SISSALA CLAN TOTEMS AS A RESOURCE FOR DESIGN AND PRODUCTION OF TUMU PARAMOUNTCY SKIN REGALIA

Volume 3, September 2021 Pages: 47 - 69
ISSN: 2665-0983 (ONLINE) DOI: 10.35738/ftr.v3.2021.04

AUTHORS

Issahaku B. Gbene
Department of Textile Design and Technology, Takoradi Technical University, Takoradi, Ghana

Benjamin K. Asinyo
Department of Industrial Art, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana

Ebenezer K. Howard
Department of Industrial Art, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi, Ghana

Corresponding Author's Email: issahaku.gbene@ttu.edu.gh

ABSTRACT

Tumu traditional area in the Sissala East Municipality of Upper West Region is home to numerous and varied animals and birds that serve as totems to their clans. Yet, the regalia of their paramountcy's skin has little or no reference to their totems and symbols. Therefore, this art studio-based study employed an ethnographic action research paradigm and adopted the Universal Design Model (UDM) to identify conceptual images of Sissala clan totems to design and produce symbolic textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin. The study revealed that Sissala clan totems have an endearing bond of unity among the various clans. It also confirmed that clan totems are a great source of inspiration for ideation and generation of designs for artists and craftsmen. The study concluded that imagery of Sissala clan totems for the production of textile regalia for the Tumu *kuoro* was paramount to give the Tumu paramountcy skin a symbolic representation and unique identity that helps the youth and general public appreciate the philosophy and cultural values of the Sissalas. The study recommends that studies be conducted in the remaining Sissala clans to unearth more totems for textile designing and production of artefacts.

Keywords: Clan Totems; Sissala; Skin Regalia; Symbolism; Tumu paramountcy.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sisaalas are a culturally inclined cluster of Gur-speaking people that form a subset of the larger Gurune ethnic group residing in the Upper West Region and Southern Burkina Faso (Kwekudee, 2013). Oral history has it that the Sissala people have originated from different tribes and clans in the Northern part of Ghana and Southern Burkina Faso to settle in their area today. Currently, the Sissalas are located in one municipality and four districts; Sissala East, Sissala West, Wa East, Lambussie and Daffiama Bussie Issa respectively (Population and Housing Census, 2010). According to Awendoba (2009), Upper West Region and the Sissala traditional area, for that matter, did not have an established chieftaincy institution amongst most of the groups until the advent of colonialism in the early 1900s. Political authority did not extend beyond the village or clan. It resided in the hands of the *Jantiina* or *Venetiina* (the landlord or chief priest of the community), the supreme and spiritual leader. The Sissalas practise a highly patrilineal system of inheritance and leadership within which flow of authority is established (Tumu Kuoro Palace, 2020). The Sissala enclave comprises families and clans led by family and clan heads (*Dia Nihiang*). The *Dia Nihiang* is usually the elderly person amongst the category of "fathers" within that family or clan. Sissalas relate in clan and lineage system. The clan is the broader division of the society and is composed of lineages. Each clan comprises members who trace their ancestry to the founder (Tumu Kuoro Parlace, 2020).

According to Rattary (1932), Sissala clans are exogamous, totemic and patrilineal. The clans are therefore identified with totems. Gbene (2020) states that these totems are symbols of animals, birds and plants or objects which are accorded with respect, and believed to have a sacred connection with the clan. They, therefore, refrain from mistreating or harming their totems, although, on rare occasions, some may kill and consume them out of ignorance. The term 'totem' comes from a North American Indian language that refers to vegetables or animals which are revered and considered sacred by individuals and a particular group of people or an ethnic group (Diawuo and Issifu, 2015). Totems are emblems consisting of an object, animal or plant that serves as the symbol of a family or clan and often as a reminder of its ancestry. They are

therefore, accorded respect and believed to have a sacred connection with a human group. According to Sissala Heritage Foundation (2013), Sissalas acquire totems through lineage. Historical accounts revealed that an ancestor swore to uphold, revere and preserve the totems and that his descendants would also never kill or eat anything he regarded as a totem. Therefore, the totems are revered and inherited patrilineally. In many African traditional settings, totems are significant in the spiritual, social and political and realms. Totems can thus be exploited as a tool to galvanise or bring about solidarity in human societies particularly, in Africa, for biodiversity conservation (Nukunya, 2003). Like the stool in southern Ghana, skin is the symbol of chiefly authority in the northerner part of Ghana. Lund (2000) asserts that skin is the seat of power or throne of chiefs in northern Ghana, including Tumu. The skin is thus, used to depict power, authority and closeness to nature. In this study, Sissala clan totems are explored as a resource for designing and producing symbolic textile regalia that reflects the traditional setting of the Tumu traditional area of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

2.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Leather is the most prominent material used for the production of textile regalia. Livestock such as cattle and sheep are reared in abundance in Sissala East Municipality. They are seen as a sign of affluence and a source of raw material for leather production. Leather production is, therefore, part of the culture of Sissalas. Against this backdrop, tanned leather from sheep was used as the predominant material for this study to symbolically represent the closeness of Tumu *kuoro* to nature and the agricultural might of the Tumu traditional area. Leatherette, adhesive, printing paste, fringes, *tuo zaafi,* packing case, foam, zippers, kapok fibres, nylon thread, woven sips of smock are among the tools and materials used in the studio experimentation and creation of the regalia.

Since the study required an in-depth analysis of the Sissalas and their clan totems to design and produce textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin, ethnographic action research was employed. According to Tacchi *et al.* (2003), ethnographic action research combines ethnography and action research. Ethnography means writing about the culture of a people. They add that action research integrates the research findings into a studio practice. Ethnographic action research draws on key ethnographic tools such as participant observation and in-depth interviews and takes a multi-method approach. In view of this, the universal design methodology (Zeidman, 2003) was adopted to execute the regalia effectively.

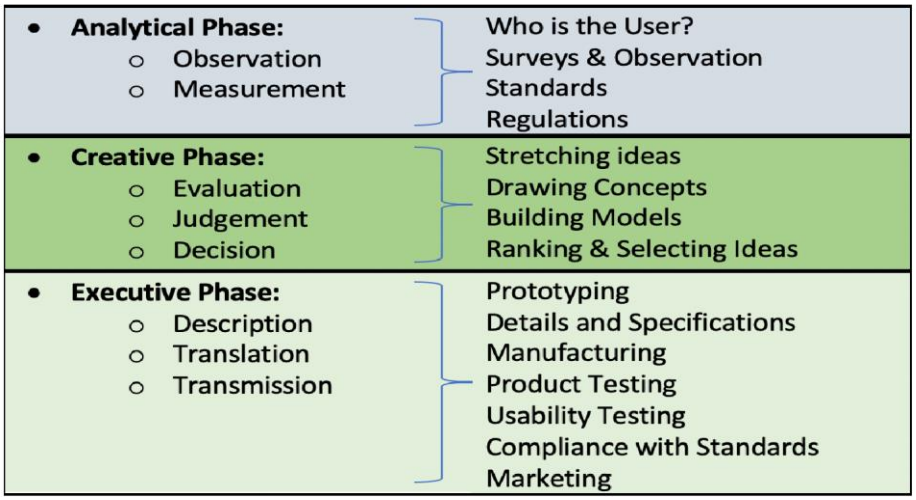


Figure 1: Universal Design Methodology
(Source: Zeidman, 2003)

With the adoption of the UDM as a foundation, a conceptual framework capturing five (5) phases was developed, as shown in Figure 2.

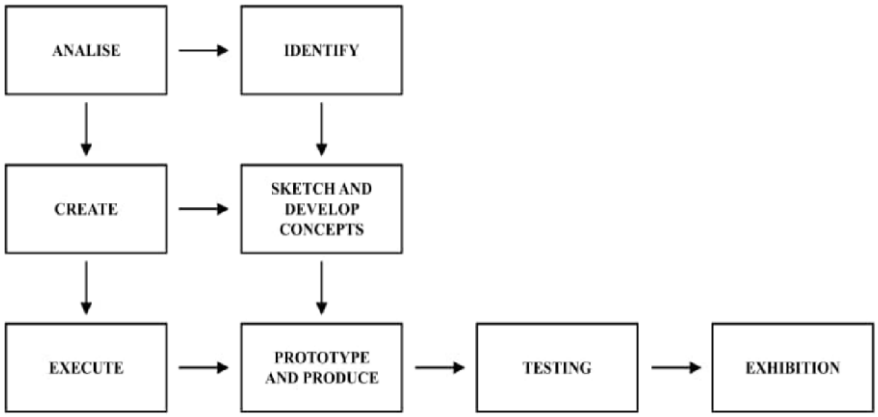


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework
Developed from Universal Design Model by Zeidman (2003)

The five-stage model (identify, sketch and develop design concepts, prototype and production, testing and exhibition) systematically aided the novel textile regalia for the Tumu paramountcy. The framework is such that Sissala clan totems were identified and used to create concept designs and develop prototypes and simulations, which guided the production of the final regalia for the Tumu paramountcy skin. Finally, the finished textile regalia was pretested and exhibited to create a platform for in-depth academic and public discourse towards enhancing cultural and artistic knowledge.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

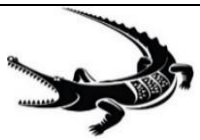
This section entails a discussion and analysis of the results of the preliminary survey of Sissala clans. It also describes the results of the concept-based design, prototype, and final production processes adopted for the seven Tumu paramountcy textile regalia samples.

3.1 Survey of Tumu Traditional Area

The survey of the Tumu traditional area in the Sissala East Municipality of the Upper West Region revealed that before the advent of colonialism and subsequent introduction of chieftaincy, the Sissalas were originally acephalous. Therefore, power was vested in the *Jantiina* or *Venetiina* (the landlord or chief priest of the community), who was seen as the traditional/spiritual anchor of the community. The entire Sissala

enclave was and still is composed of families and further grouped into six major clans. Each of these clans has a totem recorded through oral tradition, held in trust by the chiefs, *jantiina* (clan heads) and other clan opinion leaders, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Imagery of Sissala Clan Totems

No.	Clan Name	Clan Totem	Image of Totem	Settlements (s)
1.	Gangaviaraa	*Gangan* (Crow)		Tumu, Yigantu
2.	**Henviaraa**	*Hene* (Red Pot)		Sakai, Kong, Nankpawie, Bakuala, Lilixia, Dangi, Goosie, Santie, Badiseboi
3.	Nyeveviaraa	*Nyewa* (Crocodile)		Bujan, Tafiassi, Nabugubelle, Nanchalla
4.	Changbeiviaraa	*Changbei* (Frog)		Challu, Lipilime, Gyawia, Nymati, Kasana and some sections of Gwollu
5.	**Gunguroviaraa**	*Gunguro* (Wolf)		Dolbezan
6.	Pweiviaraa	*Pwei* (Leopard)		Sakallo, Nabullo, Gwollu, Jeffissi, Bullu, Botti

Source: Gbene (2020)

3.2 Design Concept

A graphic design software *(Adobe Photoshop)* was used to design a skin rug for the Tumu paramountcy skin with the approved images of Sissala clan totems, as shown in Figure 3.

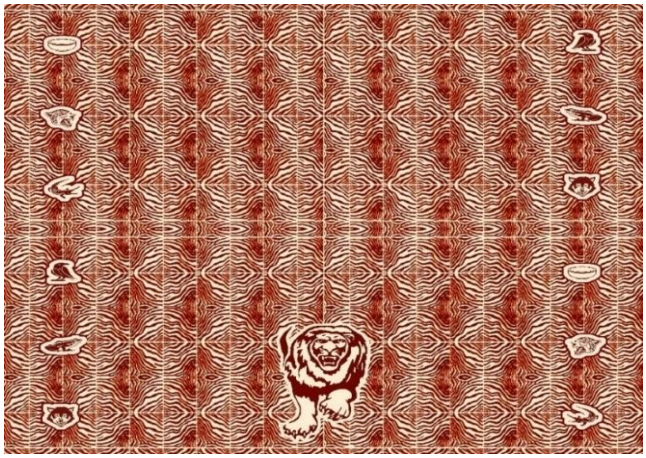


Figure 3: Design of Tumu Skin Rug
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

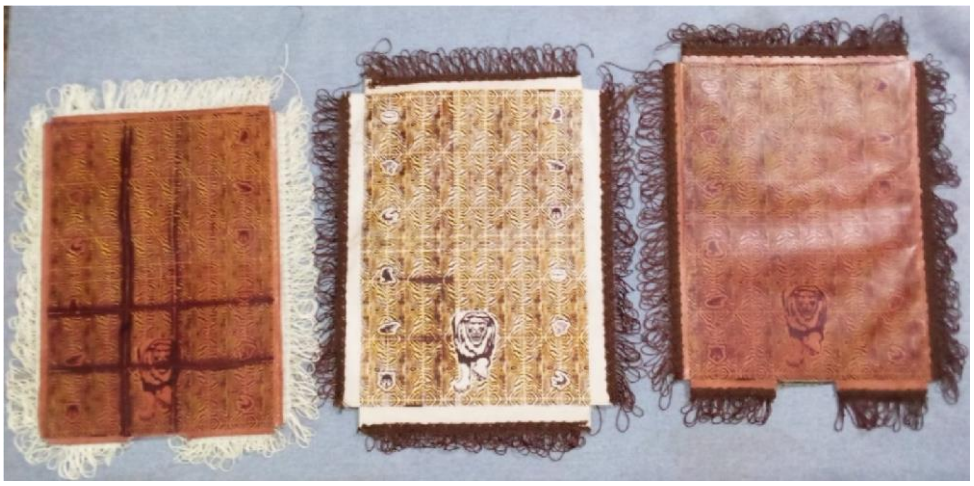
The design concept of the Tumu Skin Rug is based on 'unity of purpose' as espoused by Kuoro Bamula Basinjia, Director of Sissala Heritage Foundation/opinion leader (personal communication, 10th March 2019). “It is unity in diversity, collectivism and communal spirit among the various Sissala clans in the Tumu traditional area”. The design is composed of images of the Sissala clan totems were arranged to surround a roaring lion in the foreground. Lions are fiercely independent, confident and in control at all times. These traits are all balanced by the quiet demeanour of the lion. In like manner, Tumu *kuoro,* with all his authority as paramount chief and president of the Tumu traditional area and a member of the Council of State, has a very calm and unassuming demeanour.

The design textures are abstracted from the gorgeous bold pattern stripes that run across the width of the tiger's body. The representation of the roaring lion and the pattern stripes of the tiger are symbols of authority of the Tumu *kuoro,* and collectively, they depict the appellation of Tumu skin *"Bikobi",* which means 'dare me not'. The lines traversing and linking the textures in the skin rug design signify family links and kinship

ties of the paramountcy. It portrays unity in diversity and communal spirit among the various Sissala clans in the Tumu traditional area of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

3.3 Prototype and Testing of Tumu Skin Rug

With the design of the skin in Figure 3 as a guide, the researchers produced three (3) samples of the Tumu Skin Rug cover in different colour schemes. The import of the samples was to check colour harmony and also to test the feasibility of printing on leather. The prototype work was titled Tumu *Kuro*'s Skin Rug. A screen of the final design measuring 30cm by 42cm was developed. The techniques employed were screen printing and machine stitching. The materials used were; acrylics, leather, leatherette, foam and fringes. After printing the samples, the foam was sandwiched between the printed leather and leatherette at the back. The outcomes of the samples are shown in Figure 4.



Sample 1 Sample 2 Sample 3

Figure 4: Samples of Tumu Skin Rug
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Sample 1 was printed in brown and yellow colours on red leather and finished with cream fringes. The second sample was printed on white leather with brown and yellow colours, as shown in Sample 2. It has brown fringes at the edges. The last sample has brown and yellow colours printed on red leather with brown fringes at the edges. Each of the samples was tested by washing it with soap and then dried in the sunshine, and they all proved to have good colour fastness. They were then presented to the chiefs

and elders of the Sissala clans to solicit their views on the samples. They were fascinated with the outcome of the samples but chose Sample 3 because of its unique colour scheme. After the final sample was selected, it paved the way for the execution of the actual work.

3.3.1 Tumu Skin Rug Cover

Figure 5 is an assembled finished engineered rug cover printed with Sissala clan totems to cover the two (2) movable metal panel stages for Tumu *Kuoro's* skin. Each of the two (2) rug covers measures 96" by 48". When joined together, the two (2) collectively measure up to 96" by 96" (96" square). The square shape of the engineered skin signifies the stability of the Tumu paramountcy skin.



Figure 5: Finished Rug Cover
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

The rug cover is composed of leather. According to Fosu (1994), an artwork meant for the chief must be of the highest artistic standard for designing and decorating the selected objects. Since the aesthetic appreciation for such a work of art is critically judged by the communicative messages in the physical form, the design concept and printing of the rug cover, therefore, paid close attention to the traditional setting of the Tumu traditional area. As such, it was printed in two colours on red leather. The colours are yellow and brown. Antubam (1963), as cited in Acuqye *et al.* (2018), intimates that all people, irrespective of their location, attribute peculiar symbolic ideas about colour, often revealed in their traditional practices of everyday life. In the Sissala traditional setting, yellow is known as s*umunung* (the yellow pulp of African

locust bean). It symbolises sunshine, hope, and happiness. It also signifies freshness, positivity, wealth, energy, optimism, enlightenment, intellect, honour, loyalty and joy. The colour yellow stood for wisdom and intelligence throughout the ages. In effect, the yellow on the Tumu *kuoro's* skin signifies energy, logic, willpower and clarity for decision-making for the traditional area.

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

In Ghanaian society, red is generally seen as the colour of blood and fire. It is associated with love, joy, passion, strength and courage. So, the choice of the red skin leather as the background of the cover of the Tumu *kuoro's* skin symbolises leadership, vibrance, radiance and willpower to deliver on the mandate of the skin to the traditional area. The work has been reinforced with anti-slip rubber leatherette to prevent it from slipping around on the metal or concrete stage platform during use. The rug cover is fade resistant and easy to clean with a dry brush or a damp cotton cloth.

3.3.2 *Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest)

Figure 6 is the bottom rest known in Sissala as *Kumpungu Kpasah* of the Tumu paramountcy skin. It is a rectangular piece of upholstery fashioned out of leather and stuffed with kapok fibres.



Figure 6: Finished *Kumpungu Kpasah* (Bottom Rest)
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Tortora and Merkel (2007) note that Textile design is an arrangement of form, colours, or cloth to be implemented as ornamentation in or on various textile materials. This process involves the continuous organisation of accepted elements and original, innovative means to satisfy utilitarian and aesthetic needs. Thus, the bottom rest (*kumpungu kpasah)* in Figure 11 above was designed and produced with three (3) divisions which stand for the three (3) categories of chiefs in the Tumu paramountcy; sub-chief, the divisional and paramount chief. The *Kumpungu Kpasah* was also printed in three (3) colours; red, brown, and white leather strips. The brown colour in the middle segment stands for the mother earth on which the Tumu *kuoro* sits with his skin. The red skin leather symbolises leadership and willpower, and the white stripes stand for peace and happiness within the Tumu paramountcy.

The Sissala totems were printed on brown leather in the middle segment and arranged in a circular form around the roaring lion, which signifies the Tumu paramountcy's circularity. The middle part is stitched to the left and right with a striped, white frayed bias leather binding along the edges to depict the unity of purpose of the Tumu traditional area. The bottom rest is stuffed with kapok fibres to soften it before it is placed on the stock of skins for the Tumu *kuoro* to sit on in-state during ceremonies. Nkansah (2008) notes that the bottom rest signifies comfortability, riches and royalty. The new symbolic bottom rest of the Tumu *kuoro* signifies the essence of comfortability of chiefs on their skins and position in society.

The left and right edges of the bottom rest are fixed with two (2) hangers which aid in the lifting of the bottom rest.

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

3.3.3 *Nasin Kumpungu* (Arm Rest)

Figure 7 is a set of armrests known in Sissali as *nasin kumpungu* of the Tumu paramountcy skin. They are two (2) circular pieces of upholstery fashioned of leather and stuffed with kapok fibres through a zipper at the bottom. The top of each of them is printed with Sissala clan totems to depict the circular nature of the various clans in the Tumu traditional area. The tops are also divided into three (3) circles, each ascending order and stitched together with a striped white frayed bias leather binding along the edges. The white frayed bias leather signifies the peace and happiness of the Tumu paramountcy. The top boundaries of the *nasin kumpungu* (armrest) have been fixed with two (2) hangers. The hangers aid in lifting the *nasin kumpungu* (armrest).



Figure 7: Finished *Nasin Kumpungu* (Armrest) (Source: Studio Work, 2020)

In a personal communication with Bayugo Seidu (custodian of Tumu *kuoro* regalia) on 20/03/2019, he revealed that in the setup of the Tumu *kuoro's* skin, one *nasin kumpungu* (armrest) is usually placed on the right-hand side and another to the left for Tumu *kuoro* to lean on and communicate with his elders as and when the need arises while he sits in state. This, therefore, signifies the dependability of the Tumu *kuoro* on his elders in ruling the traditional area. Furthermore, the new symbolic *nasin kumpungu* (armrests) are fade-resistant and easy to clean with a brush or foam. They can also be polished for a shining and sparkling effect.

3.3.4 *Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest)

Figure 8 is a footrest known in Sissali as *kumpungu kpasah* of the Tumu paramountcy skin. Like *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), the *naasin kumpungu* (footrest) of the Tumu paramountcy skin is also a rectangular piece of upholstery fashioned in leather stuffed with dried kapok fibres. It has the same features as *kumpungu kpasah* (bottom rest), except it is 2" shorter in length and width.



Figure 8: The Finished *Naasin Kumpungu* (Foot Rest) (Source: Studio Work, 2020)

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

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

3.3.5 *Geriwarikin* (War Dress)

Figure 9 (a & b) is Tumu *kuoro's geriwarikin* (war dress). It is sewn from woven strips of smock in its raw natural grey colour. The significance of this organic *geriwarikin* is a conscious effort to preserve it in a friendly environment devoid of chemicals.



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

Figure 9 (a & b): *Geriwarikin* (War dress)
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Akpabli (2011) sees fugu (smock) as a mandatory royal costume for chiefs in northern Ghana. The smock/*batakari* is also seen as a wardress, thus adorned with protective amulets. Acquaah et al. (2017) also describe *gbagno* (war/funeral dress) as a wardress by all standards. For them, it is Dagbon's version of the "bullet-proof" vest. For this reason, it is bathed in charms and spiritually fortified to protect the wearer. The *geriwarikin* is also the war regalia of the Sissala people. It is embellished with talismans of varied shapes, sizes and colours with various roles or functions.

The lion printed with brown colour on the *teng fian* (red leather) and stitched on the *geriwarikin* signifies strength, vibrance, courage, fair and firm leadership and willpower of the wearer (Tumu *kuoro*). The rectangular and square talismans symbolize God's influence on man in the Tumu paramountcy. The circular-shaped talisman on the back of the *geriwarikin* with three (3) cowries signifies God's presence and power and the spirits of the male in the Tumu Traditional area. The brown talismans stand for decay and the earth. The black signifies sorrow or grief under challenging moments in the Tumu paramountcy. Marfo (2007) notes that each talisman has a kind of magic power or function that it performs. It is therefore not surprising that Bayugu Seidu, custodian of Tumu *kuoro* regalia (personal communication, 20/03/2019), disclosed that when the *geriwarikin* (wardress) is finally presented to the Tumu skin, they will imbue it with charms and spiritually fortify it to protect the Tumu *kuoro* when he wears it. Marfo (2007) adds that the chief wears this dress to recall how his predecessors fought on the state's behalf. Thus, the *geriwarikin* is not just a piece of royal garment. It serves as an important backdrop for expressing the communal code of the Sissala. It is one of the most important traditional relics that remind the Sissala people of how their forefathers fought gallantly during wars in the past. Therefore, the *geriwarikin* is not worn for fun but only on serious occasions like funerals of high-ranking members of the Tumu traditional area and *bayiila* (Sissala war dance) during the *Paari Gbielle* festival.

3.5.6 *Nyinchullo* (Native Hat)

Figure 10 is the *nyinchullo* (native hat) of the Tumu *kuoro*. *Nyinchullo* is an important component of the Tumu *kuoro's* regalia. Sissala elders regard *nyinchullo* so high that they hardly wear a smock without one, lest it will be seen as improper dressing. *Nhinchullo* is therefore seen as a complementary dress to smock for every occasion, especially among Sissala elders.



Figure 10: The *Nyinchullo* (Native Hat)
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

Just like *geriwarikin* (wardress) in Figure 10 (a and b), *nyinchullo* (native hat) was fashioned of woven strips of woven smock in its raw natural grey colour. The *nyinchullo* (native hat) was embellished with three (3) talismans of different shapes and colours. It must be noted that each talisman has its unique role or function. The cream colour is neutral, calm, and relaxing. It represents quietude and dependability. The two (2) black brown talismans stand for the earth in the affairs of the Tumu paramountcy. The two (2) rectangular talismans on the sides of the *nyinchullo* (native hat) symbolise God's influence on Tumu *kuoro* in the paramountcy. The triangular talisman decorated with cowries in front of the *nyinchullo* (native hat) signifies the inseparable connection of the wearer (paramount chief of Tumu) and his divisional and sub-chiefs in the traditional area. According to Marfo (2007), the headband shows the authority and power of the chief over his people. This is because not everybody is entitled to wear a

particular headband within a social gathering. Similarly, the wearing of *nyinchullo* (native hat) the Tumu *kuoro* from other people at events since not everybody is entitled to wear it.

3.5.7 *Natengpro* (Native Boots)

Figure 11 is Tumu *kuoro's natengpro* (native boots). Chiefs wear them during ceremonial occasions. Today, they are fashioned of leather and entirely sewn with awl and nylon thread. They are usually worn with local trousers known in Dagomba as *Kurugu.* Acquaah (2017) notes that *kurugu* by design is a voluminous local trouser usually sewn from several yards of smock fabric that reaches the ankles. The legs are sewn close and fitting to be tucked into the local boots (known as *mugri* in Dagomba).



Figure 11: *Natengpro* (Native Boots)
(Source: Studio Work, 2020)

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

followed by a medium triangle representing the divisional chiefs, and the bigger triangle represents the Tumu *kuoro*. Thus, creating the triangle on the *natengpro* means that the Tumu *kuoro* walks with his divisional and sub-chiefs.

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

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

3.4 Exhibition of the Finished Tumu Paramountcy Regalia

The symbolic textile regalia was exhibited at the Department of Industrial Art gallery of KNUST for public viewing, academic discourse, and critique toward enhancing cultural relevance and artistic knowledge about the works (Figure 18).



Figure 12: Tumu Paramountcy Regalia
(Source: Exhibition, 2020)

The exhibition was primarily informed by the traditional display settings for the Tumu *kuoro* when he sits in state. In this particular case, the two-skin rug covers printed with the images of Sissala clan totems were assembled on the floor as is usually done during the enskinment of the Tumu *kuoro*. The bottom rest was placed at the back of the second skin rug. A pair of armrests is positioned slightly ahead of the bottom rest at both sides (right and left). The footrest was also placed in front of both the armrests and the bottom rest. The *geriwarikin* (wardress) was erected on a manikin against the wall. Beneath the *geriwarikin* (wardress) and beside the manikin was the pair of *natengpro* (native boots). The arrangement was made to give the audience clear and unfettered access to the artefacts for better viewing.

The researchers then took time to explain to the audience the philosophy behind each textile regalia and demonstrated how they used their respective care too maintenance.

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Also, it can be inferred from the designs created that Sissala clan totems are very rich in meaning. When developed into images, they can be used for numerous and varied textile designs and artefacts to promote social cohesion and Ghanaian culture. Fish (2005) notes that influential textile design themes in the commercial sector rely on few long-held established themes, conversational (pictorial), ethnic, floral and geometric. From this assertion, it can be stated that Sissala clan totems stem from ethnic culture and can therefore be used as a rich and undiluted source of inspiration for textures and motifs for textile designing to boost the Ghanaian textile industry.

The *geriwarikin* (wardress) outcome revealed that smock producers in northern are doing a lot of disservice to themselves and the smock industry by being fixated on dyeing the smocks. Instead, they can simply go organic and still produce to have great results. Furthermore, the philosophical underpinnings of the Sissala clan totems mean

they can form the basis for developing unique Sissala symbols to augment the current adinkra symbols, Dagbon and Ewe proverbial symbols in the Ghanaian art industry.

The new symbolic artefacts produced are not only improvements on the existing ones with great comfort and aesthetic appeal, but they also help accentuate the Tumu skin and reflect the status of the Tumu *kuoro* as the president of Upper West House of Chiefs and a member of the Council of State. Furthermore, the huge interest of Sissalas in artefacts made with images of their clan totems means that there is an untapped ready market for textile producers and craftsmen in the Ghanaian art industry.

The study recommends that the artefacts neither be displayed in direct sunlight nor washed with soap or detergents-they can simply be cleaned with a damp cotton cloth if they are dirty. Designers and craftsmen could experiment with the Sissala clan totems using different methods and techniques to create varied artefacts for the untapped art market in the Sissala East Municipality of the Upper West Region. Also, the various textile regalia designed and produced could be used as inspiration for future studies. It is also recommended that other researchers should conduct further studies in the remaining Sissala clans to unearth more totems for textile designing and production of artefacts for the art and crafts industry.

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