary between the community and God. In addition he uses the *shish1* bead and walks barefoot, with a piece of white cloth (*klala*) worn around his waist. All those who help with this ritual performance dress in white and plate 4.86 shows the chief priest (Pouring libation) and the „ritual helps“. To symbolically confirm the ban, he later adds the *Akotsele* hat to his original costume and with a hoe, he digs the earth.

During the H4m4w4 festival when the wul4mɔ sprinkles the *kpekple* for the gods and ancestors, he wears a white long jumper over a pair of trousers made with white material. This special dress, known as *Gan*, (probably derived by corrupting the word gown) is used for all religious ceremonies (Plate 4.134). Other accessories that Nuumo Yemotey VI inherited from the deity are *amanee* which comes in different caps, beads and necklaces. Another fascinating observation was the use of beard worn by the various wul4mei. The investigation revealed that every wul4m4 must wear a beard, and Papa Nii Myers, a king maker from Ga Mashie explained that some *Ga* spiritual heads such as the chief and the wul4m4 have their powers enshrined in their beards. Whiles Nuumo Yemotey VI uses an *amanee* cap (Plate 4.88), the researcher observed during the H4m4w4 festival celebrations at Teshie and Ga Mashie, the Y1l1y1li festivals at Tema and Abokobi, that all the wul4mei (plural) wore the long *afili* with the antelope horn pendant around their necks. Also their caps were made with white material and sewn like layers of feathers. This symbolic hat known as *kotofai* (Plate 4.89, left) is cut into three hundred and sixty-five edges, with each representing each day in the calendar year;(4) meant to intercede for *Gas*. The edges are made into seven layers, with each overlapping the other, and representing the seven waves of the sea (Nortey 2008:140).

Nonetheless there are still some differences between the ceremonial clothes of the chief priest and his dressing on ordinary days. Interestingly, on the ordinary days the researcher interviewed the wul4mɔ at his residence, she realized that his clothes were casual. On one occasion he was dressed in a white lacost, white cap and an *adasaa* with white background, but with no footwear. On another visit he was spotted in a white shirt worn over blue-black togas. According to him,

the *wul4mɔ* can wear such clothes provided they have a white background. Nonetheless, the mantles of authority, the *afili* and the *shishɛ* must be worn (See plate 4.92).



Plate 4.83: Wearing the K4mi bead to signify the candidature of Nuumo Yemotey VI



Plate 4.84: Nuumo Yemotey VI wearing *kente* cloth and ornaments during his coronation



Plate 4.85: A chief priest (left) wearing jumper, *adasaa*, and holding a walking stick.



7 Plate 4.86: Nuumo Yemotey VI (left) wearing a white loin cloth around his waist, performing the rite for the beginning of the H4m4w4 festival

Source (Plates 4.83-4.86): From Nuumo Yemotey VI's library, La.

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Plate 4.87: Nuumo Yemotey VI (center) wearing the „corn row" hairstyle.



Plate 4.88: Nuumo Yemotey VI and his assistant in the *amane1* caps.



Plate 4.89: Chief priests in different priestly clothes including the *kotofai*, doing a traditional dance

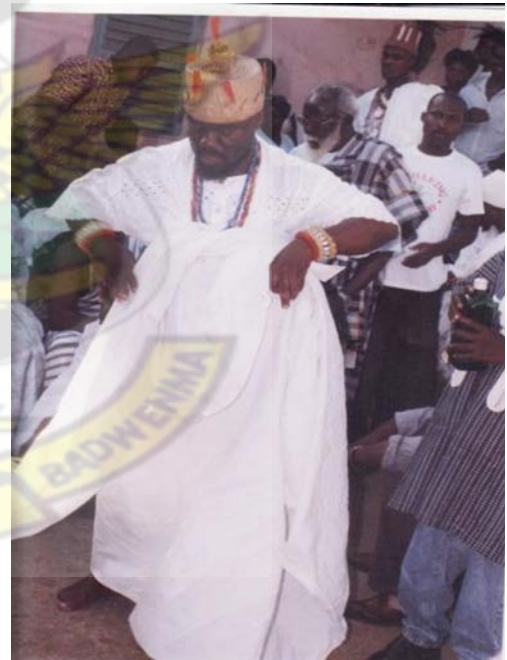


Plate 4.90: Nuumo Yemotey VI in a white jumper, togas and a loin cloth, performing the *kple* dance

Sources (Plate 4.87-4.90): From Nuumo Yemotey VI's library, La.



Plate 4.91: Nuumo Yemotey VI and his wife in casual and ceremonial clothes respectively.

Source: From Nuumo Yemotey VI's library,



Plate 4.92: Nuumo Yemotey VI at home wearing *adasaa* and a lacost „T“ shirt.

Source: Picture taken by the researcher

4.5.4 Costumes of a *Ga* Chief

Immediately a person is approved as the legitimate candidate to rule as a *Ga* chief, he is first confined to a room for about three weeks where he is cared for by some *Ga* elderly women who are custodians of *Ga* customs and traditions, and are assigned to teach the candidate the rules of the land (Dankwa 2004).

Among other things the candidate is taught the type of clothes and accessories (the dress code) he is supposed to use on every occasion. For instance he learns the proper way of dressing and the symbolic impression each regalia registers. Nii Adjei Kwei Dzamansah III, the chief of *Otinibi* (under Teshie) and Mr. Nii Myers, informed the researcher that, throughout the period of confinement the candidate wears a piece of plain white cloth (*klala*). Also his hair is left

unshaved and without a crown or any headdress. Furthermore, the symbolic jewellery of authority used at this stage is the *afili* which is worn on the right hand as bracetlet as well as the *shish1* beads worn on the left ankle (Plates 6.41&6.20). His nape, back of wrist and ankles are incised to protect and fortify him against evil eyes and malevolent spirits. For his footwear, the candidate is allowed to wear any flat slippers. Meanwhile as custom demands all clothing items or regalia like: cloths, sandals, umbrella, headdress and jewellery that will be needed during his rule as chief are provided by the paternal family. These include: seven different crowns, seven men's cloths (they include *kente*, velvet. etc) four gold-embossed *4heneba* slippers, seven sets of *adiagba* beads and seven sets of gold jewellery. After the stage of isolation, commences the actual enstoolment rite.

When the period of tutelage is over the candidate is taken to the sea for a ritual cleansing, he uses the same clothes and accessories he wore during his confinement. But to symbolically ward off all evil from his body the candidate's (the chief-to-be) hair is shaved before the purification. At the sea he is made to strip himself naked as he is washed in the sea (by the old women) to cleanse him from anything that might contaminate the stool which he is about to occupy. After washing, the candidate is clothed in a white *kente* cloth, a pair of gold-plated *4heneba* slipper and the *nyanyara* bead. No jewellery is used apart from the *afili*. Then the chief is brought home for other rituals to be performed.

In his narration, Nii Dzamansah III further recounted that before he was presented to his subjects, the Teshie *wul4mɔ* took him to the top of the Otinibi Mountain while dressed in a plain white cloth. Aside the *afili*, he also used the *adiagba* beads worn on his neck, wrist and

knee. According to him the cloth was worn above his knee revealing his legs so that his legs could be admired and appreciated by the people, proving that the elders have made a good choice. After the *wul4mɔ* had finished with the necessary rites the chief was brought home in the same regalia and presented to the people.

One very important and powerful dress among the chief's costume which the researcher appreciated the most was a smock, (made in the Northern part of Ghana) embossed with several talismans of different shapes and sizes, known as *Batakarik1se1*. This dress functions as a protective shield for the chief during war because it is believed to provide security against bullets, arrows and charms. When the researcher asked whether chiefs go to war, and if not why the need for the smock, Papa Nii Mayers explained that whether a chief decides to go to war or not, the use of the costume is emphasized. Especially when a chief is unable to go to war, he wears the smock at home to symbolically show that he is at the war front. Another reason is to prove to those who could not go to war (mainly women and children) that they should exercise no fear because the smock evokes spiritual support for the warrior's victory. However, immediately the chief wears the smock he is forbidden to have sexual contact, because it is a taboo for a chief to have pleasure when his warriors are fighting to defend the stool.

On the day he was sworn in as chief, Nii Dzamansa III mentioned that he wore his white cloth around his waist and draped in front - he was bare chest-, and adorned with only the *afili*, he removed his *4heneba* sandals and stepped on it, and with a sword in hand, he swore his allegiance to the community as well as the stool, believed to embody the spirit of his ancestors.

Another chief who was also interviewed gave a slight variation as compared to the report of Nii Dzamansah III, and for this reason the researcher finds it necessary to relate. Nii Fianko VI, chief of Awutu Fianku near Bodwease (under the *Ga* Mashie chieftaincy jurisdiction) also mentioned that white powder was poured on his head immediately he was selected as a candidate. Within the three-week confinement, as indicated in the case of the other chief, Nii Franko VI said he was dressed in a skirt, a necklace and wristlet (on both hands) made with red raffia (*s4n* or *l4n*), intended to ward off malevolent spirits, as well as an under pants and a plain white cloth meant for sleeping. Unlike the Otinibi chief, however, Nii Fianku VI was not given any body marks but he was rather forbidden to use footwear. After the third week he was clothed in a plain white cloth (*klala*) made into jumper and *adasaa* and walked barefoot to the sea where he was also washed by older *Ga* women. And to signify that the candidate was spiritually fit to occupy his new position, these clothes were thrown into the sea after the act. He was then brought home in a piece of plain white cloth worn around the waist, and later prepared for his ordination.

On this august occasion (the swearing in) the candidate was adorned with items such as a white *kente* cloth, a velvet *adasaa*, two *afili* and eight *adiagba* beads worn as wristlet (five on each hand), and *shish1* beads worn as an anklet on the left leg. Additionally, a silver crown embossed with symbols such as cutlass and a star two long silver chains with a fish and *akofona* pendant respectively assorted rings worn on all his eight fingers, as well as a black necklace, (*s1b1*) which is interspersed with silver, and a silver *4heneba* sandals, both of which are spiritually fortified were worn for protection. To crown it all, *nyanyara* neklace was worn as a necklace (Plate 4.93). Nii Fianku VI mentioned that according to custom all ornaments such as crowns, rings and bracelets must be embossed with a clan symbol, and since he comes from the *Asona*

clan, he is expected to use the crow motif which is the totem of his clan. When the researcher tried to know why those items were neglected, Nii Fianku VI stated that the ornaments were being cast, “but they will be ready for use soon”.

Nii Dzamansah III related that in the olden times, the only costumes used by a *Ga* chief were a white calico cloth, a white *adasaa*, the *afili* and the *nyanyara* leaves. They walked bare-foot. This constituted their costume during confinement, when outdoored and at all functions. The elders further mentioned that gold was specifically reserved for the gods and in order not to compete with their rank chiefs were forbidden to use gold jewellery in the olden days. However, with the influx of other cultures, and especially the *Akan* political influence as stated earlier in the introduction, gold jewellery, gorgeous and expensive clothes are now extensively patronized by *Ga* chiefs. Therefore on ceremonial occasions like, durbars, festivals and national celebrations, a *Ga* chief dress in full regalia showing his position and the beauty of it. Gold/yellow, white, green and other bright colours dominate the different cloths used by the chief (Plate 4.94). Gold signifies wealth or prosperity whiles green represents life, purity, maturity and youthfulness (Antubam1963:79).

His headband and a pair of *4heneba* sandals studded with gold designs, and other ornaments worn around the neck, biceps, wrist, fingers, knee and ankle interpret *Ga* values, proverbs and ethics (Plates 6.22 & 6.38-41)- Labi 2001:51. For instance a gold ring embossed with the image of a hen and porcupine, symbolically convey the idea of motherliness and strength associated with the chief. Like the *Wul4m4*, the chief uses casual clothes together with the *afili* on ordinary days (See plates 4.98& 6.42). And Nii Dzamansan III reported that any chief who removes the *afili* automatically destools himself, because “you must eat and sleep with the *afili* if you want to

be recognized as a *Ga* chief". It is customary for chief priests and chiefs to marry, but while wives of the former dress like the priestess (Plate 4.91), the women in the later case are not tagged with specific clothes.

Chiefs from Northern Ghana, especially the *Dagombas* use smocks, walking sticks, towels and whisks. But apart from the *nyanyara* necklace used by the *Ga* chiefs, *Ewe* and other *Akan* chiefs use similar costumes. However, *Ashanti* chiefs are noted for excessive gold accessories.



Plate 4.93: Nii Fianku VI adorned in white clothes and silver accessories during his coronation.



Plate 4.94: A *Ga* chief in Velvet cloth and holding a whisk.

Sources (Plates 4.93&4.94): Picture taken by the researcher



Plate 4.95: A *Ga* chief wearing a smock studded with talisman



Plate 4.96: Nii Ayikai III in an *Adinkra* mourning cloth.

Sources (Plates 4.95&4.96): From Nii Ayikai III's library, Ga Mashie



Plate 4.97: Nii Fianku VI at home wearing a smock and togas.

Sources (Plates 4.97&4.98): Pictures taken by the researcher

Plate 4.98: Nii Dzamansa III wearing a Ghana @ 50 „T“ shirt.

4.5.5 The Queen Mother's Clothes and Accessories

In *Ga* as in any *Akan* society, there is a queen mother who sees to the affairs of women in a particular town. When supplementing Rattary's assertion on queen mothers, Busia (1968: 19) indicates "the queen mother is described as the „mother" of the chief...more often his sister, but constitutionally she is regarded as the chief's mother, hence her title, *4hemma* (female monarch), is usually translated queen-mother". This position, like that of the *Ga* chief requires a lot of schooling concerning the traditions of the land and so when the candidate is chosen she is confined and trained just like the chief, and clothes used during this period is a plain white cloth, a pair of slippers and an *afili*. In addition she wears a scarf, but no jewellery is permitted. Her costumes for ceremonial occasions, durbars and national celebrations may include:

- ☐ A piece of multi-coloured cloth about 1.8 meters worn in the *dansikra* fashion and tied around the bust or waist. And on it is a *Kente*, Velvet, Lace or Silk cloth of about 1.6cm worn over one shoulder.
- ☐ Headdress includes: a wig or hair held at the back with a headband.
- ☐ About three to five *afiadgo* beads worn as necklace, wristlet and anklet.
- ☐ A protective ornament (*s1b1*) made with raffia and worn across the right shoulder.
- ☐ Gold jewellery worn on the neck, wrist, fingers and ears- the earring is usually small- and an *oheneba* slipper studded with gold patterns (See plates 4.99-102 & 6.21).

Madam Kweifio further added that in the olden times the queen mother only wore a white cloth, an *afili*, a white headdress and no foot wear. Presently, just like the other traditional leaders the

queen-mother also uses casual dresses when she is at home and this may include *kaba* and slit. Similar clothes are used by *Ewe*, *Krobo* and *Akan* queen-mothers, but while the use of numerous beads holds for *Ewe* and *Krobo* queen mothers, *Ashantis* are identified with plenty gold jewellery, the *dansinkran* hairstyle and sometimes the *batakarikese*.



Plate 4.99 : A *Ga* queen mother in a Velvet cloth and *gele* headgear



Plate 4.100: A *Ga* queen mother in lace cloth and a gold plated head band.



Plate 4.101: A *Ga* queen mother wearing *kente* as cloth and hair band.



Plate 4.102: A *Ga* queen mother wearing Silk cloth and the Afro hair style.

Sources (Plates 4.99-4.102): Pictures taken by the researcher

4.5.6 Costumes of: Traditional Military Company (*Asafo*), Sword Bearer, Spokespersons and the Elders at the Palace.

The *Ga Asafo* group or company is a military organization instituted in the olden days to defend their people during war. And by the “seventeenth century therefore the *Ga* kingdom was a militarized society whose soldiers were equipped with the latest European weaponry...” (Osei-Tutu 2000:20). According to Papa Nii Myers, and Osei-Tutu (:54) this group formation and their military clothes were presumed to have been copied from the *Fantes* who came to settle with the *Ga*. Clothing was an identifying mark among the various groups and as told by Labi (2002), *Fante* military strategy prescribed specific clothes that distinguished *Fante* warriors from their enemies. Additionally, Ogilby (1670: 431) has recounted that the early *Fante* who fought for the Dutch in the seventeenth century distinguished themselves from their enemies by wearing linen cloths. During that period and to date military costume has been an important part of war and a matter of competition. With this spirit, therefore, each group tries to excel the other in appearance.

As recorded by Barbot (1732:295) military costumes at the time (17-18th century) was made of a traditional cloth which was tied around the soldier's waist and in between their thighs, leaving a piece of it to hang behind them. This way of dressing was a strategy to help them wear as little cloth as possible to remain light and avoid any hindrances or obstructions during war. To prove the potency of military strength, costumes usually had peculiar and strange fittings such as a horsetail in its natural colour or dyed in red or blue, with small bells sometimes hanging on it. Belts were worn around the bodies of the warriors while sheaths were also used to hold daggers and knives, as well as pouches to store gun powder and bullets (Osei-Tutu 2000:21). Apart from

these physical protections, the warriors were also fortified spiritually; their faces were painted in red and yellow and their bodies decorated with different charms and objects such as wreaths of tree branches spiritually fortified.

The main component of military caps used (like helmets) during these centuries were the skins of animals like the crocodile, elephants, buffalo and leopard. Their helmets were decorated with red parrot feathers, horns, the white teeth of hippopotamus, precious red shells or jawbones of enemies killed in previous wars. And to make the caps stiff and firm the outside was painted with sacrificial blood. Some of the soldier's hats were designed with red and white shells and goat horns, intended to physically and spiritually protect the soldier's head during war. They also wore masks made with skins of animals such as crocodile, goat, sheep and leopard; and these were designed like animals, to frighten the enemy (Ogilby 1670: 432). One distinguishing feature of every *asafo* company is the use of flags. Flags were used for identification during war and in military dance performance. They were also “carried into battle and used by the army to identify which formation they [soldiers] belonged to or the location of their own *asafo*” (Labi 2002:96-97). And as previously stated on pages 53&55, flags had and still have imageries that communicate.

Today, *Ga asafo* do not engage in wars or inter-company fights. Their presence is rather needed in enstoolment and destoolment of chiefs, supporting to enhance the prosperity of the community as well as assisting in religious and ceremonial activities at annual festivals (Labi 2000:55,56; Osei-Tutu 2000:112-114). In this regard contemporary *Ga asafo* companies still identify themselves with particular colours of costume as in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries. However, costume used comprises a shirt, togas/trousers, caps, (Plate 4.107) belt and charms.

Aside these, the *asafoatse* (leader) of the various groups use other clothes such as smocks which have charms and talismans, sewn onto them (Plates 4.104-106&4.108). Most of these talismans are those preserved and handed over to the group by their ancestors- having the potency to protect the soldiers from the arrows and bullets of the enemy-, and special military emblems used to differentiate the soldiers from the enemy (Larbi 2002:92-93).

The use of caps similarly functions prominently among the *Ga Asafo* companies and as shown in plates 4.103-106, some *Asafoatse* / *Asafoanye* wear various helmets and caps during annual festivals and ceremonies. The one in plate 4.107 is probably made with a calabash or hard material and covered with a cloth, with a piece of it hanging in front, at the sides and behind. It is decorated with cowry shells and at the sides are two horns that are fixed on leather that holds the chin and protects the cap from falling during vigorous activities.

Apart from not functioning at war, flags are similarly designed with a groups' colour/s and emblems, and used to isolate members of the different groups like those indicated in plates 4.137-141. With regards fabrics; whereas some companies may use plain materials, others may prefer a combination of colours or one with a multi-coloured background. At the H4m4w4 festival celebrated among the people of Ga Mashie, the researcher observed the following about the military regalia of the *asafo* companies that were present. One group wore:

- ☐ A stripped red and black cloth made into a jumper and *adasaa* or trousers.
- ☐ A *lankwa*, bead worn around the waist as a protective device and
- ☐ A pair of canvas or shoes.

The *Asafoats*¹ is the captain of the male or female *Asafo* group. He/ she is identified by his/her clothes as shown in plates 4.104-106. Similar to the war dress worn by the *Mantse*, the captain uses the smock with the talismans as already described (See plate 4.105). In addition, the leader may wear *adasa* or trousers and a jumper studded with talismans. Plate 4.106 shows an *Asafoats*¹ (female) in a cap, trouser and a long jumper studded with talisman while another one from a different group is shown in plate 4.108 wearing a smock made with velvet and embossed with talisman and holding *s1b1* talisman that is worn across the shoulder for protection. Also at the durbar were some *Asafoats*^ε, and the following clothes were observed about them.

- ☐ A brown cap studded with talismans and extended to hold the chin.
- ☐ Three strands of *adiagba* beads worn around the neck and wrist.
- ☐ An *afili* and gold bracetlet.
- ☐ Two black *s1b1* worn across the right shoulder and biceps for protection.
- ☐ An iron band also worn around the biceps (See plate 4.103) and *4heneba* slipper.



Plate 4.103: An *Asafo* captain wearing cloth, beads and protective accessories at a durbar



Plate 4.104: An *Asafo* captain in a red smock and cap studded with talisman

Sources (Plates 4.103&4.104): Pictures taken by the researcher



Plate 4.105: Two *Asafo* leaders in black smocks embossed with talisman



Plate 4.106: A female *Asafo* leader wearing jumper, trouser and cap, embossed with talisman.



Plate 4.107: An *Asafo* group wearing the cap with horns.



late 4.108: A female *Asafo* leader in velvet cloth embossed with talisman.

Sources (Plates 4.105-4.108): Pictures taken by the researcher

An *Otsaam*¹ is the spokesperson or the mouth piece of the chief or queen-mother. In *Ga* as in all *Akan* traditions no chief talks directly to his subjects. It is the duty of an appointed *otsaam*¹ to communicate the chief's /queen-mother's intentions to the people. (Dankwa 2004:32-33 Manoukain 1950:83) The *otsaam*¹'s identity is linked with a spokesman's staff rather than with costumes.

Apart from the staff that immediately reveals his / her role at the palace and during durbars costumes do not have any symbolic interpretations. And in order not to compete with the chief or queen-mother, the clothes of the *otsaam*¹ are usually not elaborate. Clothes for the men include a men's cloth, one *adiagba* necklace, an *adasa*, and a pair of *4heneba* slippers which is not studded with gold like that of the chief (Plate 4.109).

The female *otsaam*¹ plays the same role as her male counterpart, but her allegiance is to the queen-mother. Mr. Myers explained that in the olden days the only clothing items for the female *otsaam*¹ were two loin cloths, a scarf and *4heneba* slipper. However, the researcher realized during the durbar that the female *otsaam*¹ wore a lace material sewn into cap, *kaba*, slit, and one loin cloth (Plate 4.110). Other accessories were a small gold earring, a string of beads worn on the neck and wrist, together with *4heneba* slipper not ornamented.



Plate 4.109: A male spokesperson wearing cloth and holding a staff.

Plate 4.110: A female spokesperson in cap, *kaba*, slit and a loin cloth.

Sources (Plates 4.109&4.110): Pictures taken by the researcher

The significant position of a sword bearer within *Ga* traditional politics always rests with the youth. As told by the chiefs, the power of each *Ga* town is embedded in the sword, and according to Papa Nii Myers, “if the sword is confiscated then the town is defeated”. Hence, young men who are believed to be swift and strong are usually entrusted with the sword. In accordance with this significant role, therefore, few clothes are used. There is no elaborate costume. The researcher learnt from the respondent that dressing light “will enable the sword bearer run very fast and protect the state sword in case of any enemy attack. Clothes used, therefore, consist of a string of *adiagba* beads necklace, a piece of cloth tied around the waist, passed in between the thighs, and tied at the back in the *lanta* style. He is bare-chest and walks bare-foot (See plate 4.111).

The elders (*Onukpa*) in the palace help the chief in his decision making. Their clothes are: men's cloth, jumper, *adasa* and slippers. Additionally the significant and symbolic ornament, the *adiabga* beads is worn as bracelet by all heads of families to help identify their position (Plates 4.49&6.39). Some of them wear smock.



Plate 4.111: Sword bearers wearing the *lanta* style.



Plate 4.112: Stool bearers in contemporary clothes

Sources (Plates 4.111&4.112): Pictures taken by the researcher

4.5.7 Clothing Elements of Traditional Priests and Priestess

From time immemorial, man has been conscious of his existence and has made countless efforts to stay alive. In trying to prevent sickness and untimely death, all forms of art had to be employed, for which costume has played a dominant part. For a fact, religion is inseparable from virtually every aspect of the life of *Gas* and commands a central place in their socio-cultural affairs, regulating the relationship between the people and their physical as well as their spiritual environment. To this end, priests and priestesses who are charged by their various divinities to work on their behalf, use specific costumes when they undergo training at their respective

shrines. There are also special adornments associated with occasions such as ordination and worship/veneration of their gods (Quacoopome 1987:74). Some of these gods are Kple, Me, Otu and Tigare (Field1961:103).

Each *Ga* family (*we*) has a deity that she is spiritually „married“ to. These gods are usually worshipped by the particular family through a priest or priestess and such a person becomes “the servant of the divinity and ministers in temples and shrines” (Quacoopome 1987:74). A priest/priestess can be chosen by the god regardless of her age, profession or religious background, and according to oral tradition, people who resist the offer of the god will either fall sick or become restless until he/she gives in. A person can be appointed right from her mother's womb, at birth; when the child is born or at a very old age- there is actually no age limit for the divinity to appoint a person as a priest or priestess. When a person accepts the call he/she has to undergo training by the particular god who has appointed him/ her. The person is assigned a trainer who becomes his/her spiritual wife/ husband, and he/she is taken to the shrine of the particular deity to be trained. “The official priest/priestess training consists chiefly of a week's solitary confinement, ceremonial cleansing, head shaving, a simple investiture, and initiation into simple duties” - Field 1961:104.

There is specific code of dress for trainee priests and priestesses, and each of them is identified and known by the different types of clothing and adornment chosen by the deities. To undergo training at the shrine, the trainee is given her first costume prescribed by the deity. According to Nuumo Ahungua, a priestess and a native of Teshie, this type of strung beads, known as *Banka*, is worn as a wristlet on the right hand and used during the whole training period. Each priestess is identified by the *Banka* of her deity and she is not allowed to wear any footwear or dress of her

choice. Nuumo Ahungua worships *kple*, a male god and that is why she is addressed as such. Her code of dressing throughout the training period consists of two loin clothes used on every occasion; whether the priestess is going to town to shop, or at home, or when she sleeps. It can either be two multi-coloured cloths of the same print or in different colours/designs (Plate 4.114). The Otu divinity uses two plain white cloths during the training period. But in addition to the *Banka*, a priestess of the Otu or *Ak4n* divinities are recognized with three rings worn on the last two fingers and the thumb of the left hand, whilst the priestess training at the Tigare shrine uses an additional iron band worn around the biceps and two plain white cloths (Plate 4.113). The *Ab1n* deity is also identified with a red cloth, sewn into a gathered skirt (Plate 4.115), while a plain white cloth worn over any other printed cloth, associate priestess of the *Gele* god. These clothes are worn with no age limit.



Plate 4.113: Two *Tigare* priestesses in their training costumes.



Plate 4.114: Some *Kple* priestesses wearing their training clothes.



Plate 4.115: A priestess in red skirt.

Source (Plates 4.113-4.115): Pictures taken by the researcher

Aside these differences, a priestess from La may wear a blouse, but those from Teshie, Accra and Osu do not wear blouses. During the training period the trainee does not wear underpants,

and in place of beads, she wears a white string tied around her waist with a piece of white or red cloth worn between her thighs to cover her female genitals. Information gathered on the underpants reasoned that these spiritual wives and husbands should always get „ready" for their „spouses "by abstaining from such clothes. The priestess may cut, braid or plait her hair; however, after the training period, she is allowed to wear any hairstyle she desires.

Each deity determines the kind of body marks that should be worn, and these consist of one or two straight lines which are normally worn on the forehead, chest, arms, biceps and ankle. For instance the Otu, Ak4n, Me and Mla priestess wear four rows of cicatrize at the back (Fig.6.5) and additional six, four, six and three others, marked on the chest (See plate 6.46), shoulders, waist and the back of the leg respectively. These marks are similarly worn by the Tigare priestess but in place of those made on the shoulders, she wears two lines that incepts. The kple priestess, however, does not have any identifying mark. When the training period is over, the medium brings the priestess and leaves her at the outskirts of the town. Nuumo Ahungua reiterated further that, she learnt she was brought home wearing only the *nyanyara* leaves designed to cover her breast and genitals.

Having successfully completed and satisfied all the customary requirements, the priestess is initiated and as such wears a piece of white loin cloth, white powder on the face, either a white headdress, or the hairstyle of her god, but without a footwear (Plate 4.116). As a new bride the priestess is later adorned with beads of all kinds, most importantly a type called *shish1* that is worn as an anklet on the left leg (Plate 4.119). The priest and priestess use beads of different colours, believed to protect him/her spiritually; for instance on festive days the priestess wear five beads as wristlet and two others as anklets.

What is the power and/or significance of the beads? The first wristlet, the *afili*, identifies her as the priestess of the traditional area, and the elevated position she holds in that regard. The second in line is the *fufua* which is in blue and ash colour and believed to have the power of protecting the priestess. And the third, *ṭnyṭny* also in red colour is for instant self defense against evil spirits. The fourth and fifth, *ade* and *bihii ale nii*, identified with a combination of yellow and green, as well as light green respectively, are for „magico religious purposes". Other beads worn for the same purpose include *Dade kulo* which is worn on the upper arms and the *nakutso nii* used on the upper portion of the ankle (Plate 4.117).

Two significant hand items; the *nmleti* (Plate 4.119) -that resembles a broom-and the *aye tso*, believed to be a witch stick, help to unquestionably distinguish the priestess. She is also wear and a long necklace made of black and white beads that are arranged alternatively. This symbolic necklace is called *afili*, and has a pendent that is cast like an antelope"s horn (Plate 4.118-right). According to oral tradition, the pendent was initially the actual antelope horn, but since it is not accessible today, *Gas* use iron to cast this two-horn antelope pendant called „*Kor*’ and „*Kaanin*’. And to revere a deity, the priestess walks barefoot immediately she puts on the *afili*. It is also an offence to wear the *afili* after six o'clock in the evening and anyone who flouts these two rules is punished by the divinity. It is worth mentioning that the *afili* is only worn during festive occasions and at traditional healing as well as the pacification of the gods.

Hairstyles worn by the priestess is the choice of the respective gods. Some of these include *ak4n*, *pesempese*, *akukuli*, *otu*, and *gele* (Plates 6.5&6.6). *Akom* and *otu* priestess for instance wear the *pesempese* hairstyle by cutting the hair very low and applying a mixture of the liquid of egg and the *nyanyara* leaf, resulting in a permanent twist-like texture. In order to maintain the

pešempese it is occasionally washed with the *nyanyara* leaf, and as shown on plate 6.5 (left), the trainee is spiritually strengthened with her hairstyle decorated with a talisman. Another fascinating hairstyle, *gele*, is observed among the priestesses of Teshie gods. This hair tradition is achieved by plaiting the hair with a black thread and either holding them high (Plate 6.6, left) or allowing them to fall back. But while those who wear *pešempese* use them during training and afterwards, the *gele* hairstyle is only worn during training, and can be replaced with other fashionable hairstyles when the period is over. The *akukuli* hairstyle is a complex piece of art which is embellished with feathers. It is crafted into five tufts, with the end of each portion twisted and tucked into the base, (Plate 6.6 right) and decorated with cowries as well as the tail of parrot feathers. Nuumo Ahungua mentioned that the use of the feathers is for religious purposes such as transmitting cosmic powers in the priestess.

Accordingly if during her training the priestess was made to learn the art without a blouse, then she must make sure she keeps to this form of dressing throughout her life time. However, she is at liberty to wear any white printed or plain cloth of her choice, which may include, Linen, Organza, Satin, and *Kente*, - which can either come in two or three loin cloths (Plate 4.118-left&right). Foot wear is also allowed only after the sixth month of her graduation. She is finally adorned in her finery (Plate 4.117) and parades through town to give thanks to well wishers.

Each priest/priestess holds an annual *Y111yeli* or yam (*Discorea ritundata*) festival to thank his/her god and accordingly, people who are blessed with children by the priest/priestess and his/her deity bring their children for blessing (See plate 4.125- right & 6.43, right). The children normally dress in white cloths, and in addition, white clay is applied to their faces or their whole bodies. The priest/priestess who is celebrating the festival is dressed in a plain white cloth, a

white headgear as well as painting the entire body with white myrrh. And apart from a small earring and necklace, the priestess is not ornamented, and also does not use foot wear (Plate 4.122). During the dance performance any priest/ priestess, including those in training can come out of the crowd and perform the ritual dance. No specific costume is required except the one expected of each priest/ priestess, but those who want to wear casual clothes are permitted to do so.

When the priest or priestess is possessed, “.... at once her dressers and attendants leap at her and dodging her flying fist, unbind her hair. Then they get her to her feet, steer her behind the scenes, strip her, paint her with white clay if she is an *ak4n* or *otu* dancer, and deck her with her grass [raffia skirt] or coloured cotton skirt, her beads, anklets, bells and amulets”(Field1961:105).

The researcher also observed at the Y111yeli festivals at Tema, Abokobi and Teshie that, the person who dressed the priest/priestess was familiar with the costumes of all the deities and therefore, had in his/her possession two or more clothes. Because during the dance performance a diety can „enter" (through actions and dance movements) any priest/priestess other than his /her worshipper and costumes has to be changed accordingly. The researcher was told that this ritual of changing clothes (Plate 4.120) indicates the presence of the divinity, hence, the desire to be acknowledged and dressed differently from what the priest/priestess was originally wearing.



Plate 4.116: Nuumo Ahungua (middle) preparing for her ordination

Source: From Nuuno Ahungua"s Library, Teshie.



Plate 4.117: A priestess adorned in lace cloth, the *afili*, *t4ny4r4*, *ad1*, *fufua*, *bihii ale-nii* and *dade kul4* beads.

Source: Picture taken by the researcher



Plate 4.118: A priestess in two loin cloths (left) and three loin cloths (right)

Sources (Plates 4.116- 4.119): Pictures taken by the researcher



Plate 4.119: Nuumo Ahungua in a white lace skirt and holding the „witch broom“ (nml1ti) used for healing.



Plate 4.120: An attendant removing the jewellery of Nuumo Ahungua when she was possessed by her god.

Plate 4.121: Some *tigare* priestesses in cap, jumper and togas



Plate 4.122: A priestess in plain white clothes, celebrating her Y111yeli festival.



Plate 4.123: Nuumo Ahungua in her sports outfit.

Sources (Plates 4.120& 4.123): Pictures taken by the researcher

The males who are trained to become priests also go through the same ordeal as the priestess, and their clothes are similarly dictated by their respective gods. During training the *kple* priest wears *adasa* and one multi-coloured loin cloth around his waist, while the *tigare* priest uses a plain white jumper and *adasaa* (Plates 4.124&4.125). They walk without footwear and similarly cut their hair low or wear the *pesempese* hair style associated with their female counterparts. It is worth mentioning that a male can be chosen by a female god and in such circumstance the priest is required to use female clothes throughout the training period and during ceremonial occasions. In this regard, all clothing elements required by the god, must be used by the priest (Plate 4.127). Interestingly, the researcher observed that priests and priestess of the *tigare* deity used smocks and whisk (when they were possessed) for the ritual dance. And the explanation was that, since a *tigare* deity was brought to *Ga* from Northern Ghana, the smock which is associated with such people must be used to show the real origin of the god (See plates 4.121&4.129).

It is fascinating to acknowledge that the everyday costumes of priests and priestesses are completely different from those used during practice. Both men and women can wear any kind of dress to suit a particular occasion. A priestess can wear *kaba* and slit, shoes/slipper, braid her hair or use makeup; in fact decorate his/ her body to commensurate any given situation (Plates 4.123 & 6.44). The priest can also wear clothes such as a jumper and *adasaa* made with either printed cloth or lace material (Plate 4.128).

Among other ethnic groups in Ghana, costumes are similarly aligned with specific deities and this give a priest or priestess the opportunity to portray which deity has possessed him/her. For example the use of raffia skirts is associated with having contacts with dwarfs. Also the *trɔkosi*

priest and *avɔyi* priestess from the Volta Region wear blue and white cloths and in addition, the priest uses a long traditional hat with feathers stacked to the top (Dzramedo 2009:124).



Plate 4.124: *Tigare* priestly costumes used during training



Plate 4.125: Costumes used by the *kple* priest (right) during training



Plate 4.126: A priest in one loin cloth worn around the waist and *afili* writlets



Plate 4.127: A priest in female clothes- two loin cloths, *afili*, *fufua*, *t4ny4r4*, *ad1*, *bihii ale-nii* and *dade kul4* beads.

Source (Plates 4.124&4.127): Pictures taken by the researcher



Plate 4.128: A priest in shirt and togas (left) and jumper and togas (right)



Plate 4.129: A *tigre* priest dressed in cap, smock and togas, and holding a whisk

Source (Plates 4.128-4.129): Pictures taken by the researcher

4.6.1 The role of Costume in some socio-cultural activities of *Ga* (Festival, trade and recreation).

Apart from clothing expressions in rites of passage and those associated with *Ga* traditional governance and religion there are other forms of social and cultural activities with related costumes. Festivals, economic activities and recreations are important periods in *Ga* social organization and during such moments specific forms of dress become an integral part and also as relevant and indispensable as the activities themselves. Clothing within cultural associations will be assessed on group levels and will include (1) traditional dancers, cultural musical groups and masqueraders. The other concern is (2) the integration between costume, festivals and economic activities, and how these moments help to project ritual, formal and informal dresses used on each occasion.

4.6.2 The Practice, Significance and Costumes of the H4m4w4 festival

Throughout the world annual celebrations are observed to commemorate some great transitions of life and passages. Through these observations (art and creativity) the deepest values of a community are aesthetically revealed and affirmed through various art forms, and costume is one of these artistic elements. Consequently, for the *Ga* people such criteria of revealing and expressing their unique culture is made manifest through the H4m4w4 festival. Among the many festivals in *Ga*, H4m4w4 is the best celebrated. It is an annual festival celebrated by all the six *Ga* townships, and each year *Ga* indigenes converge in their various towns to celebrate H4m4w4, the quintessential and symbolic *Ga* harvest ritual. H4m4w4 derives from two *Ga* words, h4m4 meaning hunger and w4 meaning to hoot at (Amoako-Attah 2001:2). According to legend when the *Gas* were migrating to their present settlement they were confronted with severe

hunger. Nonetheless they gathered courage, tilled the land, planted corn and asked for blessing from *Ataa-Naa Nyomm* (God), the *jemawodzi*, (ancestral gods) and the ancestral spirits. Their prayers were answered by rainfall which helped yield abundant crops. With their experience in fishing they also harvested a lot of fish which included very big snappers they call *tsile* and giant tunas called *odaa*. All the respondents reported that *Gas* observe this conquest of hunger with a specially prepared diet made with unfermented corn powder called *kpokpoi* (which has now been corrupted to *kpekple*) and palm nut soup prepared with fish only (preferably *tsile* and *odaa*). They hoot at “and ridiculed hunger” as they eat the meal. The day also offers an opportunity for individual families to assemble in their *Ga* ancestral homes in seaside towns to share a ritual meal with „dead” and living family members, pour libation and symbolically offer some of the meal to their gods. H4m4w4 is celebrated annually between August and September. (Amoako-Attah 2001:3) The celebration is done in succession on different days so that individuals who may belong to more than one traditional area will be able to attend any of them.

In her report Madam Kweifio related that the unique pattern of H4m4w4 celebration includes opening the fishing season, participating in preparatory rituals of gift-giving and house purifying, enjoying the H4m4w4 meal, performing the H4m4w4 dance and observing the Day of Remembrance. During this period all economic activities cease while *Gas* concentrate on participating in the custom as well as renewing relations with one another. Writers like Ammah (1982), Opoku (1970) and Field (1956) have mentioned that the festival is celebrated on Saturdays in Ga Mashie or Accra, on Tuesdays in Teshie, Nungua, Prampram, Ningo, and Kpong and on Friday at Tema. Within the celebration, there are special days identified with specific costumes such as those described under the following themes:

- ☐ *Gremlilaa* (Locking the way)
- ☐ *Soobii* (Thursday people)
- ☐ *Kaemo* (Remembrance)
- ☐ Traditional Yam Festival
- ☐ *Koyeligbi* (Day of feasting)
- ☐ *Noowala* (Greetings)
- ☐ *Kpa dance*

Preparation for the festival starts with the planting of crops before the rainy season that begins in May. "Between the period of sowing and the rite of transplanting, which covers a period of thirty days a ban is placed on drumming, dancing or noise of any kind...the duration is known as *Kpofeem* or Silence Period"(Ammah 1982:8). As reiterated by Terry Bright Ofosu, an indigene of La, and a Lecturer at the University of Ghana, Legon, the *Ala gb1 mlin* and *Agbele gb1nla* rites are performed to respectively put and lift the ban on noise making.

Three rituals start in June. The first ritual called (1) *gbemlilaa* (locking the way) forbids drumming and music to allow the people to have enough time for their farms. This is followed by (2) *nshobul1mo*; a ritual purported to calm the sea. It continues with yet another custom, (3) *ok4mfemaa* that bans fishing in the lagoon until the *H4m4w4* festival is over. Participants in these rites include only the *Wul4m4*, ritual experts and elders. A general observation by the researcher, Opoku (1970), Field (1956) revealed that in all the ritual observances only white items of clothing are used. Therefore the *wul4mo* and all present are clothed in white, and are also bare-foot.

When the date for the H4m4w4 of a particular area is due, the people in the villages are required to return to their respective homes in the capital towns. This is done a week before the custom, beginning on Thursday: the sacred day of the earth when the community is forbidden to go to farm. The first arrivals come on Thursday and are called *Soobi* which means Thursday people. The villagers arrive with enthusiasm and jubilating songs bringing their harvested crops especially maize and palm nuts along. H4m4w4 has adapted to various changes such that, indigenes coming to town to celebrate the feast in their ancestral seaside homes may come by lorries and cars as well as by foot and often wear identical clothes sewn from the same multi-colour imported fabric. In this regard Opoku (1970:53) mentions that:

The entry of these Lorries usually draped with flags and hunting, is a sight to see, they go to great expense to array themselves in attractive uniforms and decorations.

Similarly, the researcher realized that the arrivals who were mostly women dressed to portray the various quarters they originate from. Accordingly, the women dress in all kinds of colourful outfits; especially *kaba* and slit in beautiful styles, and sometimes with exaggerated makeup and very elegant hairstyles. Even though the researcher did not see their footwear (because they sat in taxis), all the respondents reported that the arrival's footwear are normally black or brown flat slippers, selected to match their hand bags or clothes.

The traditional yam festival is observed a day after the arrival of *Soobii*. Commenting on the day, Opoku (1970:53) has stated further that the festival is a "lustral day of all twins. Clad in white, twins and their parents and relations make merry in their homes with feasting...". The researcher, therefore, observed that twins and their parents and relations were all dressed in white clothes, kl4b4, and flat slippers as they paraded the town. Young twins who cannot participate in the

pageantry are carried on the shoulders of older family members (See plates 4.130&4.131).

Confirming the description on the yam festival Nnuumo Ahungua stated that “the group will use the costume till sunset and then troop out to the sea to cast away the left-overs of the feast”.

Some *Akans* (the Akuapim and Akyem people) similarly celebrate the yam festival to (1) offer sacrifice and (2) introduce the new yam. During the Ohum festival of *Tafo* for instance, mashed yam is sprinkled all over the town to drive away evil spirits and ill luck, and Madam Tetteyfio suggests that *Gas* might have acquire the custom during their interaction with the *Akans*.



Plate 4.130: Two young women in white clothes carrying the concoction for the twin rites.



late 4.131: Twins adorned in white clothes and being carried by young men.

Sources (Plates 4.130 & 4.131): Pictures taken by the researcher

The following day is dedicated to *Ga* people who died during the year. It is known as *Kaim4* or Remembrance Day and observed with black costumes in remembrance of the dead.

Consequently, dressed in mourning clothes *Ga* indigenes gather from dawn till evening to mourn their departed relatives, especially those who died within the year.

K4yeligbi is the day for enjoying the ritual meal. At dawn on this august day the researcher saw a feverish preparation of the *Kpokpoi* by the women. There were no ritual costumes in particular. Whiles some elderly women wore old *kaba* and cloths, scarves and low slippers, the young women either wore trousers with tops or dresses and slippers (Plates 4.132). Their costumes were casual.



Plate 4.132: Women in casual clothes preparing *kpokpoi*



Plate 4.133: Young women (left) and a man (right) in rich clothes on the *N44wala* day

Source (Plates 4.132 & 4.133): Pictures taken by the researcher

The food was ready by mid-morning. Then the chief priest in full ceremonial white costume and in the company of the elders of the town sprinkled some of the *kpokpoi* “around all doorsteps of the house and sometimes around the immediate precincts of the house” (Opoku 1990: 54). Later, each *Mantse* or chief sprinkled *kpokpoi* on the lanes and streets from one principal household to

another. The dress code for the *Mantse*, wives of chief priests/chiefs, elders and heads of families were white. The men wore white jumpers and *adasa* with sandals while the women used white printed cloths made into *kaba* and two loin cloths / slits, with white or black slippers. Jewellery for the occasion was white. Other *Ga* indigenes outside this domain wore various clothes. The children used smaller sizes of the adults' wear. All the members within a family gathered round a bowl of the *kpokpoi* and enjoyed its contents. Clothes worn remained the same as before, since no special costume or costume changes are required.

The day after the feasting, *N44wala*, is spent in visiting friends, relatives and in laws to exchange greetings. It is also a period of settling disputes (Amoako-Attah 2001:6). It was noted that *Gas* put on their best clothes because the day opens an avenue for people to form acquaintances. As an affirmation to the report of respondents, the researcher observed that the community was at its best with clothes and jewellery. Both males and females were dressed in bright multi-colours and the dominant colour was gold or yellow (See plate 4.133). In such outfits they visit their paternal homes to greet the elders and to also contribute money into the family coffers. In *Ga Mashie* *N44wala* falls on Sunday while the other towns celebrate it on Wednesday (Opoku 1990: 58).

Festivities after the *Kpokpoi* feast vary from town to town, and all the respondents mentioned that at Teshie for instance the *H4m4w4* feast is followed by the *Kwashimo* dance and parade. The people of Nungua also celebrate the *4bene* dance in the night and *Kple* dance during the day. However, the most popular and most patronized dance is the *Kwashimo* of Teshie. It begins on Sunday with *Tsesefaa* (the carrying of wooden dish containing water and sacred leaves).

According to *Ga* tradition the bearer of this concoction is selected only from the *Paana* family.

The researcher observed the following regalia with the *Tsesefaa* bearer:

- ☐ A piece of white loin cloth about 3.7 meters long worn around the waist.
- ☐ A long *afili* worn as necklace
- ☐ Bare chest and bare foot
- ☐ *Afili* worn on both wrists, in addition to three bundles of beads. He also wore beads on his ankle and instead of wearing the *Nyanyara* beads; it was made into a head pad for carrying the *Tsesefaa*.

The ceremony requires the presence of the *Wul4mei* (chief priests) and *Asafoatsemei* (*Asafo* leaders) drawn from the various quarters. The *Wul4mei* dressed as described on page 156, follows close behind the *Tsesefaa* carrier. The *Asafoatsemei* wear their usual costumes in addition to one *adiagba* wristlet (worn on the right hand) and also hold the *kplebi* whip which is used to control the crowd and clear the way for the *Tsesefaa* carrier. However, on this occasion the *asafoatsemei* do not use footwear.

There are two types of *Kpashimo*: *Amlakui-Akpa* and *Kpa*. *Amlakui-Akpa* refers to the dance of the nobility which is a form of traditional songs and dancing done in a more gentle way. The *kpa* is very democratic and focuses on exposing the wrong behaviour of both the nobles and the community at large. The *kpa* is a dance group made up of people (mostly youths) from the seven quarters of Teshie. They usually perform during the *Tsesefaa*, and each quarter is identified with a specific colour of costume. For instance the Pot group is identified with multi-colours (Plate 4.135) and *Gbematele* (literary meaning kill and let me carry) has the spider (*Ananse*) as their emblem and black to represent their colour (Plate 4.141). While the *K44le W4n Koo* group

uses red clothing items and a red cock as their emblem (Plate 4.136), yellow has been adopted by the *Tafoyefeo* (Tafo is beautiful) group (Plate 4.137). The other three groups are America, Mind-You (corrupted as Maa-U) and *Tsese*. A combination of red, white and black (American flag) represents the American group (Plate 4.139), white and the *sank4fa* symbol (go back to your roots) stand for Maa-U (Plate 6.140), and the *Tsese* is recognized by their white as well as the *nyanyara* beads (Plate 4.142). Other two groups: Greece and Ghana, presumed to have been among those recently formed, use green plus white, and red, yellow and green -Ghana flag- (Plate 4.138) respectively. For the other indigenes who do not belong to any of these groups, the predominant colours used are red and white. When the researcher demanded a reason for this choice, she gathered that the white symbolizes victory over hunger and blessing for a new year. With the red colour, it was revealed that due to the several disputes between the various *Ga* towns, wearing red proves to the other towns that the celebrants “eyes are red”, and thus, ready to fight anyone who dares them.

Clothes are sewn into skirt and blouse and worn by both sexes. Most of the youths dress to portray the different professions such as nursing and the security services like the police, navy and so on. Others also dress to promote education, while some are clothed in fanciful dresses with men mimicking pregnancy (Plate 4.144). The excited dancers do not spare makeup at all. The researcher noticed exaggerated makeup such as a lot of white and blue powder worn on the face or on the whole body, wide eye-liners, and blood-red wide lip-wear. Most of the groups have flags corresponding their colour/colours and emblems (See plates 4.138-141).

Children are not left out in this celebration and the investigation shows that again the children wear a smaller version of the adult clothes (Plates 4.144- down left-& 4.143). The occasion can

be described as a carnival where all kinds of clothes, both formal and informal are exhibited. The festival ends with *Tsesebum*; the overturning of the wooden dish and its contents which is intended to cleanse, bless and grant the wishes of the people. Dressed in the same makeup and clothes, the *Sese* group goes to the *Mantse* (chief) and *asafoatsemei* for blessing, and together with the other groups and the visiting spectators, they throng the principal streets amid singing and jubilation. The procession ends at *Sangonaa* (the shores of the Sango lagoon in Teshie) where the carrier of the *Tsese* pours out its contents. This ritual performed to overturn the *Tsese*, signifies the end of the H4m4w4 festival of the *Ga* people.



Plate 4.134: A wul4m4 in *Kotofai* and *Gan*, sprinkling *kpokpoi*



Plate 4.135: The pot group in multi-colour costumes.

Sources (Plates 4.134-4.135): Pictures taken by the researcher



Plate 4.136: The K44le W4n Koo group in their red clothes



Plate 4.137: Ga men and women in the yellow costume associated with the Tafoy1f1o group.



Plate 4.138: The red, yellow and green colours of the group called Ghana



Plate 4.139: The group of *kpa* dancers that are identified with American colours

Sources (Plates 4.136-4.139): Pictures taken by the researcher



Plate 4.140: The white costumes and the Sank4fa image used by the „Maa-U“ group.



Plate 4.141: Youths wearing the black costumes of the *Gbematele* or Ananse group



Plate 4.142: The *Sese* group including the *tsesefaa* bearer (center) in their customary clothes



Plate 4.143: A group of children in costume at the H4m4w4 festival

Sources (Plates 4.140-4.143): Pictures taken by the researcher



Plate 4.144: Some fancy dresses worn during the H4m4w4 festival

Source (Plate 4.144): Pictures taken by the researcher

4.6.3.1 Clothing Associated with Some Economic Activities

The major economic activity of *Gas* is fishing, and this is as a result of their interaction with the *Fante*. (Odotei 1991:62) Even though some *Gas* who live along the coast engage in salt making and farming all the respondents indicated that comparatively, fishing precedes the other activities, because though some *Gas* engage in these, they are done on a very small scale. Fishing has, therefore, become the dominant occupation among *Gas*. Having thus acquired this trade from the *Fantis*, as already stated, all elements for fishing including costumes are fashioned after the *Fante* tradition. According to Papa Nii Myers fishing clothes used in the olden times and even now have always been scanty. He explained that the fishermen need to be swift with paddling the canoe, hence, “all a person needs is a togas and a sleeveless jumper that will not distract paddling”. At Teshie and Kole Gonno beaches, the researcher realized that the only items of clothing for the men were just as was described by Papa Nii Myers. However plate 4.146 shows the different clothes of some men at the Chorkor beach. One fascinating discovery on dressing was the use of footwear. Everybody at the Teshie beach was barefoot; the fishermen,

fishmongers and even those who had come to buy fish for domestic use were all bare-foot. Why?

Nuumo Ahungua reported that “it is a taboo to visit the beach with slippers because it constitutes disrespect to the sea god”. She mentioned further that the fishes are the children of the sea god and one has to beg to take them away. Hence walking without footwear shows the deepest respect for the god as well as politely pleading to take away her children.

Ga women are mostly kenkey sellers (Plate 4.145) as well as fisher folks who buy from the fishermen and sell to the community. They wear an old *kaba* and two loin clothes (one of the cloths may be different). Some women will prefer an old long dress with one loin cloth tied around the waist, or an old trouser and blouse. Headdress is either on old scarf, or an old loin cloth (Plate 4.147&148). This mode of dressing can as well be aligned with salt-making and farming however, that of farming might require and additional use of a hat that is held under the chin with a leather strip to prevent it from fallings as well as a type of slipper (made with a discarded old car tyre), meant to protect the farmer from being pricked by thorns.



Plate 4.145: A group of women in casual clothes preparing *Ga* kenkey



Plate 4.146: Fishermen at the beach wearing deferent costumes.

Source: (Plates 4.145 & 4.146): Pictures taken by the researcher



Plate 4.147: Fish sellers in costume trading at the beach.



Plate 4.148: A fish monger at work dressed in blouse, trouser and apron.

Source: (Plate 4.147 & 4.148): Pictures taken by the researcher

4.6.3.2 Dress code identified with Traditional Dance and Musical Forms

In every traditional set up, music and dance are indispensable parts of the socio-cultural activities of the people. Inferably, these performances, prevalent in almost everyday life activity have associated clothing fashions and colour symbolisms. Similarly *Ga* have cultural groups such as dancers, musicians and masqueraders, known with their unique costumes.

4.6.3.3 Related Costumes and Dance Performances.

Dance is described as the most ancient of art, the mother of art that forms an integral part of religious customs and rituals. As a result, (Adinku 2000; Lefco 1974) have generally reported that the social, political, philosophical and environmental elements that formed the world can be observed through the study of dance. Hence, traditional dance forms within a community inform the observer about the conventions of the different art forms, including costume. (Adinku: 13)

There are a lot of dances such as the *Kolomashie*, *Kple* and *Konkame* which are all recreational dances performed by the *Ga*. However, the three most popular and acknowledged traditional

dances that have gained recognition within the six *Ga* towns are the *Kpanlongo*, *Kple*, *Gome*, *Kolomashie* and *Oge*. *Kpanlongo* is a basic-dance that started with *Gas*. Nonetheless, it has enjoyed a great deal of popularity in other parts of Ghana. In support of Younge (1992) and Thompson (2000) all the informants related that *Kpanlongo* dance is presently performed in almost all parts of Ghana. According to (Younge: 121) “*Kpanlongo* is performed by spontaneous or so called „on the spot“ groups... such groups may spring up just at the spur of the movement, at funeral and other social gatherings.”” Consequently, at such instances individual dancers perform in the costumes befitting the occasion. For instance at funerals one will see people in their mourning clothes dancing *Kpanlongo*. Confirming Young's accession Papa Nii Myers mentioned that in the past costumes and jewellery used for the *Kpanlongo* dance was not emphasized. Nonetheless, with a cultural group of *Kpanlongo* performers, dressing included: togas, bare chest and no footwear for the men, while the women used two loin cloths, scarf and a string of beads as necklace, and without footwear (See plate 4.149). However, *Kpanlongo* dance has seen some costume changes recently. While some groups still maintain the old way of dressing, others have preferred to sew costumes into skirts and blouses for the females, and jumpers and *adasa* for the men, using fabrics such as linen, satin, polyester and so on.

In the *Kple* dance both males and females wear the *nyanyara* necklace, and perform without footwear. In addition, the women use two white loin cloths, with one piece worn around the bust and the other used as a headdress, together with a single bundle of beads worn on the neck, wrist, knee and ankle. The men also wear a white jumper and togas or an additional white loin cloth tied or folded on one shoulder (Plate 4.152). The female leader of the group may be

distinguished with the *Akukuli* hair style of the *Kple* god, several beads worn on the neck, together with different shapes and patterns of body designs (See plate 4.151).

Costumes for the *Gome* dance is partially affected by foreign fashion. As mentioned by (Thompson 2000:52), its origin has been a bit controversial: “some accounts attribute its existence to the Ga fishing expeditions in Sierra Leone, others...have suggested the Liberia area of Monrovia,...Cameroon and Fernando Po”. Accordingly, Offei (1993:21-22) has also recorded that since the dance started as a musical activity for the old, present performance encourages the use of very old dresses used by *Ga* people as well as those used by their colonial masters. Consequently the female dancers use old *kaba* and two loin cloths, scarves, walking sticks, padded buttocks, and also perform without footwear. The male dancers usually dress to mimic their colonial masters and also to depict a specific profession- particularly carpentry. They use a white long sleeved shirt, khaki trousers or knickers, brais, white socks, black bow- tie, black hat, black shoes and a walking stick. In cases where they portray a carpenter at work, a carpenter's plainer is used (Plate 4.150).

4.6.3.4 Clothes Identified with Traditional Music and Drumming

One *Ga* traditional musical group known as *Wul4m4*, designs their clothes with plain white material. The costume for the females comprises one loin cloth worn on the bust, (with their upper bodies bare) and one long bead worn on the neck. Group leaders are normally identified with an additional bead. The men wear jumper and *adasa*, together with the *kotofai* and the *nyanyara* necklace used by the chief priest; probably because of the similarity in their names. Oral tradition indicates that in the olden times the drummers of these and music and dance groups wore one loin cloth tied at the back of the neck (in the *k44la* style), but recently

drummers may use big loin cloths folded on their waists or worn in the mens" fashion. Also thier costumes can be sewn into jumper and togas/trousers (Plate 4.149-background), or a pair of trousers and a „T" shirt which has the inscription of the group. The groups also have different sets of clothes designed and selected to fit specific occasion such as naming, birthday and funeral ceremonies.

Similarly, there are some dances performed by other ethnic groups in Ghana such as the *Adowa* and *kete* dances, popular among *Akans*, and the *Takai* and *Bamaya* dances from Northern Ghana. The *Adowa* dance for ladies is associated with the *Dansikran* hairstyle, which has a low hair-cut and adorned with a golden hair- band; a multi-coloured *kente* cloth worn with one shoulder bare, over a plain or a printed cloth. Another style comes in enormous waist beads that are harped with silk *kente* or velvet cloth, with a long piece left to hang both at the back and front of dancers. Ornaments used include beads and gold jewellery found on the necks, elbows, wrists, calves and ankles, including the female type of the *4heneba* sandals embossed with gold chains. The men wear a *kente* cloth, (worn with one shoulder bare) and *ahenema* slippers. Dressing for *kete* performers is the same as that used in the *Adowa* dance. The difference however, is that in the former case the cloth is respectfully worn on the bust and waist of the men and women.

The *takai* dance is also projected with the use of smock, togas, traditional boots and caps from the North. The *Bambaya* dance is also adorned with distinctive waist beads, *buri*, worn to emphasize the dance movement made around the waist. Along with this is the use of a headgear, braizier, towel, skirt, fan and the *challa* jingles which is worn around the ankles to produce special sounds when the feet is stamped on the ground in the course of the dance. Though these

dances are ethnic based, *Gas* have imbibed them by teaching them in their basic and tertiary institutions as well as using them in state functions.

The use of fancy dresses by masquerades, previously associated with the *Akans* in the Central Region has also infiltrated the clothing culture of almost all the ethnic groups in Ghana and used during Christmas and Easter festivities. These clothes which are made into different sizes, shapes and designed without or with facial masks, are sometimes created to honour heroes or special people in the community (Plate 4.186) -Brawnann1979:50. They are formed into groups and each has specific colours from which these folk-wears are sewn. Members include all categories of professions and people; such as teachers, lawyers, bankers and children (Plates 4.151& 4.185).



Plate 4.149: A man and woman doing the *kpalongo* dance in traditional clothes.

Source: From Gifty Naadu Laryeh"s library, Madina.



Plate 4.150: A group of men and women in the *Gome* dance costume.



Plate 4.151: The leader of a *Kple* dance performance, identified with several beads and body decoration.



Plate 4.152: Performing the *Kple* dance, wearing the traditional dress code..

Source (Plates 150 - 152): From Gifty Naadu Laryeh"s library, Madina.



Plates 4.153 (left) & 4.154 (right): Adults and children wearing different style of fancy dresses.



Plate 4.155: Forms of masquerade costumes designed to honour important personalities

Sources (Plate 153 -155): Pictures taken by the researcher

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE

5.1 Overview

The focus of this section, based on the questionnaire, is to conduct a statistical analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the field to examine the objectives and the research questions outlined in this study. Microsoft excel was used in analyzing the data gathered, and the choice for this programme was based on its user friendliness, accuracy and precision in computation of figures, and the availability of the needed statistical methods. The section is categorised into sub-sections, with each devoted to specific objectives designed to ensure consistency in the presentation of facts. The collected primary data was extracted from the answered questionnaires and entered into the software. Graphs and tables are inserted at appropriate sections to illustrate and support certain statements.

5.2.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Responses to the Questionnaire: Clothing Attitudes of *Gas*

A questionnaire was designed, and to assess its strength and also render it error-free, it was edited by two lecturers from University of Ghana Legon; Dr. Augustina Dzigah of the English Department, and Mr Daniel Appiah-Adjei, Theatre Arts Department, and also a former Deputy Director, Kumasi Cultural Centre. As indicated in the methodology, the questionnaire was designed in both closed and opened ended questions. Where in the former situation, respondents

were expected to choose from possible answers whilst they expressed their views (in writing) to the later. The questionnaire was designed into eight categories, and addressed:

- ❖ Demographic background of respondents.
- ❖ The concepts of *Ga* clothing Culture.
- ❖ Clothing elements associated with *Ga* traditional institutions and religious leaders
- ❖ Clothing used in Rites of Passage – naming, initiation, marriage and funerals.
- ❖ Accessories used in the *Ga* culture.
- ❖ The meanings and importance of colour and body paintings / markings
- ❖ Coiffures, yesterday and today
- ❖ Continuity/ change, and impart of modern fashion on *Ga* costume.

Data were gathered from questionnaires sent out to one hundred and twenty (120) respondents, out of which one hundred and two (102) responded, thus representing a response rate of 85%.

5.2.2 Demographic Background of Respondents

This section provides a brief socio-demographic background of respondents in the study. This is needed because it provides a useful basis for an appreciation of their knowledge, perceptions and attitudes towards any phenomenon under investigation (Andoh 2007). The critical socio-demographic backgrounds examined for this purpose therefore, covered questions one to eight and included among other things sex, age, ethnicity, educational background and occupation of respondents, as presented in Table 5.1. With regards sex distribution, there were more females (62.75%) than males (37.25%). Most of the respondents sampled (74.51%) were *Gas* and *Ga-Adangmes*, followed by *Akans* (12.75%), *Ewes* (3.92%) and other ethnic groups (8.82%).

Table 5.1: Demographic Background of Respondents

Background	Frequency	Percentage
a) Sex distribution		
Male	38	37.25
Female	64	62.75
Total	102	100.00
b) Age Distribution		
20 – 29 years	3	2.94
30 – 39 years	23	22.55
40 – 49 years	54	52.94
50 – 59 years	18	17.65
60+ years	4	3.92
Total	102	100.00
c) Ethnicity		
<i>Ga and Ga-Adangme</i>	76	74.51
<i>Akan Ewe</i>	13	12.75
Others	4	3.92
Total	93	88.22
d) Educational Background		
University	46	45.10
Post Secondary (Diploma)	19	18.63
Secondary	17	16.67
Post Primary (JHS, Middle School, etc)	20	19.60
Total	102	100.00

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

In line with age distribution of respondents, the data in Table 5.1(item b) shows that most of them, 54 (52.94%) were between 40 – 49 years, followed by 23 (22.55%) who were within the age group of 30 – 39 years, whilst 3 (2.94%) and 4 (3.92%) were between the range of 20 – 29 years, and above 60 years respectively. The analysis of thier educational background revealed

the following trend: University level respondents were 46, representing 45.10%, Post Secondary (Diploma) were 19, representing 18.63%, Secondary level 17 (16.67%) and Post Primary level 20 (19.60%). Respondents provided their occupational background indicating; teachers (21.57%), Teaching Assistants from tertiary institutions (17.65%), Traditional priests/ priestesses (11.76%), Businessmen/ women (10.78%), Fishermen (7.84%), Dressmakers (6.86%), Cultural Organisers (5.88%), Fish Mongers (4.90%), Lecturers (4.90%), Beauticians (2.94%), Cloth Sellers (2.94%) and Bankers (1.96%), recorded in table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Occupational Background of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Lecturer	5	4.90
Teaching Assistant	18	17.65
Teacher Dressmaker	22	21.57
Cultural Organisers	7	6.86
Traditional priest/ priestess	6	5.88
Banker	12	11.76
Beauticians	2	1.96
Businessman	3	2.94
Cloth seller	11	10.78
Fisherman	3	2.94
Fish Monger	8	7.84
	5	4.90
Total	102	100.00

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

5.2.3 The Concepts of *Ga* the Clothing Culture

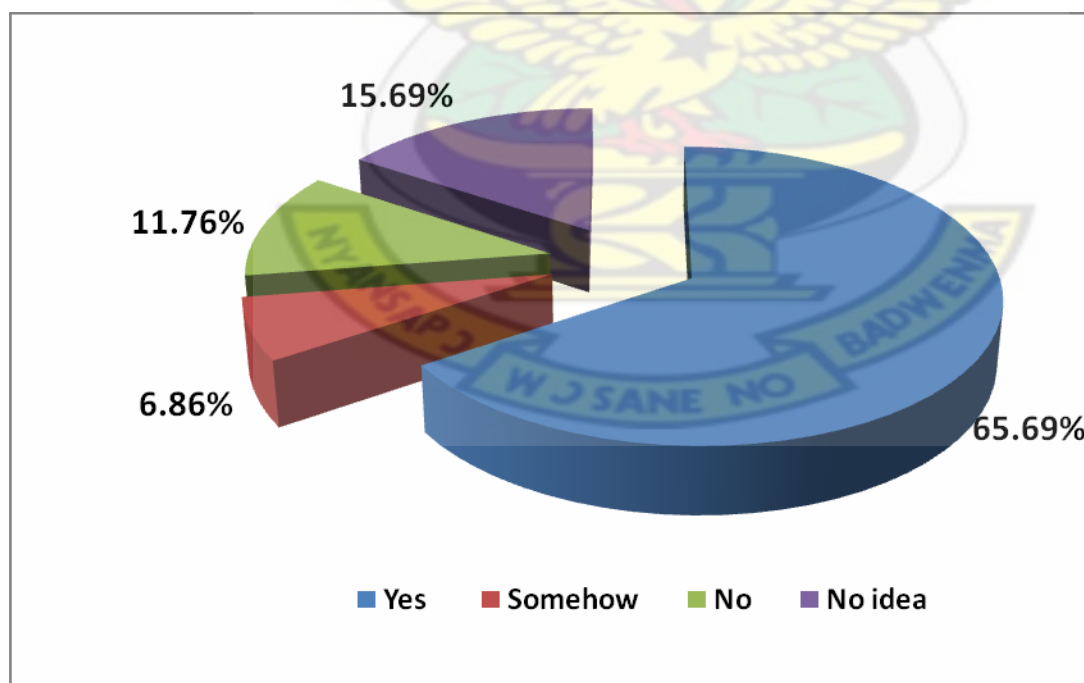
This second section of the questionnaire, questions nine to thirteen were designed to examine respondent's view on their concepts of the *Ga* dressing tradition and these are captured in Table 5.3. Additionally, figure 5.1 provides respondent's views on question ten that requested to know whether *Gas* have clothing and adornments that describe their cultural practices.

Table 5.3 Concepts of the Ga Dressing Tradition

Que. What are the concepts of the <i>Ga</i> dressing tradition?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. Wearing traditional clothes and accessories that conform to norms and ethics of society.	62 (60.78%)	27 (26.47%)	13 (12.75%)	102 (100%)
Dressing according to the fashion in vogue	31 (30.39%)	16 (15.69%)	55 (53.92%)	102 (100%)
Wearing Ghanaian / <i>Ga</i> outfits	34 (33.33%)	15 (14.71%)	53 (51.96%)	102 (100%)
Dressing to depict a person's status, rank, position and beliefs.	59 (57.84%)	9 (8.82%)	34 (33.33%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

Figure 5.1: Do *Gas* have Clothing and Adornments that describe their Cultural Practices?



In this regard, 67 (65.69%), 7 (6.86%), 12 (11.76%) and 16 (15.69%) respondents answered yes, somehow, no and no idea respectively. Those who answered yes were expected in question eleven to provide reasons for their response. Whiles some indicated that some of the indigenes dress to show specific occasion (durbars, puberty or funeral rites and festivals such as H4m4w4 etc.) others stated that chiefs always wear cloths during social gatherings to show the identity of their personality. Priest and priestess always wear white apparel and a special hat or cap that distinguishes him/ her from other cultures, whiles the high priest (Wul4m4) never used footwear.

A respondent stated that *Ga* men wear *adasaa* – a traditional huge short-, shirts and wear beads on thier wrists and around their necks, whiles ladies prefer *kaba* and slit. Another stated; “certain rituals have costume that goes with it and they are cultural practices that are still practiced and so when one is wearing them a *Ga* knows what the occasion is”. Question twelve was generated to know respondents views on the appropriate costumes expected at ceremonial occasions and the responses gathered are summarized in Table 5.4.

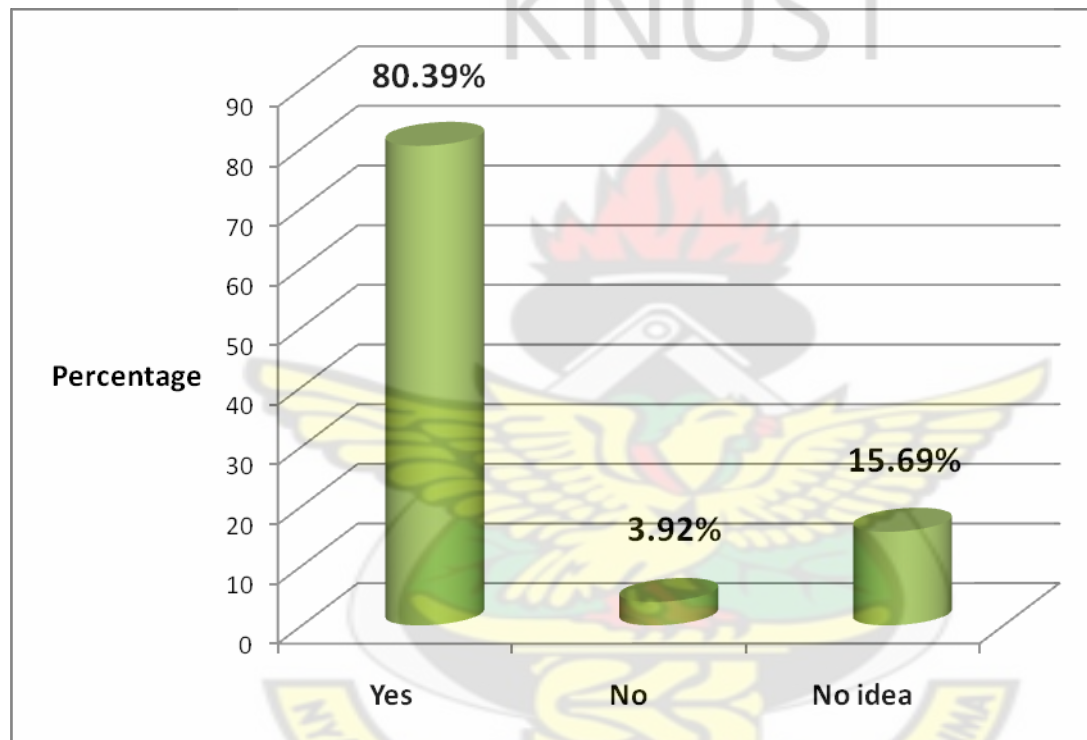
Table 5.4: Ceremonial Costumes and their Appropriate Use

Que. In the <i>Ga</i> culture, the appropriate costumes expected at ceremonial occasions require:	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. Knowing <i>Ga</i> clothing symbolisms as well as their meanings and using them accordingly.	89 (87.25%)	6 (5.88%)	7 (6.86%)	102 (100%)
Dressing to suite a person"s taste.	6 (5.88%)	35 (34.31%)	61 (59.80%)	102 (100%)
Wearing elaborate and fashionable dresses that measure up to peer-expectancy.	21 (20.59%)	33 (32.35%)	48 (47.06%)	102 (100%)
Wearing clothes that society does not frown on.	30 (29.41%)	16 (15.69%)	56 (54.90%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by Researcher, 2011

For question thirteen, most respondents (80.39%) indicated that clothing and adornment are part of the *Ga* culture whiles 4 (3.92%) and 16 (15.69%) respondents answered no and no idea respectively when their views were sought on the issue. See in figure 5.2 how this response is graphically represented.

Fig.5.2 Is Clothing and Adornment part of the Ga Culture?



5.2.4 Clothing Elements Associated with Traditional Institutions and Religious Leaders

Respondents were asked series of questions, from fourteen to nineteen, relating to the forms of dressing presently used by *Ga* chiefs/ queen mother"s on various occasions and whether these traditional leaders use crowns, jewellery, foot wear and hand items. For instance in question fourteen, respondents shared their views as captured in Table 5.5 shown on the next page.

Table 5.5: Forms of Dressing of Ga Chiefs/Queen mothers on Various Occasions.

Que. What are the possible forms of dressing for <i>Ga</i> chiefs/queen mother"s on various occasions?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. Full regalia on all occasions	30 (29.41%)	14 (13.73%)	58 (56.86%)	102 (100%)
Full regalia on ceremonial occasions and casual wear on ordinary days	76 (74.51%)	0 (0.00%)	26 (25.49%)	102 (100%)
Traditional clothes for both festive and ordinary occasions.	24 (23.53%)	10 (9.80%)	68 (66.67%)	102 (100%)
Que. Do the <i>Ga</i> queen mothers use crown, accessories, foot wear and hand items?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. They use all of these	19 (18.63%)	16 (15.69%)	67 (65.69%)	102 (100%)
They use all of these, but instead of the crown, they cut their hair very low or wear different headdresses to suite different occasion.	71 (69.61%)	0 (0.00%)	31 (30.39%)	102 (100%)
They wear crown, accessories, and slippers but they do not use hand items	11 (10.78%)	18 (17.65%)	73 (71.57%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

Question fifteen sought to find (by writing) respondents views on costumes used by a *Ga* chief (*Mantse*), and to this 85% did not answer at all whiles 15% answered. Respondents mentioned velvet (*ago*), *kente* and *adasaa* (shorts). Example of crowns indicated includes straw hats made of *l4n* and *akekpe*, and accessories include beads, *nyanyara*, *k4mi*, cowries, *adiagba*, rings, *afili*, whisk, scepter/ sword, and *4heneba* slippers. The study revealed that clothes used in the *Ga* culture differentiate one chief from another and also contrasts a chief and his sub-chiefs. Again the type of costume worn by a *Ga* priest/priestess is largely determined by the occasion as well as the requirements of the divinity. Stool/sword bearers and the elders are also identified with special clothes. To these reports table 5.6 provides a summarized view of respondents.

Table 5.6: Costumes for: *Ga* Sub-chiefs, Priests/Priestesses, Sword bearers and Elders (Questions 17-19).

Que. How different is the clothes of a <i>Ga</i> chief from that of his sub-chiefs?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. They all dress the same.	12 (11.76%)	36 (35.29%)	54 (52.94%)	102 (100%)
The clothes of the chief are more richer and symbolic than those of his sub-chiefs	34 (33.33%)	43 (42.16%)	25 (24.51%)	102 (100%)
Some accessories and hand items are specifically reserved for the chief.	29 (28.43%)	9 (8.82%)	64 (62.75%)	102 (100%)
Que <i>Ga</i> priests/priestesses wear similar costumes on all occasions regardless of the requirements of their various gods.	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. All of them wear the same fashion of clothes despite their affiliation with specific gods.	9 (8.82%)	30 (29.41%)	63 (61.76%)	102 (100%)
Costumes are determined by their specific gods and these are used for both ceremonial and ordinary days.	68 (66.67%)	18 (17.65%)	26 (25.49%)	102 (100%)
Costumes prescribed by a god must be worn on all occasions; whether the priest /priestess is at home or on ritual assignment.	21 (20.59%)	14 (13.73%)	67 (65.69%)	102 (100%)
They dress to portray their specific gods, however, on ordinary days they use casual wears.	26 (25.49%)	59 (57.84%)	17 (16.67%)	102 (100%)
	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Que. Do the elders, sword/stool bearers and attendants in <i>Ga</i> traditional institution have their mode of dressing?	86 (84.31%)	5 (4.90%)	11 (10.78%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

5.2.5 Clothing Associated with Rites of Passage- Naming, Initiation, Marriage and Funeral Rites (Questions 20-32).

Questions twenty to thirty two generally centered on clothes associated with rites of passage.

Naming ceremonies form an important event in every society and as reported during the discussions, it is during this occasion that the new born baby is given a name and also introduced

to the community and the world at large. And among *Gas* it is after the ceremony that the baby is considered as a human being, and therefore adorned in white. The parents of the baby, family members and well wishers express their joy by also wearing white clothing items and questions twenty and twenty-one requested respondents hold on this.

From table 5.7 below, 54 respondents representing 52.94% indicated that they had no idea whether parents and family members are obliged by custom to dress in white, 86(84.31%) said that tradition requires the wearing of clothes and accessories with white background but 69 (67.65%) respondents had no idea of the clothing composition used in the past. But 66 (64.71%) respondents belief the new baby is nude in the early part of the ceremony, thus when it is given a name.

Table 5.7: Clothing Associated with Naming Ceremony

Que When a baby was/is given a name during the outdoorng ceremony it was/is:	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. nude	66 (64.71%)	17 (16.67%)	19 (18.63%)	102 (100%)
dressed according to the taste of the parents	21 (20.59%)	29 (28.43%)	52 (50.98%)	102 (100%)
adorned in white dress with white beads, in addition to silver and gold ornaments after it is given a name	56 (54.90%)	7 (6.86%)	39 (38.24%)	102 (100%)
I am ignorant about the clothing fashion around the 17 th and 18 th century, however forms the 19 th century to date, I have observed that the baby does not wear any clothes during the ceremony.	30 (29.41%)	19 (18.63%)	53 (51.96%)	102 (100%)
Que What were /are the clothing components for the parents, family members and well wishers?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. The ceremony did/does not call for specific clothes; a person could/can dress as he/she pleases.	11 (10.78%)	18 (17.65%)	73 (71.57%)	102 (100%)
Tradition required /s clothes and accessories	86	5	11	102

with white background.	(84.31%)	(4.90%)	(10.78%)	(100%)
Parents and family members are obliged by custom to dress in white, but the well wishers may wear clothes of their choice provided the colour is bright.	32 (31.37%)	16 (15.69%)	54 (52.94%)	102 (100%)
I am not aware of their clothing composition in the past, but presently these people may choose to dress in white clothes.	24 (23.53%)	9 (8.82%)	69 (67.65%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by Researcher, 2011

5.2.6 Costumes and the *Otofo* Initiation Rites

Questions twenty two to twenty four dwelt on knowing respondents stand on the *Otofo* costume and from table 5.8, on the next page, 32 (31.37%) respondents were of the view that it is culturally important to continue with the *Otofo* rite as well as its associated costume while 54 (52.94%) respondents found no need for the continuation of the rite. Reasons cited as being culturally important for the continuation of the *Otofo* rite are; (a) The need to preserve the culture and (b) the rite enables girls to be trained, groomed, and prepared for future marriage and “it prevents girl's pre-marital sex”. Some respondents also stressed the need to change certain aspects of the dressing such as the exposure of private parts of girls so as to respect the rite of the girl child and prevent any human right violation.

Table 5.8 Costumes and the *Otofo* initiation rites

Questions	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Is it culturally important to continue with the <i>Otofo</i> rite as well as its associated costume?	32 (31.37%)	54 (52.94%)	16 (15.69%)	102 (100%)
Do you know the names meanings and significance of some/all the costumes used by the initiate?	3 (2.94%)	62 (60.78%)	37 (36.27%)	102 (100%)
Are there any significant changes between costumes previously used for the rite and the clothing fashion today?	68 (66.67%)	26 (25.49%)	8 (7.84%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

5.2.7 Clothing components of a Marriage Ceremony (Questions 25-28)

To questions twenty five to twenty eight which tried to solicit ideas on costumes used during marriage ceremonies performed in the past as well as today, whether the bride price demanded from the man included clothes, and if royal marriages demand special costumes, the responses are: concerning the dowry, 33(32.35%) said yes whiles 59(57.84%) said no. On that of royal marriage, 29(28.43%), 18(17.65%), and 55 (53.92%) indicated yes, no and no idea respectively.

36 (35.29%) respondents said yes when asked whether *Gas* had cloths, accessories, body markings/paintings and colours traditionally prescribed for marriage ceremonies, whiles majority (59.80%) said no. Their responses are also summarized in table 5.9 and represented graphically in figures 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5.

Table 5.9: Dressing for a Marriage Ceremony (Questions 25-28).

	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Que Do <i>Gas</i> have cloths, accessories, body markings/paintings and colours traditionally prescribed for marriage ceremonies?	36 (35.29%)	61 (59.80%)	5 (4.90%)	102 (100%)
Que Which type of clothes were the men and women identified with during marriage ceremony between the 15 th and 18 th centuries	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. They dressed according to their taste	23 (22.55%)	8 (6.86%)	71 (69.61%)	102 (100%)
Their clothing were designed according to the <i>Ga</i> tradition	16 (15.69%)	19 (18.63%)	77 (75.49%)	102 (100%)
They combined both the <i>Ga</i> clothing tradition and Western fashion	31 (30.39%)	7 (6.86%)	64 (62.75%)	102 (100%)
I do not have the slightest idea of what the couples wore	34 (33.33%)	10 (9.80%)	58 (56.86%)	102 (100%)
Que. Do you know the kind of cloths, accessories, footwear, head dress and hand items demanded from the man as bride price or dowry?	33 (32.35%)	59 (57.84%)	10 (9.80%)	102 (100%)
Que. Are there any differences in the clothing fashion of a royal marriage and that of the general public?	29 (28.43%)	18 (17.65%)	55 (53.92%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

Figure5.3: Do *Gas* have Cloths, Accessories, Body Markings/Paintings/Colours traditionally prescribed for Marriage Ceremonies?

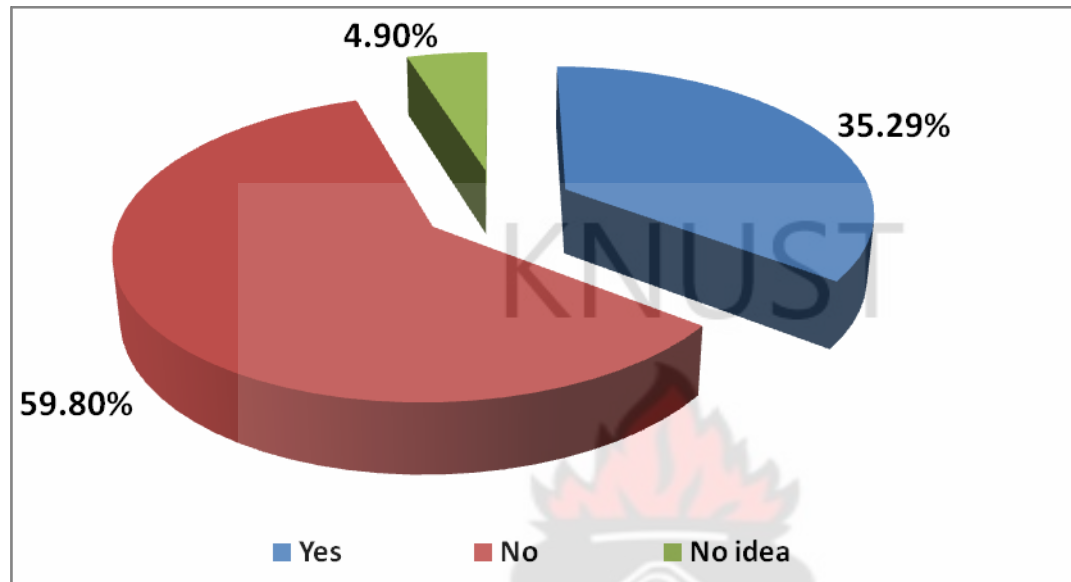


Figure 5.4: Do you know the kind of Cloths, Accessories, Footwear, Headdress and Hand items demanded from the man as Bride price or Dowry?

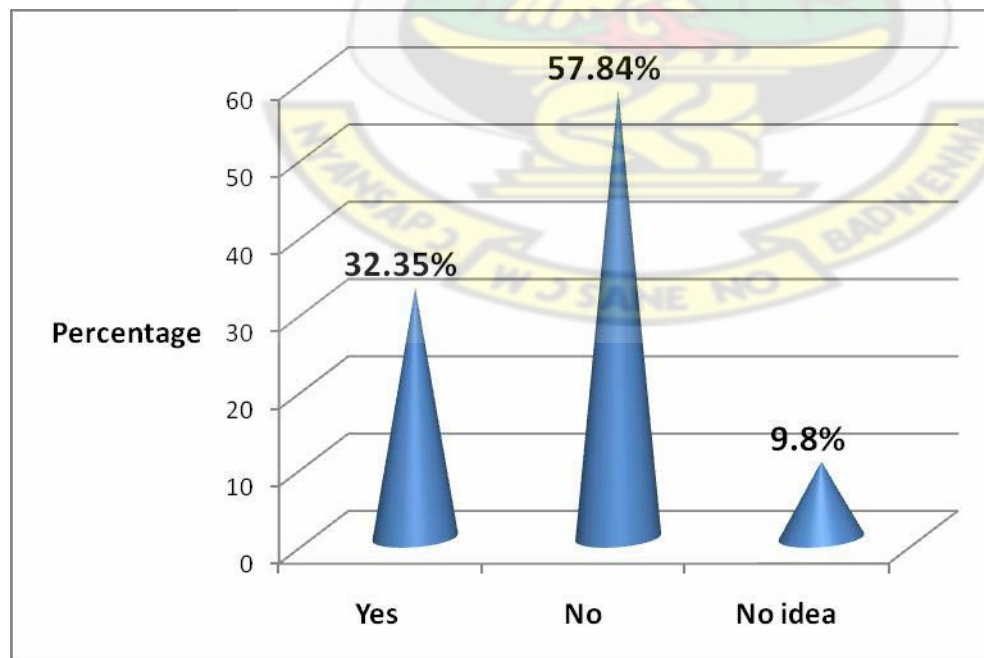
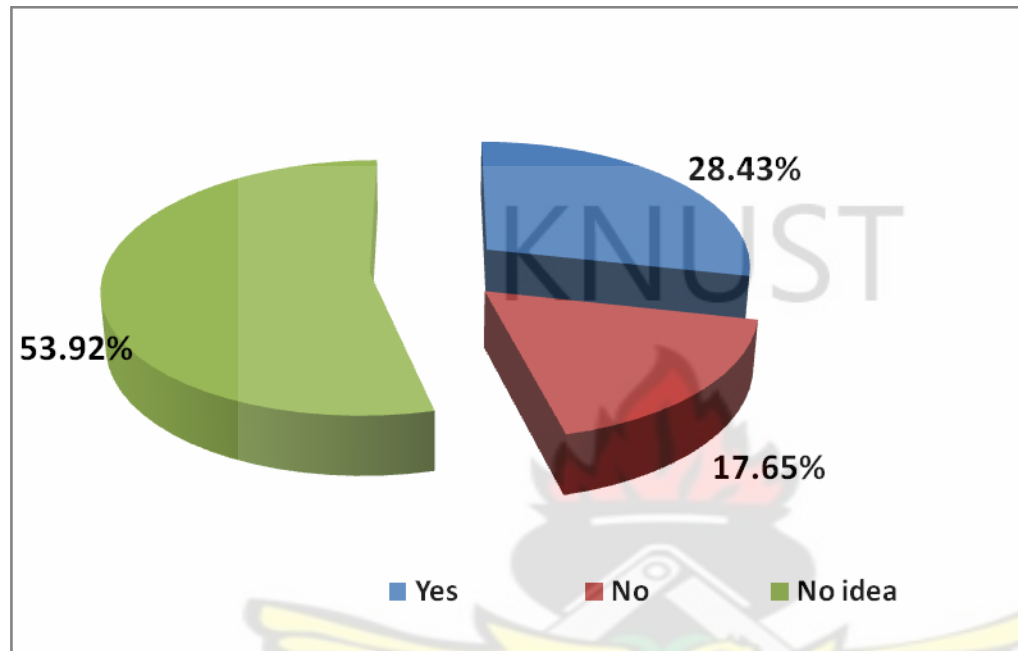


Figure 5.5: Are there any Differences in the Clothing Fashion of a Royal Marriage and that of the General public?



Questions twenty nine to thirty two sourced for the types of colours used at funerals as well as *Gas* attitude to their use. And if the age of the deceased, size and type of funeral, affordability and relationship with the deceased family inform the clothes one wears for a particular funeral. In tables 5.10 and 5.11, respondents indicated their perceptions.

Table 5.10: Clothes worn at Funerals

Que. What informs the clothes you wear for a particular funeral?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. The size of the funeral	0 (0.00%)	73 (71.57%)	29 (28.43%)	102 (100%)
The type of funeral	63 (61.76%)	28 (27.45%)	11 (10.78%)	102 (100%)
My relationship with the deceased /family	54 (52.94%)	9 (8.82%)	39 (38.24%)	102 (100%)
What is affordable	5 (4.90%)	89 (87.25%)	8 (7.84%)	102 (100%)
Que. Are <i>Gas</i> very particular about what they wear for funerals?	63 (61.76%)	36 (35.29%)	3 (2.94%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

Table 5.11: Type(s) of Clothes worn During the Funeral of a Person within Age groups 6 – 21, 22 – 45, 46 – 70 and above 71.

Please indicate the type(s) of clothes you will wear for the funeral of the following.	Response
6 and 21 years (under age)	Red and or Black
22 and 45 years (youth)	Red and or Black or Brown
46 and 70 years (adult)	Red and Black
Above 71 years (aged)	Black and or White

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

5.2.8 Accessories used in the *Ga* Culture (Questions: 33-35).

In thirty three to to thirty five, respondents' views on the attitude, uses, values, symbolisms, importance as well as the occasions that require the use of accessories were gathered. From Table 5.12, 76 respondents representing 74.51% were of the view that traditional accessories have symbolisms and importance attached to their uses, as well as occasions that require their use. And from figure 5.6, 41 (40.2%), 35 (34.31%) and 26 (25.49%) answered yes, no and no

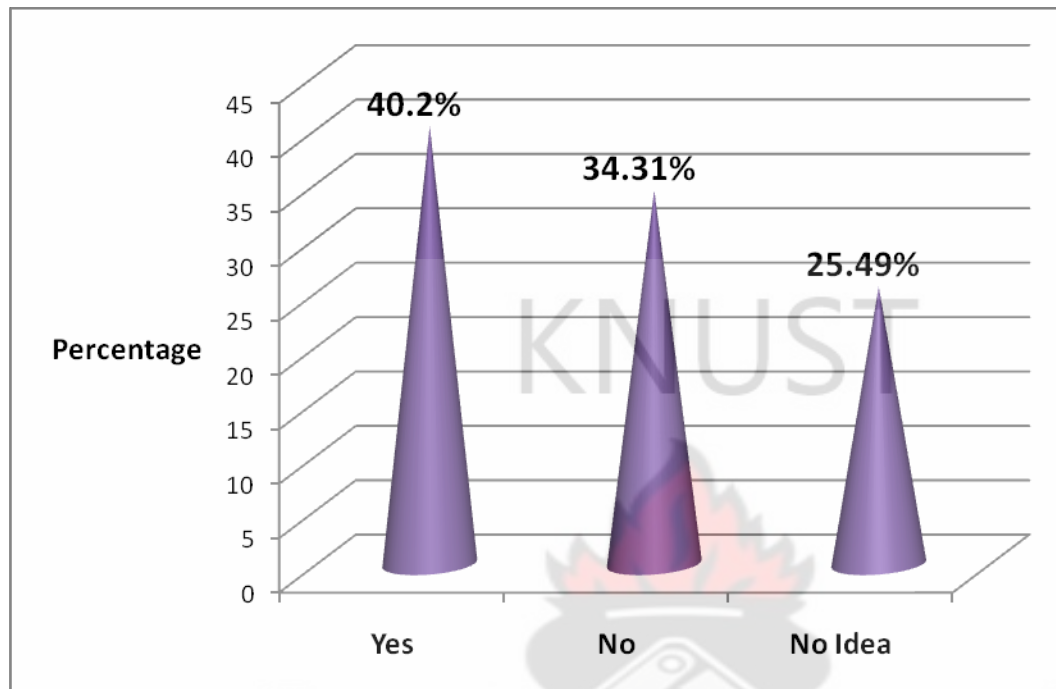
idea respectively when asked: do accessories define the role, rank, personality and occupation of a person?

Table 5.12: Accessories used in the *Ga* culture

Que. What was/is <i>Gas</i> attitude towards the use of accessories	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. They had/have minimal use and value for them	26 (25.49%)	38 (37.25%)	38 (37.25%)	102 (100%)
They value them now as they did in the past	65 (63.73%)	12 (11.76%)	25 (24.51%)	102 (100%)
They did not value accessories at all, except gold ornaments which were „worshipped“ and preserved for their gods	9 (8.82%)	43 (42.16%)	50 (49.02%)	102 (100%)
Que. Do traditional accessories have symbolisms and importance attached to their uses, as well as the occasions that require their use?	76 (74.51%)	19 (18.63%)	7 (6.86%)	102 (100%)
Ans. Accessories define the role or rank, personality or occupation of a person	41 (40.20%)	35 (34.31%)	26 (25.49%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

Figure5.6 Do accessories define the Role, Rank, Personality and Occupation of a person?



In question thirty six respondents were asked if colour, body paintings/markings used by *Gas* have their associated meanings and significance. As detailed in table 5.13, 48(47.06%) answered yes, 46(45.10%) said no, while 8(7.84%) claim they don't have any idea.

Table5.13: The Meanings and Importance of Colour and Body paintings/markings

	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Que. Are you aware that the uses of colours in the <i>Ga</i> society have associated meanings and significance?	48 (47.06%)	46 (45.10%)	8 (7.84%)	102 (100%)
Que. Personally, how do you use colour?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Based on its meaning and significance	50 (49.02%)	6 (5.88%)	46 (45.10%)	102 (100%)
Depending on the specific occasion and what it demands	74 (72.55%)	0 (0.00%)	28 (27.45%)	102 (100%)
What I want to wear at any given time regardless of the occasion	23 (22.55%)	38 (37.25%)	77 (75.49%)	102 (100%)
Que. Among the <i>Ga</i> beliefs, do you think the art of body painting and body markings are	62 (60.78%)	7 (6.86%)	33 (32.35%)	102 (100%)

culturally symbolic?				
Que. Body markings /paintings depict a stage in life, social status and position, as well as serving as a spiritual „shield“	45 (44.12%)	19 (18.63%)	38 (37.25%)	102 (100%)
Que. In your opinion can body paintings/markings have some health consequences; hence, they should not be worn despite their traditional values?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. There are health implications, and thus should be discouraged	36 (35.29%)	21 (20.59%)	45 (44.12%)	102 (100%)
They are part of the culture of the people and must continue at all cost.	23 (22.55%)	41 (40.20%)	38 (37.25%)	102 (100%)
They have their own spiritual potency that physically protects the body of wearers, hence, not harmful at all.	9 (8.82%)	36 (35.29%)	57 (55.88%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

When respondents expressed *Gas* view on colour- its associated meanings, significance and connotations- in question thirty seven, about 78% of them did not answer, but the remaining 22% suggested that (a) black was associated with sorrow, mourning, (b) green represented fertility (c) white means happiness, victory and cheerful moments and (d) yellow/ gold indicated prestige and wealth. In response to questions thirty eight to forty one, see table above.

On head covering and hairstyles, questions forty two and forty three requested to know whether these art forms are associated with the beliefs and practices as well as seasons in *Ga* tradition. And also if, hair plaiting/ braiding, cornrows, shaving the entire or portions of the hair, permed or relaxed hair, using wigs and wearing dreadlock have meanings and significance. Results are summarized below.

Table 5.14: Coiffures, yesterday and today

	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Que. Were /are headdresses associated with the beliefs and practices as well as seasons in <i>Ga</i> tradition?	49 (48.04%)	6 (5.88%)	47 (46.08%)	102 (100%)
Que. Do the following hair styles as part of the <i>Ga</i> culture; have names, meanings and significance?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. Hair plaiting /braiding, „cornrows" and rasta	35 (34.31%)	36 (35.29%)	31 (30.39%)	102 (100%)
Shaving the entire or portions of the hair	30 (29.41%)	19 (18.63%)	53 (51.96%)	102 (100%)
Permed or relaxed hair	19 (18.63%)	46 (45.10%)	37 (36.27%)	102 (100%)
Using wigs	12 (11.76%)	41 (40.20%)	49 (48.04%)	102 (100%)
Wearing dreadlocks	34 (33.33%)	35 (34.31%)	33 (32.35%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

5.2.9 Continuity, Change, and Impact of Modern Fashion on *Ga* Costume (Qs: 44-50)

The final part of the questionnaire, questions forty four to fifty, considered continuity/ changes as well as means of preserving *Ga* costumes. Response from questions forty four to forty six for instance suggested that the advent of western religious beliefs and practices and the desire for modern fashion, especially among the youth, have had adverse impact on *Ga* costumes, leading to the lack of knowledge and the appropriate way of using them. And that it is only the *Ga* traditional leaders, ritual experts and the elders who are abreast with the *Ga* culture and its associated costumes. Views expressed by respondents are summarized in Table 5.15.

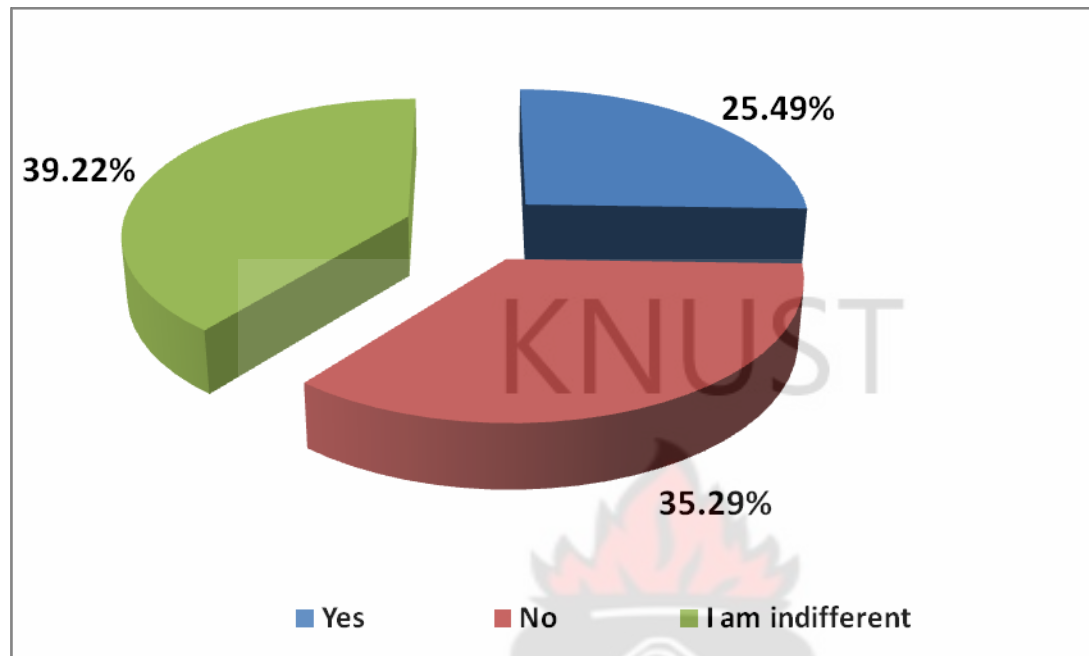
Table 5.15: Continuity/ Change, and Impact of Modern Fashion on *Ga* Costume

Que. What in your opinion is the state of <i>Ga</i> clothing tradition?	Yes	No	No Idea	Total
Ans. Most Ghanaians have a fair knowledge of <i>Ga</i> costume	41 (40.20%)	18 (17.65%)	43 (42.16%)	102 (100%)
It is only the <i>Ga</i> traditional leaders, ritual experts and elders who are abreast with the art	26 (25.40%)	36 (35.29%)	40 (39.22%)	102 (100%)
Every <i>Ga</i> indigene is acquainted with the clothing culture and its meanings and significance.	39 (38.24%)	20 (19.61%)	43 (42.16%)	102 (100%)
Most Ghanaians including some <i>Gas</i> do not have the basic knowledge about <i>Ga</i> costumes.	51 (50.00%)	2 (1.96%)	49 (48.04%)	102 (100%)
Que. Has acculturation and immigration affected <i>Ga</i> traditional clothes?	15 (14.71%)	56 (54.90%)	31 (30.39%)	102 (100%)
Que. Have religious beliefs and practices generally influenced <i>Ga</i> dressing?	53 (51.96%)	2 (1.96%)	47 (46.08%)	102 (100%)

Source: Field Survey by researcher, 2011

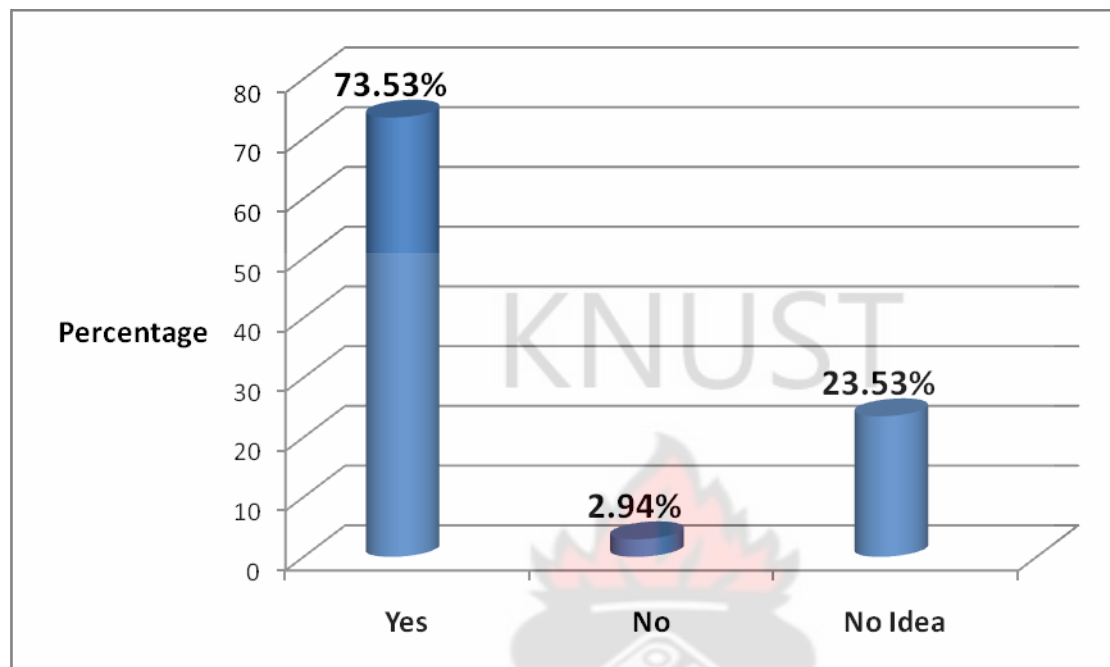
Q.47 asked: do you prefer traditional clothes to Western dress? In the response found on figure 5.7, 26 (25.49%) were affirmative. Whiles 40 (39.22%) indicated they were indifferent as to clothes they wear, 34(35.29%) claim they will settle on Western costumes.

Figure 5.7: Do you prefer Traditional Clothes to Western dress?



In trying to find out in Q.48 on the present state of *Ga* costumes as well as how to preserve them, respondents were asked: do you consider clothing and adornment as an important art that needs to be preserved? To this 73.53%, 2.94% and 2.94% said yes, no and no idea respectively, as indicated in figure 5.8 on P.237

Figure 5.8: Do you consider Clothing and Adornment in the *Ga* Culture as an Important Art that needs to be preserved?

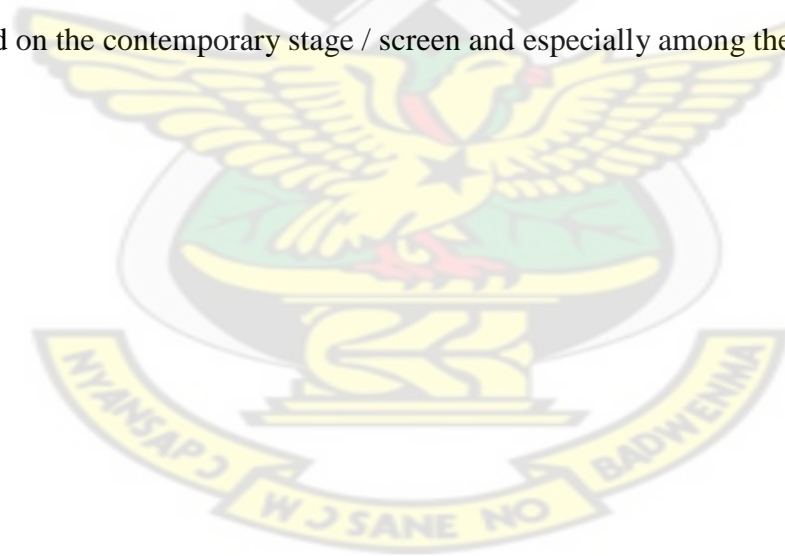


Finally the last two Qs.49-50 respectively sought to know: (1) if the *Ga* dressing tradition is in danger of acculturation and deterioration, and (2) ways to sensitize *Gas* on the relevance of using traditional clothes as a means of preserving it for generations yet unborn. The answer to (1) was 72% yes and 28% no. For (2), 60% of respondents did not comment, however, the rest, 40% were of the opinion that preservation of the *Ga* culture can be achieved if measures are taken by government, stakeholders and all Ghanaians to prevent acculturation and modernization by respecting the art.

They further reiterated that this could be achieved through education; that is (1) making it a prominent part of the educational curriculum and (2) organizing ceremonies and fairs in promotion of the art. 69 (67.65%) respondents indicated that the local manufacturing textile industries will be promoted if the Government of Ghana takes measures to sensitize citizens on

the importance and the need to adore and use *Ga* traditional clothes. They reasoned that the use of the local textiles will boost businesses of small and medium scale fashion firms and also uphold good morals and ethical values resulting in a morally upright people who are content with their clothing tradition and live with soundness of mind.

There may, however, be very few instances of inconsistencies with some of the responses, yet the holistic view and suggestions from most respondents (about 98%) have shown that the *Ga* culture has undergone some changes over time due to acculturation and modernization. Knowledge about *Ga* clothes; in respect to their names, meanings and functions, is also very minimal among Ghanaians, and even most *Gas*. Further proof shows that the dressing styles of most *Gas* have been submerged by contemporary fashions, resulting in inappropriate traditional dress codes found on the contemporary stage / screen and especially among the youth.



CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

This thesis has so far tried to examine clothing and adornment used by *Gas* from the 17th to the 21st century. As a non-verbal language that expresses the relevance and symbolisms of the culture of a people, this art has become an effective means through which this thesis has dwelt on to project the earliest and prevailing clothing and adornment in the socio-cultural set up of *Ga* people.

6.1.1 Traditional and Contemporary *Ga* Costume and Adornment

The follow-up on the typical traditional costumes of *Gas* showed that because of their interactions with some countries during their migration to Accra, and also due to the influence and influx of people from neighbouring towns to the community, *Gas* have adopted diverse costumes. Nonetheless it was observed that some specific clothes were not compromised. Documented works and oral tradition suggested among others archaeological discoveries that pointed to the use of jewelry in the earliest periods. Others included scanty clothes in the form of *lanta*, a loin cloth worn around the loins and used by men and women. Notwithstanding, clothes identified royals from the ordinary people. Over the decades – 18th to the 21st century, however, cultural dynamism among *Gas* have resulted in an improved clothing status. The elders stated that the typical traditional costumes for *Gas* are made up of cloth, headdress, footwear, jewellery, make-up and hand items, which are selected to suit naming, death, funeral, politics, religion and social functions.

6.1.2 Clothes

Ga women like the *Akans*, wear *kaba* and two loin cloths, while young women below the age of puberty also wear *kaba* but with only one loin cloth. According to oral tradition, in the past the use of two loin cloths were reserved for married women, this tradition has however taken a different turn as some spinsters are also now patrons of the former clothes. The *Ga* men also have their way of dressing. Unlike their female counterparts, *Ga* men wear clothes similar to the *Fantes*; while the older men wear jumpers and *adasaa* or jumpers and cloths, the younger ones either wear one loin cloth which is tied around the neck, or a jumper and *adasaa*. The raffia skirt (Plate 6.2) is only used by the Tigare priest/priestess, and in the past hunters attached bullet pallets to their costume (Plate 6.1).



Plate 6.1: Ahunter"s costume embossed with bullets.

Source: Department of Archival and Heritage Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.



Plate 6.2: The raffia skirt used by the Tigare priest.

Source: Picture taken by the Researcher

6.1.3 Headdress and Hairstyle

Traditional hairdressing is a cherished custom among *Gas* such that even chief priests who are mostly men are expected by tradition to either braid or plait their hair, (Plates 4.87&6.3-right) and a traditional priest whose deity is a female may decide to plait or braid his hair. Based on custom, status and occasion, *Ga* women may shave, braid or plait their hair into different styles. For instance a woman who mourns a dead spouse wears the *nkɔmmɔ*_hairstyle as discussed on page 148. Some modern hairstyles may combine both human and synthetic hair in weaving or plaiting, while custom or fashion may also require specific hairdressing such as adding accessories like caps, scarves, veils, animal tail or hair, feathers, beads, combs, shells, wires and spills (See plates 6.5-6.14). For aesthetics rather than tradition people use such items to decorate their hair or wear customary hairstyles. For instance some youths who are not traditional priest/priestess wear their hair in tassels for the sake of fashion or just to set themselves apart and this kind of dressing has neither traditional, religious meaning nor significance.

Headdresses are also worn by the high priest, ritual experts and women in the community and these may include headkerchief, shaved hair or uncovered hair. On the other hand the men may also shave their hair or wear it according to the fashion in vogue (Plate 6.15-6.19), however, special headdress are used by *otofo* initiates, royals, a priest or priestess to commensurate specific occasion (See plates 4.61-63, 4.93-96, 4.116).



Plate 6.3: A chief priest in the Akots111 cap (left) and the *wa bi bio* hairstyle (right)

Source: From Nuumo Yemote"s library, La.

Plate 6.4: A *Ga* chief in a red cap (left) and a *Ga* sub chief in headgear (right)

Source: Photograph taken by the researcher



Plate 6.5: A priestess in p1s1mp1s1 hair style (left) fortified with talisman (right)

Source: Photograph taken by resercher

Plate 6.6: The *gele* hairstyle (left) and the *akukuli* hairstyle adorned with gold (right)

Source: From Nuumo Yemotey VI"s library

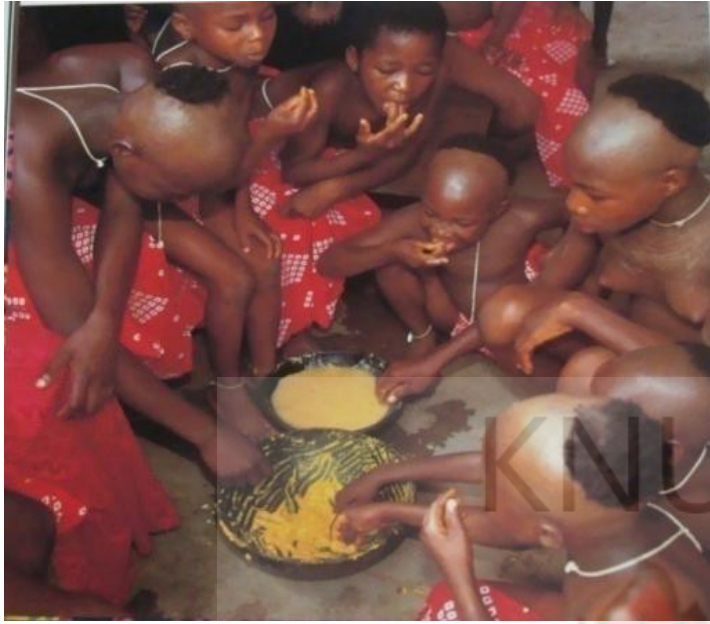


Plate 6.7: Hairstyle of *Dipo* initiates, similar to the nk4mm4 hairstyle of the olden days *Ga* widow.

Source: From the book *African Ceremonies*



Plate 6.8: *Tekua* headdress decorated with gold ornaments.

Source: www.mega.com



Plate 6.9: Headdress knotted on the forehead.

Source: www.mega.com



Plate 6.10: The *Gele* headdress from Nigeria.

Source: From the magazine, *Posh Designers Delight*, 2011



Plate 6.11: A woman wearing the pony hairstyle.



Plate 6.12: Different types of wigs, i.e, short (a), long (b), and curly (c)



Plate 6.13: A lady wearing the cornrow hairstyle



Plate 6.14: A dyed „Mow-hawk“ hair fashion worn by a young woman.

Sources (Plates 6.11 – 6.14): From the Single Touch Catlogue, 2011



Plate 6.15

Plate 6.16

Plates 6.15 & 6.16: Two young men wearing different „Crazy" hairstyles



Plate 6.17: Wearing the „TI" hairstyle

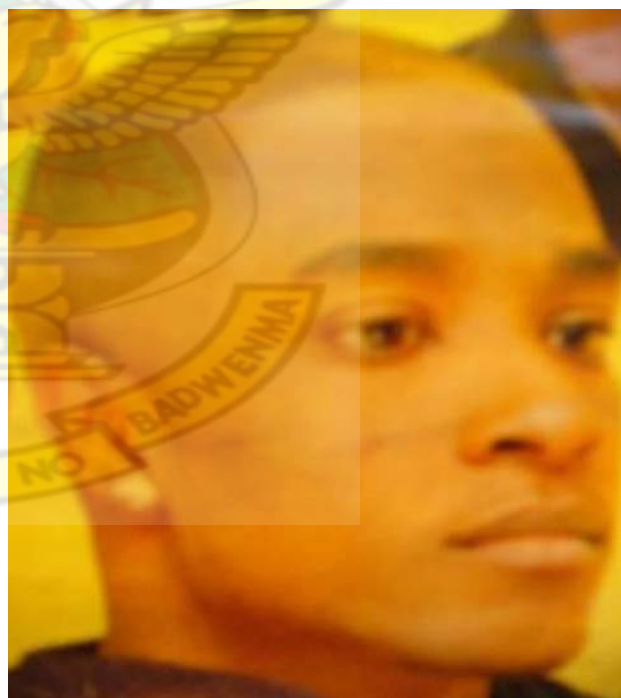


Plate 6.18: A young man in a „Fade" hairstyle

Sources (Plates 6.15 – 6.18): From the Royal Hair Cut Catalogue, 2011



Plate 6.19: Young men in different cornrow hairstyles.

Source: From the Royal Hair Cut Catalogue, 2011

6.1.4 Footwear

In the olden times, all the chief priests, chief, queen mothers, *asafo* leaders and priest/priestesses walked barefoot on all occasions. Today, all the others except the chief priest may use footwear always or sometimes. Men, women and children in the community can also use any footwear depending on the occasion and the situation at hand. Such footwear include *4heneba* slipper, low/block/high heeled slipper, sandals or shoes made with materials such as brown/black leather, wood or ropes and may be decorated with gold, silver, bronze, beads, bones or cowry shells. The *4heneba* for chiefs are specially made and fortified against evil eyes and malevolent spirits (Plates 6.20-6.33). It is worth emphasizing that between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Ghanaians including *Gas* did not use footwear.



Plate 6.20: An *ahenema* silver slipper embedded with gold.



Plate 6.21: Female style of *ahenema* slipper



Plate 6.22: *Ahenema* slipper with *Gye Nyame* motif.



Plate 6.23: *Ahenema* slipper with a porcupine motif.

Sources (Plates 6.20- 6.23): Pictures taken by the researcher



Plates 6.24- 6.26: Slippers made/ designed with *kente* (6.24), beads (6.25) and fur (6.26).



Plates 6.27- 6.29: „Open toes" shoe with a bow-tie (6.27). A wedge slipper (6.28) and „platform" shoe with pencil heel



Plates 6.30 & 6.31: A high-heeled slipper with leather straps (6.30). Winter boots with a pencil heel (6.31).



Plates 32 & 6. 33: Mens" laced shoe with flat tip (6.32). A mens" slip-on foot wear with a pointed tip (6.33)

Source (Plates 6. 24 - 6. 33): Pictures taken by the researcher

6.1.5 Fabric/Cloth

According to Ogilby (1956) the type of cloth or fabric used by Ghanaians/*Gas* around the seventeenth century was the bark cloth. *kpekpe* or sack cloth was also used and though the *oloobo* cloth may be used by *Gas*, the cloth has a ritual association with priests and priestesses. Fabrics that are now patronized by the *Gas* are made of wool, grass, raffia and vegetable fibre, as well as beaded cloths, plain/ printed cloths, appliqué, linen, *kente*, silk and animal skins. The *kente* cloth, originating from both *Ashantis* and *Ewes* (Plates 4.101&6.34) are used by *Gas*, and even though *kente* was initially reserved for chiefs, in recent times, any *Ga* who is financially capable can own the cloth. However, *Ga* chiefs have special weavers who make them distinct *kente* cloths which are not accessible to the ordinary *Ga*.



Plate 6. 34: The *Ewe Togodo* or *Adanuvo* *kente* cloth

Source: From the National Museum and Monument Board, Accra



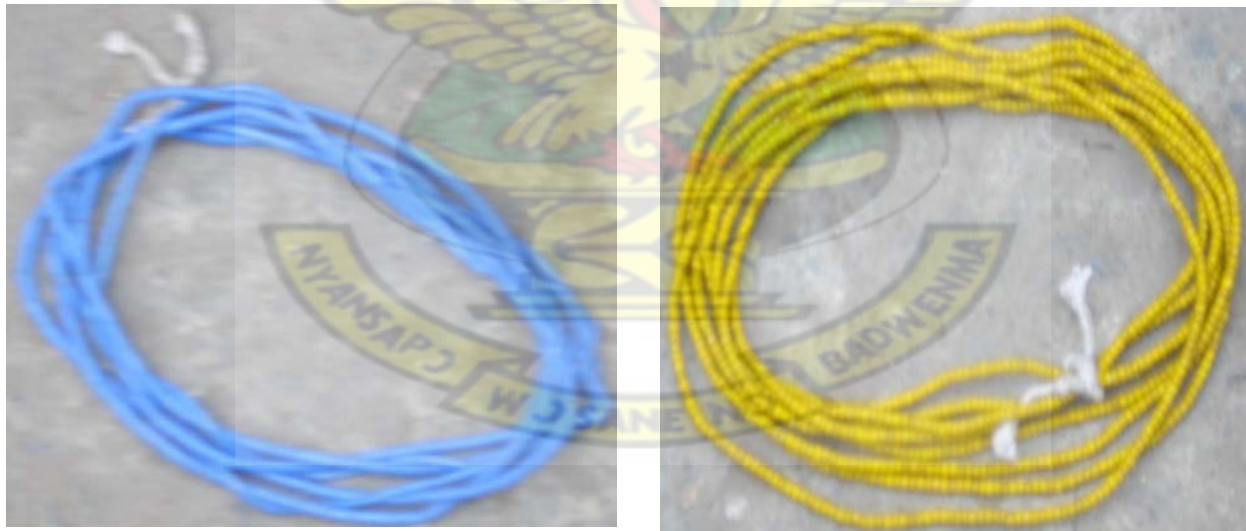
Plate 6. 35: The *Oloobo* cloth

Source: Picture taken by the Researcher

6.1.6 Ornaments

Gas use ornaments to complement their clothing, hairstyles and makeup. These accessories are worn on almost all parts of the body such as the head, neck, ears, waist, hips, fingers, knee,

ankle, arms and toes. People of rank are identified with a special necklace made of *nyanyara* leaves (Plate 6.39), hence the chief priest, chief, queen mother, priest/priestess use this ornament during ceremonial occasions to symbolize the different eminent positions they hold. The most common forms of ornaments used by the *Ga* people are earrings, necklaces, bracelets and rings. These items are made with gold, silver, copper, brass, and wood. Some locally obtained materials such as threads, fibers, reed, grass, feathers, cowries and leather may be used; and these stuffs can be woven, plaited or strung alone, or combined with other materials. Special types of durable wood like ebony can also be used to make wristlets, necklaces and earrings. The uses of these ornaments are guided by the body symmetry such as the ear, arms and legs; thus earrings, wristlets and leg bands are usually used in pairs. Ornaments transcend all categories of *Ga* people and these are used in accordance with the occasion (See plates 6.36-42&fig.6.1).



Plates 6.36 & 6.37: The K4mi blue (left) and yellow (right) beads used to adorn the dead.

Source: Pictures taken by the researcher



Plate 6.38: A *Ga* chief wearing several gold bangles and a tortoise and porcupine motif gold rings.



Plate 6.39: The *nyanyara* and *s1b1* necklaces.



Plate 6.40: The *shika Ga* bracelet and the *adiabha* beads.

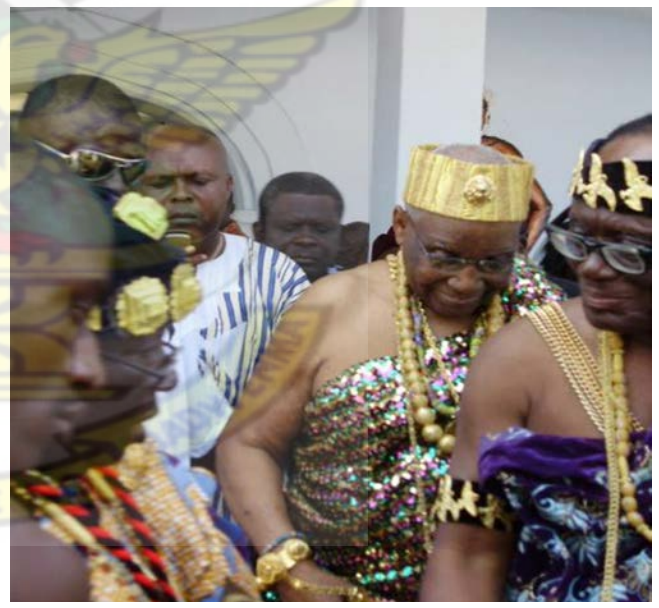


Plate 6.41: *Ga* chiefs in different crowns embedded with gold

Source (Plates 6.38 – 6.41): Pictures taken by the researcher



Plate 6.42: Nii Ayikai III(middle) at home wearing the *afili* braclet

Source: Picture taken by the researcher,



Fig.6.1: A young *Ga* woman wearing the low hair cut style and multiple ear rings.

Source: Drawn by the researcher

6.1.7 Facial Makeup, Styles of Body design and Body markings

Apart from individual makeup worn for beautification, special makeup is used by twins, priests/priestesses, chiefs/queen mothers and other ritual experts on specific occasions. For instance white powder and *kl4b4* are worn on the faces and arms of such people during enstoolment, destoolment and annual ritual festivals. Some makeup is worn for protection. There are also various types of body designs made with different kinds of cosmetics. Some of which are clay, myrrh, charcoal, dried leaves, gold dust and vegetable oil. Being in the form of oil, paint or powder, the cosmetics are dabbed or spread in the form of patterns on the various parts of the human body. A person can decorate his/her own body, however, assistance is sought when one needs to paint one's back, but to achieve the required body designs used at functions, specialists consult other members for their decorations. Basically, the fingers, the palm and the mouth are the major tools of the designer. Other instruments like combs, specially carved wood and stones

are also used to achieve special effects such as scratching; rubbing; doodling; smearing; making dots and splashing (See plates 6.43-46 & 4.122). Eyebrows, eyelashes and fingernails/toenails, such as those in plates 6.48 to 6.50 are designed according to the taste of a person or the fashion in vogue.

Among the *Ga* people body markings are worn for identity and protection. Such markings are found on the head, the torso and the limbs. On the head, markings are located on the forehead, cheeks (such as the ethnic mark shown in fig.6.3), the corners of eyes and mouth, while those marked on the torso are found on the nape, chest, navel, groins and the hips. Marks made on the limbs can be located on the shoulders, upper arms, elbows, wrists, knuckles, arms, knees, ankles, toes, and soles of feet.

The two (2) major markings discovered among the *Ga* people were scarification and cicatrices. With the exception of the *gbobal* marks (See fig 6.4) which are big and deep scarifications, some facial markings are comparatively tiny and may disappear with age.

Body markings come in various forms, shapes and sizes with the common ones marked either horizontally or vertically. Each marking has its specific element created for a particular purpose and used by specific class of people in the society. They are believed to perform a wide variety of functions within the social, religious, and medicinal context, which include protection from sorcery, witchcraft, evil eyes and evil spirits. The various body markings are used for social, religious, or medicinal purposes which include protection from sorcery, witchcraft, evil eyes and evil spirits. Some markings are also deliberately concealed by clothing so that wearers will be protected from witches and wicked people who may want to destroy them. To constantly

maintain the efficacy of certain types of incisions, they are energized occasionally with specific herbs, and body markings meant for protection and healing are usually executed by ritual experts. There are some instances of people wearing tattoos, though, not as common as the two incisions mentioned earlier.



Plate 6.43: Designing the body of *otofo* initiate with myrrh.



Plate 6.44: The spiritual daughter of a priest adorned on the day of her “liberation”

Sources (Plates 6.43 & 6.44):From Nuumo Yemotey VI"s library,La



Plate 6.45: Facial makeup of a priest during a H4m4w4 festival

Source: Picture taken by the resarcher



Plate 6.46: Wives of chief priests in special body designs.

Source: Nuumo Yemotey VI"s library, La



Fig.6.2: The *Fanti kunkuma* marks worn during pregnancy.



Fig.6.3: A girl wearing an ethnic mark.



Fig.6.4: The „crow-feet” marks of the gboba14.

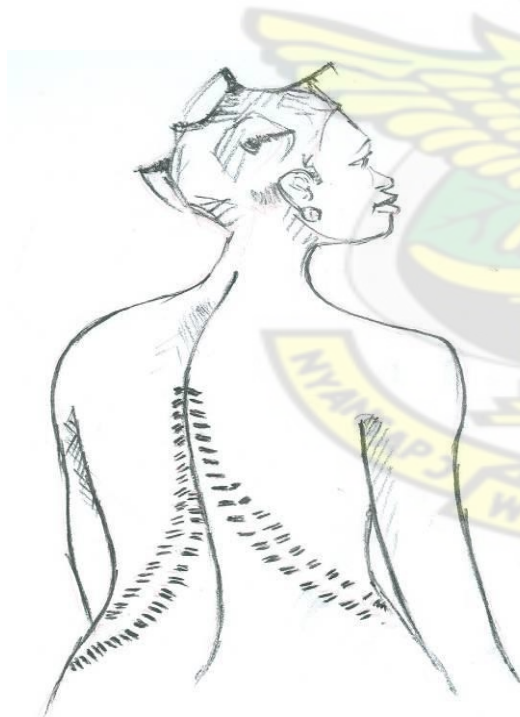


Fig. 6.5: The four rows of cization worn at the back of a priestess.



Plate 6.47: The six marks worn on the chest of the *tigare* priestess.

Source: Picture taken by the researcher.

Sources (Figs. 6. 2- 6.5): Drawn by the researcher.



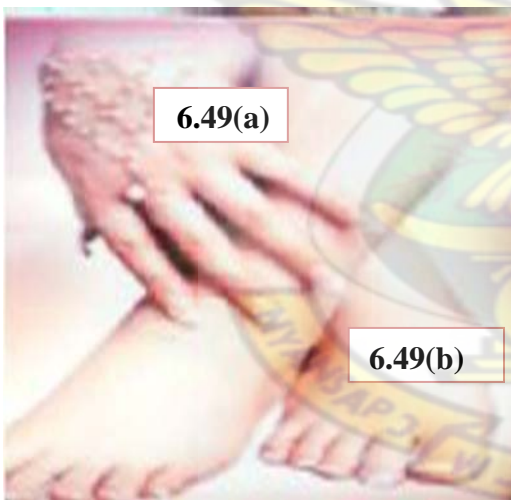
6.48 (a)



6.48(b)

6.48(c)

Plate 6.48 (a-b): Fingernail dressing (manicure), with extended artificial nails in different designs such as French Tips and Acrylic.



6.49(a)

6.49(b)

Plate 6.49: Wearing a ring connected to the bracelet (a) and extending and designing the toenails (b)- pedicure.



Plate 6.50: Extended eyelashes and the „Butterfly” eyebrow design.

Sources (Plates 6.48- 6.50): Pictures taken by the researcher.

6.1.8 Hand Items

Hand items used by the *Ga* people include fly whisks, the *kpledwo* stick, *nml1ti* and *gbul4*. Some chiefs use fly whisks as protective devices, and also some gods require their priests/priestesses to use the fly whisk. The leader of the asafo company uses the *kpledwo* stick during festive occasions and the *nml1ti* is used by the *Wul4m4*, priests and priestess for spiritual cleansing. The *gbul4* is a ceremonial cudgel used by the chief priest. Handbags and purses are also used by *Ga* women to commensurate their clothes or dressing.



Plate 6.51: Nuumo Yemotey VI holding the ceremonial cudgel: *gbul4*

Plate 6.52: Nuumo Yemotey VI holding the *nml1ti* used to clear the way for the *H4m4w4* festival.

Source Plates 6.51 & 6.52: From Nuumo Yemotey VI's library, La

6.1.9 Colour symbolisms

The investigation established that *Gas* have special preference for specific colours which have symbolic importance. Even though almost all the various types of colours may be used sometimes, certain colours have ritual importance that make them unique, hence such colours, cannot be compromised with any other. For instance colours such as white, red, green and black are selected on the basis of their religious or spiritual significance, and interpreted as follows:

WHITE

Among *Gas* white denotes victory, status, power and liberation. It is therefore used for the installation of chiefs, queen mothers and the chief priest, as well as the celebration of ritual festivals of twins and the divinities. White is also used to ward off evil spirits as happens in the case of the death and funeral of *ɔtɔfo*. White clay is used to dissolve marriage; and wearing it at this moment signifies the „liberation“ of the spouses to engage in another marriage without breaking any taboo.

RED

Red depicts danger, „be ware“, aggression, sorrow and determination. It is smeared on the body of twins when they are born, and also used for the funerary rites of the *Ga* chief and a young *Ga* person who dies between the ages of twenty-five and thirty years.

GREEN

Youthfulness, freshness, life, virginity, maturity and hope are expressed through colour green. (Opoku 1989). The *otofo* girl, the chief priest, priest/priestess smear their bodies with green

mryth as a sign of fertility, maturity and hope. Green mryth is also patronized by *Ga* women because of its sweet scent and the power associated with it. Widows, new-born babies and some relatives of the deceased also use it as protection against the spirit of the dead.

BLACK

Death, decay, ill-luck, sadness and hopelessness are communicated through the use of black. (Frings1982). Black is used for the funeral of people who die between 6 and 70 years. Ironically black gives life because most traditional healers employ black herbal preparations in treating/curing some chronic and deadly diseases.

6.2 Conclusions: Findings- Continuity, Changing Ideas/Influences in *Ga* Costumes

Posterity will not hesitate to commend *Gas* for their support and (1) continuous adherence to some important aspects of their costume tradition. The researcher really appreciated some of the people"s unflinching patronage of the traditional clothes used during their various ceremonies. Although some *Gas* are now Christians and have also received Western education, (2) their attitudes towards tradition have not been negatively affected. How? The study noted that during certain moments like pregnancy, illness and "girls who have to submit to the traditional nobility rites"" (3) most *Gas* do not frown on the custom, but rather use or allow their relatives to wear the required ritual clothes and adornment. Due to the fear and anxieties associated with the neglect of certain customs, some *Gas* participate or permit their children to go through the rites even when some aspects may conflict with their Christian principles. According to such people "they ought to render to Caesar his due". Besides this fear, however, (4) *Gas* believe in their gods and the potency of their medicine, as well as the efficacy of modern science. They then agree with Forster (1995:66) who has reported that:

Both the traditional medicine and the different medical systems are protective measures against sickness. People accept the two as complementary practices for combating disease. People believe that traditional body [adornment and incisions] markings take care of both the spiritual and the physical whilst modern science deals with the physical.

Most of the respondents therefore emphatically stated that their adherence to their tradition (for which clothing and adornment take prominence) “cannot be taken from them”. (5) Foreign influence on *Ga* costumes has a dual effect, manifested either positively or negatively within the indigenous and contemporary fashions. In spite of the fact that *Gas* are sensitive to their costume tradition, the research revealed that their use in recent times has been negatively influenced by modern Western cultures whose aesthetics these *Gas* have found appealing. Other factors aligned to this behavioral pattern are (6) migration, survival and identity, which have together infiltrated clothing styles used by people such as the priestess and some youths. And also during occasions such as naming and funeral ceremonies, as well as traditional music and dance performances.

In the light of clothes used by the priestess, the study revealed that (7) some of them wore treated hair (permed) instead of the natural hair they are required to keep. Whiles others used wigs, some of them attached animal or synthetic hair to their own, and wore nail polish as well as fanciful makeup. Even though these priestesses claim they are allowed to wear such items, the researcher finds it a bit questionable because although the “idea of the sacred and profane” are important considerations in clothing and adornment, their social aspects are relatively important in role definition and status differentiation. With the use of such clothes therefore (8) the solidarity of these religious bodies and their representation of the various gods become a bit „watery” or diluted. As a result the fear and respect accorded both the priestess and her deity may soon wave off.

The study also confirmed that (9) these adulterations or allowances in dressing have in a way diluted the power the priestess wields in the community. For instance, at a point during one of the ceremonies, a priestess was seen dressed in the colours of a political party and had to struggle for space like any other person. The researcher's concern here is that, though a priestess has her normal life to live, care must be taken not to overemphasize patronage of other costumes to promote the supremacy of another deity or person. Or better still, lose the necessary respect and confidence accorded her in the community. More importantly, this fashion trend will have a negative influence on the acolytes, causing a gradual "erosion" into the type of clothes that are culturally accepted.

Nonetheless, these religious persons have a very commendable custom in that by walking bare foot, they claim they do obeisance or revere their gods. But the study revealed that even though a person may get hurt in the process, scientists have observed that it has health benefits; such as working on the nerves of the individual and thereby facilitating the blood cycle. Hence, it is highly recommended for all manner of people especially hypertensive patients.

Also (10) clothes used during some traditional ceremonies have gradually switched from what was customarily right to what a person desires. Most Christians for instance prefer a church naming ceremony to the traditional one which offers opportune times for people to show case their wealth, instead of soberly reflecting on the responsibility of child care and its financial constraints.

However, (11) there is a positive change with some aspects of the *otofo* girls' costumes. Their dressing has been modified such that much „nudity" is not portrayed as before. Girls who go

through the rite today wear pieces of cloth to cover their breasts, and in addition because most of these girls attend Basic Schools, they are excused from shaving their hair or maintaining the traditional hairstyle.

Concerning funeral rites, the study noted that (12) those occasions have become moments for „fashion display" rather than a time for mourning the dead. Instead of the mourning clothes used in the past, there are today all kinds of expensive dresses that seem to promote fashionable competition rather than grief. Cloths on display include Chinese *Brisi*, Damask, which is commonly called “Cheddar”, Seer-sucker, Organza, lace, Satin and Brocade. Accompanied headdresses are black rayon, nylon cap, hair slides, uncovered hair and elaborate hairstyles. Footwear has also changed from the low slippers to high-heeled, block-heeled and platform shoes/slippers, together with all kinds of expensive jewellery and elaborate makeup.

Costumes used to perform marriage rites today are at variance with those of the past. Sad to say, most of the youths are „scared" of marriage due to its extravagant nature; because instead of the modest clothes used in the past, most weddings today use fashionable costumes. With most people desiring church weddings, costumes are now designed in accordance with Western fashion, and at very high cost. Consequently (13) clothes, hairstyles, accessories, makeup, hand items and footwear are all dictated more by Western fashion than by *Ga* tradition. Apart from the expensive clothes of the couple the use of page boys, flower girls, and the bride's maids aggravate the cost, creating financial burden on most couples at the early stages of their marriages. Some marriages have sadly been dissolved because of such unwise course.

Finally the study recorded that (14) *Ga* traditional dance costumes are no longer the printed cotton cloth. There is a shift that emphasizes aesthetics than culture; where most of the costumes are sewn with *Kente*, Silk, Seer-seeca, Organza and Lace materials, made into desirable styles that seem to promote fashion rather than tradition. Consequently the royalty associated with the use of *kente* cloth as noted by the study then becomes questionable.

It is evident from the data collected for this thesis that the researcher has examined clothing and adornment as a reliable means for *Ga* cultural expression. The concepts, meanings, symbolism, influences, continuity and changes which have been the major findings, as realized in this study are salient in the preservation of the *Ga* costume tradition. This is a clear indication that the art has a prominent position in *Ga* history, and must be given its due attention, because without it *Ga* cultural record will not be complete. To effectively address this, the role of clothing components in relation to the socio-cultural activities of *Gas* must be investigated against the changing forms of modernization, globalization and identity; cankers that can mar the clothing fashion tradition of a people. This concern therefore spurred the major objectives of this study.

Objective 1

The first objective of this research was to investigate the earliest records and some historical developments in *Ga* costume and adornment. The intent was achieved by (1) examining written records of early European travelers to the Western Coast who provided clothing evidence in the earlier periods, (2) the accounts of archaeologists and historians and (3) visiting museums and libraries. The first part of chapter four of the thesis dealt with this issue and suggested that the various clothing evidence found among *Gas* is presumed to be around early seventeenth century, and even though clothes were scanty they outlined gender, occupation and status. Clothes and

adornments were worn together with gold, bronze and wood ornaments. It was also noted that the people adopted European fashion around 1800s.

Objective 2

The second objective of the study aimed at assessing the contemporary fashion trends and their influences among *Gas* from post independent to the present. In this regard the second part of chapter four disclosed that from 1900 to date the *Ga* people have been patrons of both their traditional and the Western clothes. The later (in the name of modernization) have resulted in moral diminutions; by way of indecent dressing patronized by some youths. Again the styles of costume used within these periods were observed to be cyclical, where slight variations were noted in the length, size and silhouette.

Objective 3

The third objective sought to examine and show the uses, cultural importance and symbolisms in cloth, colour, fabric and styles of costume as expressed in *Ga* political, economic, social and religious lives, including the changes that have occurred with time. The third part of chapter four investigated this concern in perspective of past and present *Ga* traditional costume and adornment, and revealed that there are philosophies, symbolisms and meanings behind the use of clothes found within the above activities and customs. Moreover some of these costumes which were previously informed by distinct religious factors, such as costumes previously used by a *Ga* chief, have recently been influenced by fashions of other Ghanaian ethnic groups as well as modernity.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Clothing and adornment among *Gas* face challenges of loss and deterioration. The following recommendations are therefore made based on the data, discussions, analyses and conclusions drawn for the preservation of the art.

(1) *Further Study to close up missing gaps in (a)-(c) noted.*

Scholarly works on Ghanaian including *Ga* costumes in general are scanty. The study of clothing to comprehend the culture of *Gas* and also close up the „missing gap in their history“ needs comprehensive and integrated efforts. It is proposed that researchers in the arts such as social and cultural anthropologists turn their attention here and focus on: (a) the evolution of Hair Styles and Headgear, together with Hand Items from pre-colonial period to the present. (b) A critical analysis of costumes used by the individual *Ga* towns; showing similarities and divergence in symbols, imagery, oral sources and histories. And this may be achieved by targeting each town, noting all details on costumes including minute ones, since their emergence and to date. (c) A comparative study of styles, content and symbolisms in costumes among *Gas* and other Ghanaian ethnic groups.

(2) *Stakeholders and others noted should put shoulders to the wheel to educate, promote and preserve this heritage.*

For society to learn and cherish *Ga* traditional costumes and accessories and refrain from fashionable ones that seem to water down their own, efforts are needed by (a) Government, (b) Traditional religious leaders, (c) Textile Industries, (d) Fashion Designers, (e) Skin specialists and beauticians. Government must incorporate fashion study programmes at various levels of Ghana's education conventions. This will help young ones appreciate the relevance of the art,

thereby creating cultural awareness at an early age. The researcher here agrees with Hansen (2009:369), that “clothing [has] for a long time received only passing attention”. Therefore Clothing must be given the same slot as English and Mathematic on the Teaching Schedule or Time Table at the Primary and Junior High levels; instead of relegating it to the background and sometimes branding it among others as Extra Curriculum Activities that are assessed once a week.

Traditional leaders such as chiefs, queen mothers, priests and priestess must use occasions like durbars, festivals and other ceremonies to sensitize their subjects on the important of preserving *Ga* costumes as part of a national heritage.

Ghanaian Textile industries, Fashion Designers, Costumiers, Dressmakers, Tailors and Home Economist must regularly come together and showcase Ghanaian costumes with focus on *Ga* clothes, emphasizing the appropriate use and occasions worn.

Skin specialists and beauticians should also be engaged in schools, through the print, audio and video media, to educate people on the dangers of wearing tattoos, some cosmetics and paints.

(3) *Initiate programmes to arrest indecency in dress code which impact negatively on the youth.*

By way of television and radio, different programmes must be employed to address and arrest the „unwholesome“ practices connected with dressing that has a drastic telling impact on the immoral stance of the youth in particular. These can be achieved through drama and documentary shows.

The church must use its position in the society to „sound“ decency in dressing as part of their worship, especially if they want God's approval and blessings (Numb.15:38-39; 1Tim.2:9). They must make it a matter of urgency and design structures like talk shows, seminars and church dramas which will similarly augment bible teachings about issues concerning decent grooming that exhibit the inner personality created in the image of God and also serving as a fine witness of their faith.

Parents must also be on the alert because the idea of modernity in dressing can and has resulted in the display of provocative fashions seen among the youth today. Facts are that some parents are culprits themselves because not only will they wear such clothes, but also buy them for their children- even very young ones. If the children are the future custodians of our culture, then parents must do well to help them have a proper standing of costume in order to effectively pass it on to generations to come, reducing the rate of acculturation and/or modernization and a possible „erosion“.

In line with Ryan (1966); Horn & Gruels (1981) some peoples dressing are dictated by their role models. Therefore if such people like artists-actors, and musicians, politicians and women or men in leadership positions make deliberate efforts to dress decently and also patronize traditional clothes, the result will be obvious, and the *Ga* dress tradition is likely to be preserved.

(4) *Government provision of lesser tariffs on the Local Textile industries*

Financial difficulty ranks high among the clothing attitudes of *Gas*. Some imported dresses are cheaper and therefore attract greater patronage. It is important for government to impose „affordable“ taxes on the manufacture of local cloths in order to boost the demand of consumers.

Given that most Ghanaians/*Gas* prefer second-hand clothes, referred to as *Oboroni Waawu* (the

legacy of a deceased White Man) or Bend Down Boutique, because they are comparatively cheap, higher tariffs must be imposed on their importations so that its apparent high cost will discourage the people from buying and automatically increase the demand for the local products.

(5) *Mount programmes of Ga costume collections, documentations, conservation and exhibition for the benefit of the the public.*

To preserve *Ga* costumes, Ghanaians including *Gas* and developmental agencies like the District Assemblies and Town Committees can contact international bodies who are experts in „conservation and promotion of cultural property“.

The Ghana Museums and Monuments Board and other museums in tertiary institutions such as the University of Ghana, Legon and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi and the others, must intensify their move on the collection of *Ga* costumes by assigning students that task. Regular museum exhibitions will help in this regard and enhance students" interest to help fill these establishments with facts concerning *Ga* costumes.

Funds must be set aside by the traditional leaders and the District Assemblies for people who are able to help collect photographs of clothing, as well as old costumes. This will motivate and also help the people to respect their own clothes and preserve them for this reason.

Contacts can also be made with international institutions. And according to Labi (2009:350), establishments such as the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and its Committee on Documentation (CIDOC), the International Centre for the Study of the Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the Programme for Museum Development (PMD) and the International

Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) will help with regards to documentation, conservation and publication. And the Africa 2009 project in Mombasa, Kenya has also specialized for this same purpose.

(6) *More scientific or Technological Research on Preservation Methods.*

Lack of proper storage and preservation of *Ga* costumes cause deterioration and loss. Hence other new techniques of research through laboratory tests are needed to re-enforce existing methods and practices. Public and private universities, especially the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, is challenged in this perspective to find more scientific means of preserving the „life“ of *Ga* costumes, for any society that does not value its culture and the stages of development „bargains“ its creativity and endangers its future.



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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

on the topic:

CLOTHING AND ADORNMENT IN THE GA CULTURE:

SEVENTEENTH TO TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

The interview guide has five sections. Apart from the first and the last sections that concentrate on all categories of respondents, the rest are however, structured in line with the specific class of respondents that are interviewed. For instance interviews that targeted chiefs, queen mothers etc., are not generalized but treated accordingly.

Section 1; Background of Respondent

- ☐ Name;.....
- ☐ Age;.....
- ☐ Gender;.....
- ☐ Occupation/Status;.....
- ☐ Religious Background;.....
- ☐ Educational level;

Section 2; Early historical records on clothing and Adornment within the Gold Coast – Ga - from 1500 to 1700.

- ☐ Who are *Gas*? What is their origin and how did they arrive at their present settlement?

- ☐ What were the presumed types of clothes and accessories used by men, women and children? Do you have any idea about their footwear, accessories (jewelleries and beads) cloths; their styles and how they were worn?
- ☐ How similar or different were clothing of *Gas* to /from that of other neighbouring towns – ethnic groups.
- ☐ What forms were the possible kinds of body painting/making such as scarification and tattoos?
- ☐ How related or distant were these clothing fashion to/from the clothing trend today?

Section 3; A survey of the mode of costumes of traditional institutions between the 15th and 21st centuries.

3:1; Clothing and Adornment used in connection with chieftaincy institutions.

- ☐ Was the institution of chieftaincy prevalent around the 15th and 18th centuries?
- ☐ What is its position today? Do *Gas* use and recognize the role of their chiefs?
- ☐ What were the possible forms of clothes used by chiefs and queen mothers before and now?
- ☐ What kinds of clothes, accessories, body marks/paintings and headdress were these identified with during: religious ceremonies; installation; funerals and in their everyday activities?
- ☐ Did/Do these elements of clothing such as cloths, beads, footwear, hairstyles, accessories (anklets, bracelets, necklace and rings) and hand items used for the various ceremonies indicated above, have any symbolic interpretations?
- ☐ How are the following traditional court officials or attendants dressed during ceremonial occasions, and on ordinary days: sword and stool bearers, body guards and spokes persons for the chiefs /queen mothers, sub-chiefs and elders?
- ☐ Have modern fashion trends had any significant changes on the costumes of chiefs, queen mothers and their court officials?

3:2; Clothing components of Priests and Priestesses: past and present.

- ☐ What were the earliest forms of clothes; hairstyles; accessories; footwear; body marks and body paintings used by *Ga* traditional priests/priestesses during the 1500s?
- ☐ Have these items of clothing seen any form of changes or a probable continuity in recent times?
- ☐ Do all the priest/priestesses dress the same in spite of their various gods?
- ☐ Do their clothing and adornment reflect: ceremonial occasions such as naming initiation, marriage, funerals and healing – as well as social activities like games, travelling and everyday life?
- ☐ What is the cultural implication of walking barefoot? Does it also have any scientific significance and/or meaning?

3:3; Costumes aligned with Rites of Passage.

3:3.A; Clothing and Adornments used in Birth Rites

- ☐ What were/are the clothes and accessories of the new born baby; the day it was/is born, during naming, till he attains age six?
- ☐ Have there been changes in these costumes over the years?
- ☐ What were/are the types of colours, clothes, accessories and body marks/paintings associated with the parents of the baby, family members and others?
- ☐ Have there been costume changes for these individuals, and with what result?

3:3.B; Clothing and Adornments in Puberty Rites.

- ☐ Do all the different *Ga* towns perform and adore the puberty rite?
- ☐ Which town or quarters celebrate this custom, and with what identifying clothes; accessories, footwear, headdress and hand items?
- ☐ What are the appropriate costumes required for the period of the rite: clothes used during the time of confinement as well as the day the girl is initiated and made public?
- ☐ What are the importance of cloths; beads; jewelleries, footwear; body marks/paintings; hairstyles and hand items associated with the rite?

☐ Comparatively, are there any changes/similarities between costumes used for the rite in the past and that which is in contemporary use?

3:3C; Marriage and related clothes.

☐ Were there any defined clothes and accessories used by *Ga* couples, family members and well wishers during marriage ceremonies in the 1700s?

☐ What is the fashion trend of *Ga* marriage between the 19th and 21st century; concerning the clothing and adornment of the people indicated above.

☐ Did/Does the bride price demanded from the man include; cloths, accessories; footwear, headdress and hand items? If yes, what were /are they and in what colours?

☐ In terms of costumes, how does royal marriage differ from that of the general public?

☐ What are the changes in the traditional dressing for marriage ceremonies among the *Gas* today? Have there been any „foreign influences?

3:3D; Costumes identified with Death and Funerals.

☐ What form of dresses (colours, accessories, foot wears, head styles, body marks/paintings and hand items) were/are used for deceased persons such as royals (chiefs, queen mothers etc) accident victims, priest/priestesses, as well as the general public when they lie in state.

☐ Do the different stages and the period of the funeral rites require changes in clothes?

☐ With what colours of clothing"s and accessories are the following relatives of the deceased identified with: children, family members, grand children and spouses? What about friends, well wishers, and group or society members of the deceased?

☐ Are there variations in the funeral clothes of royals and that of the general public?

☐ How do chiefs dress for the funeral of a paramount chief, other chiefs, sub-chiefs, family members, spouses and the general public?

☐ How similar or different in clothing are *Ga* traditional and modern ways of laying a deceased in state?

3.4; Clothing associated with Socio-Cultural Activities

- ☐ Do traditional groups among *Gas* such as *asafo* companies, masqueraders, cultural dancers and singing groups have peculiar forms of dressing?
- ☐ Do *Gas* use and associate meanings with body marks such as scarification tattoos, as well as body paintings?
- ☐ Have there been any similarities or changes in the use of any of these forms of clothing component?

Section 4; Impart of Foreign Clothes and Accessories on Contemporary *Ga* Dressing

- ☐ In what positive or negative way/s have the adaptation of foreign clothes influenced *Ga* costumes?
- ☐ Do *Gas* patronize their traditional clothes? If yes, are these dresses used only on festive occasions or for all occasions? And if no, what are the possible reasons?
- ☐ How do you assess the contemporary *Ga* clothing fashion of men, women and children from the post colonial period to the present time (1950-2010)?

Section 5; Suggestions to sustaining the *Ga* Clothing Culture

- ☐ What is culture? Is clothing and adornment part of *Ga* culture?
- ☐ How can *Gas* help in preserving their clothing tradition?
- ☐ Does the excessive use of foreign clothes pose a threat to the *Ga* traditional clothing fashion?
- ☐ What must the Ghana government and other take holders do in promoting and sustaining the interest and use of Ghanaian /*Ga* costumes?
- ☐ What must be the focus of the *Ga* traditional institutions in attaining cultural awareness among its citizenry through clothing and adornment?

QUESTIONNAIRE

CLOTHING AND ADORNMENTS IN THE GA CULTURE.

□ □

- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| b. Dressing according to the fashion in vogue c. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wearing Ghanaian /Ga outfits. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Dressing to depict a person"s status, rank, position and beliefs. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. Do *Gas* have costumes that describe their cultural practises?

- a. Yes ☐ b. Somehow ☐ c. No ☐

11. Please give some reasons for your answer to question 10.

.....

.....

.....

.....

12. In the *Ga* culture, the appropriate costumes expected at ceremonial

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. occasions require: | | |
| knowing <i>Ga</i> clothing symbolisms as well as their meanings and using them accordingly. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Dressing to suite a person"s taste | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Wearing elaborate and fashionable dresses that measure up to peer-expectancy. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Wearing clothes that society does not frown on | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13. Is clothing and adornment part of the *Ga* culture?

- a. No ☐ b. Yes ☐

(C) Clothing Elements Associated with Traditional Institutions and Religious Leaders.

14. What are the possible forms of dressing for *Ga* chiefs/queen mother"s on various occasions?

- | | Yes | No |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Full regalia on all occasions | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| b. Full regalia on ceremonial occasions and casual wear on ordinary days. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Traditional clothes for both festive and ordinary occasions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

15. Can you please mention some of the costumes used by a *Ga* chief (*Mantse*) such as:

a. Cloth:

.....

b. Crown:

..... c.

Accessories:

..... d. Hand

items:

..... e.

Footwear:

.....

16. Do the *Ga* queen mothers use crown, accessories, foot wear and hand items? **Yes No**

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. They used all of these | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. They use all of these, but instead of the crown, they cut their hair very low or wear different headdresses to suite different occasions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. They wear crown, accessories, and slippers but they do not use hand items | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

17. How different are the clothes of a *Ga* chief from that of his sub-chief?

- | | No | Yes |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. They all dress the same | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. The clothes of the chief are richer and symbolic than those of his sub-chiefs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

	Yes	No
c. Some accessories and hand items are specifically reserved for the chief.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. Do the elders, sword bearers and attendants in *Ga* traditional institution have their mode of dressing?

a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

19. *Ga* priests/priestesses wear similar costumes on all occasions regardless of the requirements of their various gods.

Yes No

a. All of them wear the same fashion of clothes despite their affiliation with specific gods

☐ ☐

b. Costumes are determined by their specific gods and these are used c. for both ceremonial and ordinary days.

☐ ☐

d. Costumes prescribed by a god must be worn on all occasions; whether the priest /priestess is at home or on ritual assignment

☐ ☐

e. They dress to portray their specific gods, however, on ordinary days they use casual wears

☐ ☐

(D) Clothing used in Rites of Passage.

D. i. Clothing associated with Naming Ceremonies

20. When a baby is given a name during the outdoor ceremony it is :

Yes No

a. nude

☐ ☐

b. dressed in white cloths and white beads

☐ ☐

c. dressed according to the taste of the parents.

☐ ☐

d. adorned in white dress, in addition to silver and gold ornaments

☐ ☐

21. What were /are the clothing components for the parents, family members and well wishers?

Yes No

a. The ceremony did/does not call for specific clothes; a person could/can dress as he/she pleases.

☐ ☐

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| b. Tradition required /s clothes and accessories with white background. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Parents and family members are obliged by custom to dress in white, but the well wishers may wear clothes of their choice provided the colour is bright. | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

D ii. Costumes used during the *Otofo* initiation rites:

22 (a). Is it culturally important to continue with the *Otofo* rite as well as its associated costumes?

- a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

(b) Please give reasons for your answers

.....

.....

.....

.....

23. Do you know the names meanings and significance of some/all the costumes used by the initiate?

- a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ c. Partially ☐

24. Are there any significant changes between costumes previously used for the rite and the clothing fashion today?

- a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

D iii. Dressing for a Marriage Ceremony

25. Do *Gas* have cloths, accessories, body markings/paintings and colours traditionally prescribed for marriage ceremonies?

- a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ c. Probably ☐

26. Do you know the kind of cloths, accessories, foot wear, head dress and hand items demanded from the man as bride price or dowry?

- a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

27. Are there any differences in the clothing fashion of a royal marriage and that of the general public?

- a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ c. No idea ☐

28. What are the similarities and/or the differences between clothes used during traditional marriage rites performed in the past and that of the present? **Yes**

No

- a. Clothes used during the former periods were strictly traditional b. There are no significant differences ☐ ☐
- c. Clothing for the former period was basically traditional, whilst that of the later combines traditional and cotemporary fashions ☐ ☐
- d. Clothing and adornment for marriage ceremonies today is basically patterned after Western fashion ☐ ☐

(E) iv. Mourning clothes:

29. What informs the clothes you wear for a particular funeral?

No **Yes**

- a. The size of the funeral b. The type of funeral ☐ ☐
- c. My relationship with the deceased /family d. What is affordable ☐ ☐

30. Please indicate the type(s) of clothes you will wear for the funeral of the following:

- a. A person between 6 and 21 years..... b. A person between 22 and 45 years.....
- c. A person between 46 and 70 years.....
- d. A person between 71 and above.....

31. Are *Gas* very particular about what they wear for funerals?

a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ c. Sometimes ☐

32 .What specific colours of clothing are associated with *Ga* marriage?

a. Red ☐ b. Blue ☐ c. Gold ☐ d. Multi-colour ☐

(F.) Accessories Used in the *Ga* culture

33. What was/is *Gas* attitude towards the use of accessories

Yes **No**

a. They had/have minimal use and value for them b. They value them now as they did in the past

☐ ☐☐ ☐

c. They did not value accessories at all, except gold ornaments which were „worshipped“ and preserved for their gods

☐ ☐

34. Do traditional accessories have symbolisms and importance attached to their uses, as well as the occasions that require their use?

a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐

35 Accessories define the role or rank, personality or occupation of a person a.

True ☐ b. False ☐ c. No idea ☐

(G.) The Meanings and Importance of Colour and Body paintings/markings

36 Are you aware that the uses of colours in the *Ga* society have associated meanings and significance?

a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ c. Sometimes ☐

37 If you answered yes to the above question please provide the possible connotations for the following colours.

a. Black /red..... b.
Green..... c.
White.....

d. Yellow /gold.....

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 38 Personally, how do you use colour? | | |
| a. Based on its meaning and significance | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Depending on the specific occasion and what it demands | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. What I want to wear at any given time regardless of the occasion | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

39 Do you think the art of body painting and body markings are culturally symbolic?

- a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ c. Sometimes ☐

40. Body markings /paintings depict a stage in life, social status and position, as well as serving as a spiritual „shield“

- a. True ☐ b. False ☐ d. Sometimes. ☐

41. In your opinion can body paintings/markings have some health consequences; hence, they should not be worn?

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. There are health implications | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. It is the culture of the people and must continue at all cost. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. They have their own spiritual potency that physically protect the body of wearers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

(H) Coiffures, yesterday and today.

42. Are head coverings and head styles associated with the beliefs and practices as well as seasons in *Ga* tradition?

- a. Yes ☐ b. No ☐ c. No idea ☐

43. Do the following hair styles as part of the *Ga* culture, have names, meanings and significance?

- | | Yes | No |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Hair plaiting /braiding, „cornrows“ and raster | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Shaving the entire or portions of the hair | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Permed or relaxed hair | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- | | Yes | No |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| d. Using wigs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Wearing dreadlocks | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

(I) Continuity/Change, and Impact of Modern Fashion on *Ga* Costume

- | | No | Yes |
|---|--|--|
| 44. What in your opinion is the present state of <i>Ga</i> clothing tradition? | | |
| a. Most Ghanaians have a fair knowledge of <i>Ga</i> costume | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. It is only the <i>Ga</i> traditional leaders, ritual experts and elders who are abreast with the art. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Every <i>Ga</i> indigene is acquainted with the clothing culture and its significance. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Most Ghanaians including some <i>Gas</i> do not have the basic knowledge about <i>Ga</i> costumes. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 45. How has acculturation and immigration affected <i>Ga</i> traditional clothes? | | |
| a. Positively <input type="checkbox"/> | b. Negatively <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 46. Have religious beliefs and practices generally influenced <i>Ga</i> dressing? | | |
| a. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | b. No <input type="checkbox"/> | c. Partially <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 47. Do you prefer traditional clothes to Western dress? | | |
| a. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | b. No <input type="checkbox"/> | c. I am indifferent <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 48. Do you consider clothing and adornment in the <i>Ga</i> culture as an important art that needs to be preserved? | | |
| a. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | b. No <input type="checkbox"/> | d. Very much <input type="checkbox"/> |

49. Is the *Ga* dressing tradition in danger of acculturation and deterioration? Please comment.

.....

.....

.....

.....

50. In what way/s can education on the importance to adore and use *Ga* clothes improve the economy, as well as preserve the tradition for generations yet unborn?

s

- a. It will promote the local manufacturing textile industries
- b. Businesses of small and medium scale fashion firms will flourish.
- c. Ghanaian/*Gas* will be educated about the art as well as feel proud of their significances, and use them appropriately.
- d. Good morals and ethical values will prevail; resulting in a morally upright people who are (1) content with their clothing tradition, and (2) live with soundness of mind.

Ye
No

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

