

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

**Nkrumah, Kente, and African Philosophy:
Socio-Political Thought and Development in Ghana**

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by

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DEDICATION

In memory of my father, Wisdom (1913-1981), mother, Pepertua (1923-2007), and sister, Antoinette (1945-1997), your sweet memories are the wind beneath my wings. I share this accomplishment with you, and though I am saddened that you are not here physically to witness this milestone, this is still for you. Rest in Peace!

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Open to me the gates of righteousness that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord the righteous shall enter through it. I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. Psalm 118:19-23.

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May the Almighty look down on us as we look up to him daily!

ABSTRACT

Nkrumah contributed much to political thought and leadership style, not only in Africa, but also in the Developing World as a whole. Nkrumah's impact is evident not only in the field of ideas, concepts, and metaphors but also in his sartorial elegance and sociopolitical choices. In the early 1940s, Nkrumah began wearing the kente as a symbol of cultural identity. The kente (a well-known African fabric) has not only had an extensive impact on the Ghanaian society, but it has also captured a far reaching global interest in the fabric. Even though a number of scholarly publications on kente and other hand-woven textiles of West Africa have emerged since the early 1940s, the history of African textiles—their royal and aesthetic significance—has been well-documented. However, little scholarship has addressed the connections between the kente and Nkrumah's political, economic, and socio-cultural ideas.

The main objective of this research was to examine the relationship between the symbols of kente and the ideas of Kwame Nkrumah -- the first President of Ghana, a prolific writer and major political figure in Africa as a whole. The intricacy of the designs of the kente fabric, its unquestionably lofty place in the indigenous political systems of Ghana, and its wide use in the Black World as a symbol of unity, the fabric can be considered a major art and craft work in the region.

Thus, a study of the meanings of the kente symbols is a good entry point in the study and understanding of the relationships between African cultural and symbolic representations and the ideas and philosophical orientations of its statesmen and stateswomen—the individuals who are at the forefront of the region's development efforts.

This research adopted a broad view of development and built on a pedigree of works since Max Weber's seminal study on the affinity between the protestant ethic and the spirit of

mature capitalism, and show that there are relationships between a people's philosophical and cultural orientations and their attempt to develop economically, politically, and socially. One of the most recent studies in that direction, part of which has informed the conceptual and theoretical framework of the current research, is Lawrence E. Harrison's and Samuel P. Huntington's 2000 edited volume: *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THESIS COMMITTEE APPROVAL	ii
DEDICATIONS	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
ABSTRACT.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	xi
ACRONYMS.....	xii
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of Problem.....	1
Objective of the Study	3
The Thesis Statement.....	4
Research Questions and Hypothesis	5
Methodology.....	6
Analytical and Theoretical Framework	7
Study Locale	8
Significance of the Study	10
Limitations of the Study.....	10
Definitions of Terms	10
Review of Related Literature	13
Kente.....	14
Weavers.....	19
The Textile Industry.....	20
Organization of the Study Report	21
CHAPTER II: KWAME NKRUMAH AND KENTE: TWO OF AFRICA CULTURAL ENTITIES.....	23

Kwame Nkrumah	23
Kwame Nkrumah: First President of Ghana.....	27
Kwame Nkrumah’s Pan-African Vision.....	29
Nkrumah’s Concept of Development of Ghana.....	31
Downfall and Legacy of the Kwame Nkrumah Era.....	34
Kente.....	35
Historical Background of Kente	35
Cultural Aspect of Kente	37
Philosophical Views Imbedded in Kente.....	38
Economic Profile of Kente.....	39
CHAPTER III: SYMBOLIC MEANINGS OF KENTE DESIGNS AND NKRUMAH’S IDEAS	40
The Basic Frame Work-Ewe Kente - Adanuvo	42
Unity	43
Progress/Development	46
Majesty/Dignity	52
Protection	56
Contradictions.....	58
Political Guile	62
Others.....	62
CHAPTER IV: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	65
Conclusion	65
Policies and Reflections.....	66
The Impact of Secondhand Clothing Trade in Ghana	68

Economic and Social Benefits	69
The Effect of Second-hand Clothing on Culture	70
Pricing Policy of Arts and Artifacts.....	72
Recommendations.....	74
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	75

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Map of Ghana.....	12
Figure 2: Map of Volta Region.....	12
Figure 3: More Than Half a Century—Nkrumah’s Image Still on Magazine.....	13
Figure 4: Kente in the Global Market.....	21
Figure 5: Kwame Nkrumah’s Philosophical Thoughts.....	23
Figure 6: Kente as a Holistic Commodity	36
Figure 7: Symbolic Meaning of Kente Designs and Nkrumah’s Ideas	40
Figure 8: <i>Togodo/Adanuvo</i>	42
Figure 9: <i>Akpedo/Novie</i>	43
Figure 10: <i>Haliwoe</i>	44
Figure11: <i>Atideka me tu na xor o</i>	45
Figure 12: <i>Sasa</i>	46
Figure 13: Ewe Kente Named After the Motorway Project	47
Figure 14: <i>Toku</i>	49
Figure 15: <i>Nlornlodzanyi</i>	53
Figure 16: <i>Amegbor</i>	53
Figure 17: Kwame Nkrumah’s Visit with Howard University’s First Black President: Mordecai Johnson	54
Figure 18: <i>Woha Tsi Nata</i>	55
Figure 19: Nkrumah Receiving Citation at Lincoln University.....	57
Figure 20: <i>Klogo</i>	57
Figure 21: Independence Day – Nkrumah and Some of His Cabinet Members in an Open Motor Cage	58

Figure 22: <i>Gbadegbenyo</i>	59
Figure 23: <i>Ehianega</i>	61
Figure 24: Visit of President Kwame Nkrumah with President Eisenhower.....	61
Figure 25: <i>Gale Anyako</i>	63
Figure 26: Ghana Flag	63

ACRONYMS

AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act
AU	African Union
CPP	Convention Peoples Party
NAPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NMAA	National Museum of African Art
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention
UNESCO	The United Nation's Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Kwame Nkrumah was not only a major figure in Ghana, but a statesman and philosopher. He was also one of African's greatest thinkers. Nkrumah led Ghana to political independence and became its first head of state. Nkrumah contributed much to the African thought and political leadership style, not only in Africa, but also in the Black World. Nkrumah's impact is evident not only in the field of ideas, sociopolitical choices, concepts, and metaphors but also his sartorial adornment, the elegant kente cloth noted by many, even beyond the Black World. In essence, Kwame Nkrumah popularized kente's elegance and grace.

The intricate designs of the kente cloth, its unquestionably lofty place in the indigenous political systems of Ghana, and its wide use in the Black World as a symbol of unity, are all evidence of the kente values as one of the major art and craft products of the cultural work in Ghana. Thus, a study of the meaning of kente designs is a relevant base for the analysis and understanding of African cultural and philosophical orientations, in general, and the ideas of Nkrumah and his period in political history of Africa, cultural and educational policy in Ghana in particular.

Statement of the Problem

Throughout the literature on the indigenous textiles of African societies, kente has been seen as a viable and an integral part of the region's socio-economic development. Specifically, kente has not only had an extensive impact on the Ghanaian society, it has captured a far-reaching global interest as work of art and craft. A number of scholarly publications on the fabric and on other hand-woven textiles of West Africa have emerged since the early 1940s.

However, the history of African textiles—their royal and aesthetic significance—have not been fully-documented. Little scholarship has addressed the connection between kente, its political, economic, and the socio-cultural interpretations and the ideas of significant Africans.

For example, Doran H. Ross (1998), in his most recent book on kente titled, Wrapped in Pride: Ghanaian Kente and African-American Identity stated that kente gained extra popularity when the United States President, William Clinton and the First Lady, Hilary Rodham Clinton were presented with it during their visit to Ghana by the former President Jerry K. Rawlings and his wife, Nana Konadu Agyeman-Rawlings. In the American society, Ross noted that “The tradition of kente as a meaningful gift has been carried over into the Kwanza, festival of African Americans where it fulfills Maulana Karenga’s founder of Kwanza stipulation of a culturally significant presence and at the end of a school year when a kente stole is frequently given as graduation gift.”¹ Throughout Ross’ book different chiefs and other people of high status are shown dressed in kente

In The Pride of Ewe Kente, Ahiagble Bob Dennis (2004) brings out the cultural symbols and their meanings in some selected kente cloths. To him, “kente is above all a formal garment worn on special occasions and festivals in Ghana, where there are as many festivals as there are ethnic groups. All the festivals have political, religious, and social significance for people who celebrate them.”² This current research fills in these gaps, including the in-depth relationship of the kente to socio-cultural, political, and philosophical connection to Nkrumah who pioneered the kente in the United States at numerous functions. Nkrumah immersed himself in the kente so

¹Doran H. Ross, *Wrapped in Pride: Ghanaian Kente and African American Identity*, Los Angeles, CA: UCLA, 1998, p. 50.

² Ahiagble Bob Dennis, *The Pride of Ewe Kente*: (Accra, Ghana): Sub-Sahara Publishers 2004, 45.

much so that throughout all his association with most events which he attended at home and abroad, he brought his culture and Afrocentricity to the fore.

Nkrumah was never ashamed of his culture around the African Americans or the Europeans. Several of his pictures from the archives portrait showed him wearing kente at different historic occasions. Nkrumah wore kente when he received his citation from Lincoln University in 1958. Another picture showed him in kente with Ralph Bunche, who was the founding father of Political Science at Howard University. There is also a picture of Nkrumah in kente with W. E. Du Bois, one of the Black leaders and a founding father of Pan-Africanism. There is also a picture of Nkrumah dancing with the Queen of England Nkrumah also appeared in kente with his cabinet ministers when Ghana celebrated her independence. He proudly wore the kente at so many other festivities. This may be evidence that the kente gained its currency at home and abroad through Kwame Nkrumah, as a sign of cultural, historical, and political identity. This has pointed to the significance of the research.

While there are evidence to show that kente was widely used by Nkrumah, he did not write about it or made any reference to its philosophical significance; therefore, it is a useful exercise to relate the cloth to some of his socio-political thought. In other words, is it possible to identify the affinity between the symbolic meanings of kente and the socio-political thought of Nkrumah. This validates both kente and Nkrumah as two of Africa's socio-political fountains.

Objective of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the holistic interpretation, the historical value, socio-cultural, socio-economic, political, and philosophical significance of the hand-woven cloth of Ghana – the kente. This study is about ideas and philosophies in Africa as it is also about the

kente, its nature and symbolic significance. Specifically, the study aims to investigate the link between the political and economic ideas of Nkrumah and the socio-cultural significance of the kente. In other words, this study has shown that a better understanding of the ideas of Nkrumah can be gained by linking his political thought to the symbolic meanings of the designs of the kente cloth.

The focal point of the study addresses not only the extensive use of the fabric in a form of cloth, but also it investigated how Nkrumah's ideas can be situated in its symbols. Even though this study has made references to economics, politics, and education, among others, it is not primarily a study in any of them. Rather, they are used to link the interpretation of kente designs to Nkrumah's ideas. Although Nkrumah's use of the cloth to places and political functions, such as at the United Nations, the ceremony where he received his citation from Lincoln University constituted ways of exposing the cloth to the international community, this study is not about that. Rather the effort here is the intellectualization of the kente fabric vis-à-vis the ideas and philosophies of Nkrumah as a study in the quest for pride and dignity, not only in Africa, but also in the Developing World as a whole.

The Thesis Statement

As a contribution to development, this study proceeded from a contention that the understanding of the relationships between the symbolic meanings of kente designs and the politico-economic ideas of Nkrumah not only marks the integration of two major philosophical entities in Africa, it also contributes to a shift in the understanding of the philosophical foundations of development in the region. This statement built on Wilfred David's (2004) *humanitarian development paradigm*, which, "pointing to the shortcomings of contemporary

development noted, among other things, that in “economic orthodoxy, a discrete reality is abstracted away from the totality of human relationships.”³ In other words, Africa as a socio-cultural entity can begin to place itself on a sustainable path to development only when it seeks to understand, and utilizes the relationships that exist between the material component of its culture and the ideas of its people.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Specifically, this current research attempts to address the following questions:

1. Who was Kwame Nkrumah?
2. What was the nature of his ideas on the cultural, political, economic, and educational policies in Ghana in partial and Africa as a whole?
3. In what way can we interpret the symbolic representation of kente?
4. What was Nkrumah’s conception of the African personality, African Unity, and what are the relationships between these on one hand and the symbols of kente on the other?
5. In what way can an analysis of these relationships throw more light on the nature of African cultural orientation in particular and African political and economic thought and philosophies in general?

Even though this study showed relationships between Nkrumah’s ideas and the meaning of kente designs, there was little evidence to prove that Nkrumah directly and consciously picked his ideas from the kente designs. However, one can argue that what holds or glues the Ghanaian society together is their cultural beliefs. It was also shown that, apart from one of two kente fabrics in which Nkrumah’s names has been mentioned, there was evidence to show that the

³ Wilfred L. David. *The Humanitarian Paradigm: Search for Global Justice*. University Press of America, Lanham, 2004, p 53.

kente weavers consciously design their fabrics to reflect Nkrumah's ideas. The above change of name in design proves this. What was gained from this study is that both Nkrumah and the kente weavers derived the spirit of their philosophical orientations from common African philosophical fountain.

Methodology

This study was primarily qualitative. In a sort of Weberian conception of methodological device in research, Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (2000, p. 486), noted that qualitative method of data collection and analysis derives on the *Verstehen* tradition, which builds upon "emphatic understanding of social phenomena." As a guide in quantitative research, which the current study strictly observed, are two important points: (i) sticking to the main concepts under consideration and (ii) avoiding too many details from the available data which may lead to excessive and congested description. The data for the analysis mostly came from documented sources, which consisted of books, journals, monographs, archives, internet, magazines, recorded videos, and newspapers. Even though the data obtained from sources such as archives, and newspapers were largely classified as primary, other primary data were collected by consulting individuals in the United States. These individuals have authorities on the topic either by virtue of their scholarly works, profession, or place of origin.

Specifically selected journal articles on Shea Clark Smith's *Kente Cloth Motif* from the Mooreland Spingarn Research Center were consulted. The Library of Congress Archives, the Textile Museum and the National Museum of African Art (NMAA) Library were the other sources for additional information. The Textile Museum and the NMAA have a great deal of historical and current information on the indigenous weavers of Africa in general and the

production of kente in particular. Recent exhibitions on the kente were also available as a valuable source of information on the different designs, symbols, and their meanings.

Analytical and Theoretical Framework

To the extent, this study is concerned with symbolic expressions the analysis was carried out as discussions in both culture and ideas. As a cultural analysis, the study paid particular attention to cultural variables such as values, beliefs, and symbolic expressions. As Michael E. Porter explained in his contributed chapter in *Culture Matter: How Values Shape Human Progress*, he stated that.

Attitudes, values, and beliefs that are sometimes collectively referred to as “culture” play an unquestioned role in human behavior and progress. This is evident to me from working in nations, states, regions, inner cities and companies at widely varying stages of development. The question is not whether culture has a role but how to understand this role in the context of the broader determinants of prosperity.⁴

However, this did not only reflect what culture is (Verba, 1963), it also enables us to identify and to analyze the cultural variables that the kente weavers intricately weave into their fabric in the form of designs. There was also a justification that kente fabrics are differentiated by the designs that are woven into them, which also give the cloths their name. For example, *Fathia Fata Nkrumah*, literally meaning Fathia, is a suitable wife for Nkrumah has designs composed of triangles, squares, lines, and zigzags, vibrant colors of gold, red, black and green. This design was renamed after the military overthrow of Nkrumah to *Obaakofo mmu man*, plainly meaning one person does not rule a nation. This same design in the in the Ewe weave is called *Efa prim*, literally meaning a drastic change has occurred. The concept of this study is

⁴ Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress, ed. Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington, Basic Books, p14.

defined as the concepts that influence development programs and projects (Boas and McNeill 2004). It is within this definitional mode that an understanding was gained of Nkrumah's political and economic ideas that influenced his views on, and practice of African unity, socialist development, and anti-neocolonialism.

In the book Culture and Development in Africa edited by Ismail Serageldin and June Taboroff, Joseph H. Kwabena Nketia, an Emeritus Professor of University of Ghana also brought out some key points on the value of culture. He used these proverbs to relate on how one should view culture. His argument is for example, "the old rest stops were very good, but you should not stop there. You should create your own rest stops now because life is like a voyage." He made mention of other proverbs such as "When times change, change yourself." In other words many people tend to think that culture is something created once and for all, but this is not so in Africa. These are also his words, "Culture is continually being created and recreated, and it is important to bear this in mind in relation to our contemporary world. While old identities survive, new identities are being created all the time."⁵

Study Locale

While the three key kente-weaving districts in Ghana have been mentioned, closer attention was paid to the industry in the Anlo-Ewe Traditional area in the Volta Region of Ghana. Of special importance the Ahiagble Bob Dennis' book, *The Pride of Ewe Kente* (2004) was a viable source of this research. This book provided a detailed discussion of the Anlo kente, which included not only the weaving technology and a good number of samples of the kente, but it also provided the literary meaning of each of the designs woven into the cloth in both Ewe and

⁵ Ismail Serageldin, June Taboroff (ed.). *Culture and Development in Africa. Proceedings of an International Conference held at The World Bank, Washington, DC 1992*, p. 366.

English. Thus, the most important aspect of the study was to identify some of the symbols represented by the designs and relate them to Nkrumah's political ideas.

The Anlo traditional area is one of the traditional areas of the Volta Region of Ghana. The Anlo Traditional Area is also the headquarters of all the traditional areas in the southern part of the Volta Region, called the Anlo Traditional House of Chiefs. These include the traditional areas of Some, Dzodze, Penyi, Ave, and Avenor. The Awoamefia (or the paramount chief) of Anlo is both the overall traditional head of his people and the *primus inter paris* of the Anlo Traditional House of Chiefs.

The Anlo traditional area is in the southeastern corner of Ghana and mostly on the southern part of the Volta Region. The people are Ewe-speaking, known as the Anlo-Ewes. Not only do the Anlos form a distinctive division of the Ewe people of Ghana, Togo, and Benin, they are also a people very conscious of their identity both as an Ewe division and as a sociopolitical unit within Ghana.

As a maritime area—abutting the Gulf of Guinea (part of South Atlantic)—with a long contact with Europeans, Anlos boast of some of the most highly western-style educated Ghanaians. However, like in the other areas of the country, while most of the highly educated ones are in the larger cities of Accra, Ho (the capital of Volta Region), Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi, other Anlos have traveled outside the country.

The key cities of the Anlos are Anloga (literally meaning big Anlo—the traditional capital), Keta (the chief commercial city), Dzelukope, and Srogbe. The closet cities with considerable cultural affinity with Anlo and with reputation for Anlo kente-weaving are Agbozume, Denu, and Aflao. Even though there are government offices in the area, and modern

banks and schools, the chief occupations of the people are kente-weaving, fishery, and shallot-farming.

Significance of the Study

While kente has been studied in depth by other scholarly researchers, and so much has been documented on Nkrumah's ideas, the relationships between his ideas and the symbolic representation of the fabric remains to be written. The Nkrumah era was an extraordinary period of expansion in the spread of the indigenous political and cultural ideas to the international community. Additionally, it was a period that saw the extensive experimentation on the indigenous African ideas in the region's search for true decolonization and models for development. Thus, a study in the perceived relationships between the symbolic meanings of kente designs and the philosophical orientations of Kwame Nkrumah is not only a study in two of Africa's major philosophical entities, but it is also a contribution to, if not the founding of a basis for an African development paradigm.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited by factors beyond the researcher's control. The study was conducted outside Ghana; therefore, the various forms of kente, the kente weavers, the kente traders, and the community elders who constitute the key repository of the ideas behind the fabric could not be interviewed. Given the limitation, the results of the study should be interpreted with caution when attempting to make generalization to the various forms of kente.

Definitions of Terms

Kwame Nkrumah: First president of Ghana, a West African state formerly known as Gold Coast.

Ghana: A West African State formerly known as Gold Coast located between Togo and Ivory Coast. A map of Ghana is shown in Figure 1.

Kente: The textile of the two major kente-weaving ethnic groups of people of Ghana, the Agortime, Volta Region and Bonwire, Ashanti Regions of Ghana. Kente has often been referred to as the cloth for the chiefs. Kente is so widely used by the people of African origin that it can be considered a symbol of unity or common focus among them.

Ewe Kete: Hand woven textile with distinguishing features of the threads used for the weft-faced blocks. They are often made up of filaments of two or more different colors twisted together, which gives the multicolored effect.

Volta Region: One of the ten administrative regions of Ghana. Even though the Anlo area is part of the Volta Region, the Volta Region, today, which evolved as the southern section of the Trans-Volta Togoland—a trusteeship colony that was created after Togo was taken away from Germany after World War I and placed under Britain—the Anlo area was not part of the original Togoland but the southeastern part of the British Crown Colony. Figure 2 is an illustration of a map of the Volta Region.

Ewe: A language spoken by about 13 percent of the population of Ghana. It is the main African language spoken in Togo and one of those spoken in southern Benin. Although they are from different regions and speak different dialects, each dialect can be understood by all Ewes.

Ashanti Region: The central area of Ghana and its citizens are the major ethnic group.

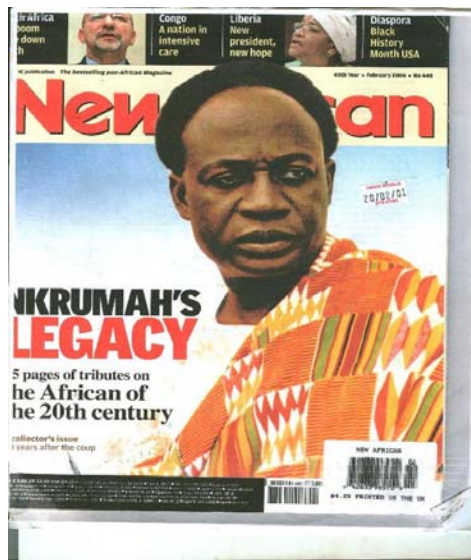
Asante Twi: The most widely spoken of the dialects of the Akan language. It is spoken by about forty percent of the people in Ghana as their mother tongue.

Traditional areas: All the indigenous regions in Ghana by virtue of the Chieftaincy Act of 1961. The other traditional areas in the Volta Region include Dzodze, Avenor, Ave, Agortime,

Review of Related Literature

This section presents a detailed discussion of the existing literature on kente on one hand, and Kwame Nkrumah on the other as the main objects of the study. The chapter is divided into three major sections: (1) kente, (2) the weaver, and (3) the textile industry.

There have been several studies on kente and Nkrumah; however, it has not been easy to locate scholarly materials that show how the kente is linked to the ideas of Nkrumah. Therefore, this study is the key point to unlock what may not have been investigated by other researchers. Apparently, Nkrumah had used the kente as a link between his political and socio-cultural ideas. He popularized the use of the kente at home and abroad during his time as the first President of Ghana. The internal re-assessment of his contribution to the history of the kente, even about half a century after he was overthrown the continent and the west still examines the legacy he had left behind. Pictures of Nkrumah adorned in the rich kente are still on display in magazines, is shown in Figure 3, books, bill boards, and the internet. This literature review will elaborate on the kente – Nkrumah link.



Source: Adapted from the Cover of New African Magazine
Figure 3: More than Half a Century, Nkrumah's Image Still on Magazines

Kente

Kente is a culturally hand-woven textile in Ghana predominately by three district ethnic groups. They are Anlo-Ewes, Ewe-Adangbes, and Ashantis. The Anlo-Ewes and Ewe-Adangbes are sub-groups of the Ewes of Ghana. While Angloga, Weta, and Agbozume constitute key kente-weaving towns of the Anlo-Ewes, Kpetoe and its surrounding towns and villages are the weaving centers of the Ewe-Adangbes. Bonwire is the key kente-weaving center for Ashantis. In 1992, Adler and Barnard succinctly gave the historical overview of the kente in their book, African Majesty: The Textile Art of the Ashanti and Ewe. In this book the intricacy of the kente production using looms such as the treadle-operated and horizontal looms are displayed. The mosaic designs, names and symbolic meanings were also discussed.

Two years later, on his part Asamoah (1994) argued that “kente could not have come from anywhere else than the Ashanti Region”⁸ Also, he noted what he thought was the misuse of the kente. As he explained it, “The Ghanaians in general and Ashantis in particular can be classified as traditionalist judging from their idea of the cloth. They detest the idea of using kente cloth for hats, dashiki, shoe and any outfit that deviates from the norm. If an oral historical data would have been collected, it may have proved the fact”. Though his research seems informal, he narrated the traditional aspect of the kente, but had no discussions on the symbols and their philosophical interpretation. Although there was a picture of Nkrumah adorned in kente in his book, there was no statement summarizing the cultural connection between the two. Rather Asamoah stated that “... the few non-traditionalist Ghanaians appear to be less concerned

⁸ Ernest Asamoah-Yaw, *Kente Cloth: Introduction to History*, (Accra, Ghana: Ashante, 1994), 14.

about its usage, but more worries about how others are manipulating the cloth to exploit black Afrika.”⁹

A few years after Asamoah’s publication 1994, June Pearson Bland wrote her Dissertation on Textiles and Clothing in the Gambia: An Analysis of Culture and Development. She examined the hand woven, hand-dyed and commercially manufactured cloth in the context of the development of the Gambia. She also addressed the following research questions: What are the production and consumption patterns of textiles and clothing in The Gambia, including handcrafted, manufactured, traditional and contemporary styles in natural and synthetic fibers? How does the production of clothing and textiles affect economic growth and development in The Gambia? What strategies and interventions are necessary to ensure that textile and clothing enterprises facilitate sustainable growth and development in The Gambia? The similarities between Dr. Bland’s research and this study are that, both examined ways and means to promote the textile industries in Africa. They saw textile production as a possible vehicle for sustainable development.

As previously mentioned, Ross (1998) conducted interviews with the indigenous weavers of Bonwire in Kumasi and Agbozume in the Volta Region. The book analyzed the manufacturing and marketing of the kente cloth and also discussed the various motifs and their meanings. It therefore gave an insight of what was not yet captured in the research on the kente; for instance, using the kente as a tool for development was not discussed. On the other hand, an overview of the kente as a global commodity was presented.

Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and his cabinet were shown at several ceremonies wrapped in the kente as a sign of cultural identity. Throughout the book, different chiefs and other people of

⁹ Ibid. 72.

high status were shown wearing the kente. “The first Bonwire kente festival held January 5-11, 1998, celebrated 300 Years of Kente Evolution (1697 -1997), and presided over by Nana Nyarko Frimpomaa, the queen mother of Bonwire. The festival included an exhibition, fashion show, weaving competition, durbar, dance, and sporting events. In attendance was Nana Konodu Agyeman-Rawlings, the wife of the President of Ghana.”¹⁰

The year 2000 was when Mariama Ross wrote her Dissertation on Symbols of Identity: Akan Art in the Popular Culture of Ghana and Its Educational Implications. The main focus was on how indigenous culture influences and impacts contemporary arts, popular culture, and education within its native setting, and how knowledge of context can inform multicultural art education outside the setting. She formulated an approach using symbols as a language, examined current applications of traditional culture in Ghana, and analyzed how the school system teaches indigenous art forms. This is an educational policy which Nkrumah introduced during his era, however, she did not link Nkrumah’s contribution to the indigenous aspect of his educational policy in her research. Nkrumah’s educational policy laid a major stress on art and culture which he introduced in the first university, Legon, as the key element popularizing different types of artifacts in Ghana.

The Art of African Textile, published in 2002 by Duncan Clarke, has a chapter titled: *Kente, Royal Cloth of the Ashanti*. Kente has its royalty in both Ashanti and the Volta Region; however, almost at the end of the chapter he stated that “Ewe weaving is far more diverse than

¹⁰ Doran H. Ross. *Wrapped in Pride: Ghanaian Kente and African American Identity*. (Los Angeles, CA: UCLA, 1998) p. 94.

that of the Ashanti.”¹¹ He linked Kwame Nkrumah and kente by stating that “Ghana was the first of the African states to achieve independence in 1957, and its first President, Kwame Nkrumah, became a major figure on the world stage. He adopted the wearing of kente and other locally woven cloths as a visual symbol of his commitment to cultural nationalism and Pan-African unity”. However, the study did not narrate how the symbols in the kente related to some of Nkrumah’s philosophy. His view on who wears the kente is also to be questioned. He stated that, “Within Ghana kente and other local cloths remain the prestige dress of political leaders, notably in the campaign pictures of President Rawlings an Ashanti opponent during the 1996 election is shown wearing kente. Rawlings himself is not an Ashanti but is often pictured wearing kente for official portraits”. It seems Clarke’s argument on who wears the cloth is not clear, but since this research is to elaborate on the Ewe kente as well as its socio-cultural, political, economic and historical symbolism, it will focus on clarifying this misconception. He also made statements such as “While it is relatively easy to tell Ewe cloths made for local sale from those woven by the Ashanti, it becomes far more difficult when Ewe weavers deliberately imitate the style of kente cloth.” In the next paragraph of the same page, he went on to state that “In the last few decades however, as the international demand for kente cloth has grown, many of the Ewe master weavers have established workshops directly to supply export trade to the United States.” His research on the Ewe and Ashanti kente seems conflicting to the reader and may question the authenticity of his research.

John Gillow published his book on African Textile in 2003 which covered all the handmade textiles of West, North, East, South and Central Africa. On his subject on the Ewe strip weaves, he pointed out that “Ewe weavers are acknowledged to be some of the most skillful

¹¹ Duncan Clarke. *The Art of African Textiles*. Thunder Bay Press, San Diego: CA, 2002, 74.

in West Africa. Indeed, they are in such demand that they can be found working as far away as Lagos and Ibadan in Nigeria”. He also stressed that due to versatility and adaptability, they weave in three areas of south-east Ghana, namely: Agbozume and around the Keta lagoon, Kpetoe, and around Kpandu. “One distinguishing feature of Ewe weaving is the way that the threads used for the weft-faced blocks are often made up of filaments of two or more different colors twisted together gives a variegated effect.”¹² He has explained in part what differentiates the two weavers.

In 2004, Ahiagble Bob Dennis, the author of The Pride of Ewe Kente, also described the techniques by which Ewe weavers distinguished their textiles. The book demonstrated that ethnic distinctions between styles of cloth often served merely as conventions that provide a springboard from which artists create exceptions. The author/ weaver is an Ewe, a fact that did not inhibit his apprenticeship to an Ashanti weaver and his adaptation of Ashanti-style motifs along with the Ewe pattern. His kente is culturally produced as a traditional wearable art. Its meaning and significance are generated and shared by members of his community. The differentiation allows for a clearer analysis of techniques involved in the production. This gives a clear view to research the origin of the kente, since he has experienced both the Ewe and the Ashanti production. His explanation of the name kente stated: “According to the Agotime people, the Ewe people living in the Volta Region, ‘Kente’ was not originally the name of the cloth. The Ewe word for loom is *agba*, and the word for cloth is *avo*. Together these two words form *agnamevo*, the Ewe name for any cloth woven on a loom. This was the word originally

¹² John Gillow. *African Textile*. Chronicle Books, San Francisco: CA, 2003, 38.

used for Kente.”¹³ This book gave a complete interpretation of the designs woven into the Ewe Kente.

The Weavers

The Ewe and Ashanti weavers share other cultural similarities which include styles of weaving and the use of music as noted by E. Ofori Akyea. In his book, The Heritage Library of African Peoples: Ewe, Akyea observed that even though both groups do follow their traditions, their varieties of designs have created diversity in the hand woven textile kente. Although the Ashanti kente is the most popular design, the Ewe kente seems to have gained much favor in the consumers’ eyes. Kwame Nkrumah was presented with the Ewe Kente from Kpetoe in the 1950s and his philosophical values are embedded in most of the Ewe designs. The differences between the Ashanti and the Ewe hand woven textiles are: the Ashantis refer to the cloth as Kente while the Ewes call it Kete; (kete is used where appropriate when referring to the Anlo-Ewe or Ewe-Adangbe kente). The Ashantis use only geometric motifs while, the Ewes use figurative motifs in their weaving. These motifs have a proverbial principle associated with the cloth as a whole and names are given on this basis. The Ashantis use double-heddle loom to weave narrow strips that are then sewn together to make the kente cloth. What stands out against the Ashanti kente is the way in which the threads are used in the Ewe kete. As previously explained, the weft-faced blocks are created by filaments of two or more different colors twisted together, which gives the variegated or multicolored effect.

¹³ Ahiagble Bob Dennis. *The Pride of Ewe Kente*. (Accra, Sub-Sahara Publisher) 12.

The Textile Industry

Ghanaian Mokola women are entrepreneurs who have always controlled the textile industry. Although they play a minimum role in the manufacturing of the hand woven textile and other printed textiles, they are responsible for investing into this business. They are expected to generate enough income that can assist them on enhancing the family's economic welfare from such resources. Unfortunately, the textile industry as stated by Allan Kyeremanteng Minister for Trade and Industry in the (2006) Business Week Magazine in which the headline reads: *The Travails & Triumphs of Ghana's Textiles Industry*, in the article it stated that, "The saga of Ghana's textile and garment industry over the past few years is increasingly looking like a tale of two cities. The country's textile industry is quietly going through a deep crises ..." ¹⁴ it could be collapsing because the Ghana Government, including the Ghanaians in the textile business have become weak players in the global market. In order to protect the textile market, the government will have to impose strict restrictions on piracy and inferior duplication of the Ghanaian textile designs. Asamoah expressed this concern in his book earlier on and so did Ross.

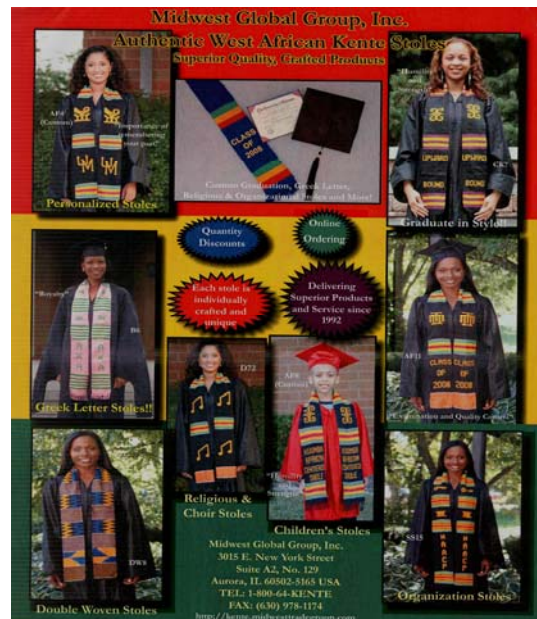
As stated by Carter Dougherty in the New York Times (June 3, 2004), "protection might create local industry that can compete in world markets, for example as displayed in Figure 4, and the subsequent gains might be large enough to pay back the costs incurred on account of protection, "Mr. Hufbauer of the Institute for International Economics also said, in practice, however, not more than one case in ten meets these two conditions." ¹⁵ Carter's final view was

¹⁴ Allan Kyeremanteng, Minister for Trade and Industry. Business Week Magazine on "The Travails & Triumphs of Ghana's Textiles Industry, 2006, August 07-21, p. iv.

¹⁵ The NYTimes.com, June 3, 2004.

that policies have been against trade barriers. This could be the reason why the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) seek to integrate the continent into the world economy. By offering easy access to the American market, the act preaches growth through exports, not through national self-sufficiency, and accounted for \$1.2 billion in apparel exports from Africa in 2003, according to the Commerce Department.

Chinese produced textiles, clothing and other goods coming into the Ghanaian market has already collapsed most of its market. Many families live on income of less than even a \$1 a day which means they are absolutely poor. Despite the devaluation of the Ghanaian currency and the condition of the people, imported inferior goods find their way especially to the rural areas. These goods are exported from Europe, Asia and the United States.



Source: An Advertisement from Midwest Global Group, Inc.

Figure 4: Kente in the Global Market

Organization of the Study Report

Chapter I provides the specific purpose and objectives of the study, the major research questions, the significance of the study, the limitations of the study, and definitions of terms. It

also provided an overview of the available theoretical and empirical literature, as they relate to the study. The methodological aspect of the research study is described in detail in this chapter as well as the review of related literature. Chapter II provides an overview of Kwame Nkrumah and Kente. Chapter III is the key section of the study. It focuses on the perceived relationships between the symbolic meanings of the Anglo-Ewe kente designs and the ideas and concrete achievements of Kwame Nkrumah. It also presents the results and discussions of the research questions. Finally, Chapter IV presents the conclusion, policy and research implications, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II

KWAME NKRUMAH AND KENTE: TWO OF AFRICA CULTURAL ENTITIES

This chapter presents background literature on Nkrumah and kente. In the case of Nkrumah, attention is paid to his birth, education, and political life. In relation to the kente, the chapter shows its history and relations to the Ghanaian Society as a whole. Figure 5 presents a summary of the key issues relating to Kwame Nkrumah's philosophical thoughts.

Kwame Nkrumah

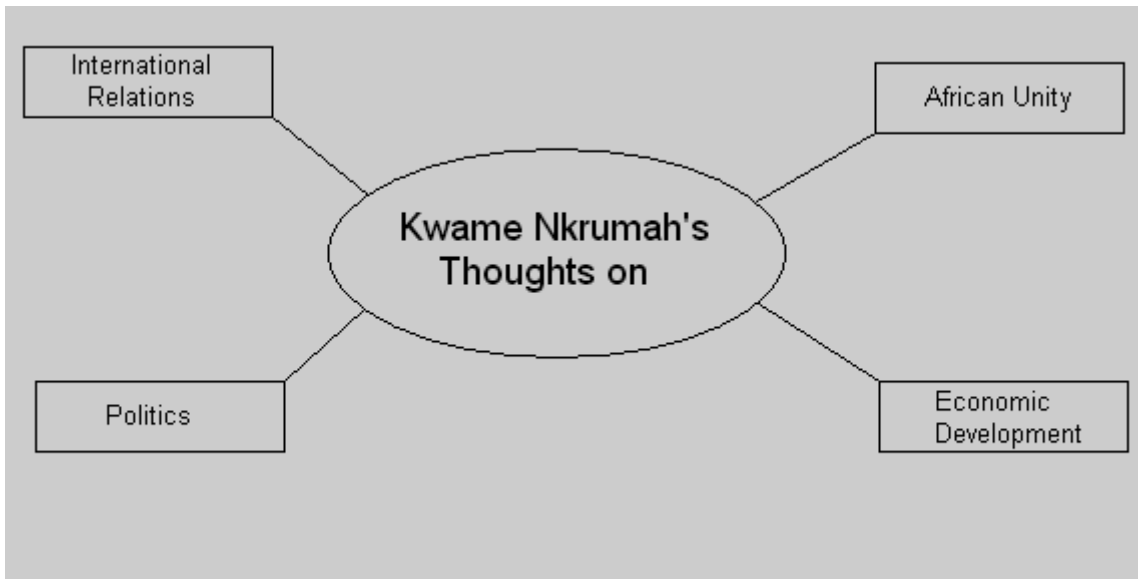


Figure 5: Kwame Nkrumah's Philosophical Thoughts

Kwame Nkrumah's philosophy is connected in so many ways to the symbols woven into the kente, and he used kente to communicate his culture and Pan-Africanism. Joseph E. Harris expressed in his book, *Africans and their History* (1972) that, "Ghana's Kwame Nkrumah the charismatic leader of the continent's first independent Black Country had a comfortable national budget based on cocoa. He was well-educated and experienced in the United States and England where he became acquainted with several brands of socialism. The "African Personality"

became his creed as he promoted the path of African socialism for Ghana and the rest of Africa, and as he insisted, “Ghana would not be free until all of Africa was free.” His appeal in Africa was enormous.”¹⁶ While in the United States and Britain, he wore Kente to several public events, where some great Pan-Africanist adopted his style. These images are documented in the later part of the study. Through this Nkrumah established a dynamic presence which led him to gain global influence. An article published by Metta Winter in the June 2004, *Human Ecology*, entitled *Cornell Costume and Textile Collection Represents cultures of Seven Continents*, she stated that clothing reveals aspects of a family in a more intimate way than other objects because it sensitively represents details of lifestyle and how people feel about themselves, Jirousek, Associate Professor of Textiles and Apparel and the curator of the Cornell Costume and Textile Collection explained. She further stated that, the Langdon family’s contribution is a fine example of the initial premise of the collection that “dress is a very sensitive measure of the cultural values of any particular time and place,” says Jirousek. “We communicate who we are by how we dress.”¹⁷

Winter directly pointed this statement to Nkrumah by stating that “...to a costume of Kente cloth hand woven by the personal weaver of Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, the first democratically elected leader in Africa, in 1957.

Angela Uriyo in her Masters Thesis titled *School Uniform Design Preferences of Uniform Wearers and Terminal Values Attributed to Them*, confirmed the above statement by stating that “Visual symbols are often used to help establish the identity or status of a person. Clothing may

¹⁶ Joseph E. Harris. *Africans and their History: A Landmark Re-evaluation of African Cultures and Politics by a leading African-American Historian*. (New York: The Penguin Group, 1972), 294.

¹⁷ Metta Winter. *Cornell and Textile Collection Represents Cultures of Seven Continents*. *Human Ecology*, June 2004, p.18

be that visual symbol. This type of identity is called status for the social structure in a given situation and it defines the individual's rights and obligations with regard to others with statuses in the same structure.”¹⁸ Nkrumah was a perfect example of the above statements. Although he spent most of his adult years in the United States and Britain, he held on to his culture by wearing the Kente Cloth to many of his social events. A review of the related literature shows that to Nkrumah, appearance communicated his non-verbal visual cue. Hiding his cultural identity was not an option even when he was around his Western peers.

Another important component of the contribution to this literature review is to explain how Nkrumah's political thought played a crucial part in this scholarly dialogue. This chapter sets out to answer these questions. Who was Kwame Nkrumah and what were his political thoughts? As stated by Owusu (2006) in his Kwame Nkrumah's Liberation Thought: A Paradigm for Religious Advocacy in Contemporary Ghana, “The traditional Ghanaian sees the world as a spiritual universe and, therefore, its events must be explained from that base.”¹⁹ This was further explained that since the people believe that spirituality inter-mingles with all spheres of life, the first principle of the indigenous political philosophy was the idea of a religio-political state. This means politics cannot stand on its own vis-a-vis religion.

On March 6, 1957, on the Old Polo Grounds in Accra, Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah and five of his colleagues referred to as the Big Six stood on the podium after parliament had adopted the motion for independence, to declare Gold Coast free from colonialism. Dressed for the occasion in their national costumes, more than 100,000 men, women and children, most of them had

¹⁸Angela Uriyo. Masters Thesis, Clothing and Textiles, Blacksburg: VA, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 2000, p.37.

¹⁹Robert Yaw Owusu. *Kwame Nkrumah's Liberation Thought: A Paradigm For Religious Advocacy in Contemporary Ghana*, African World Press, Inc.Trenton, NJ, 2006, p.37.

traveled on foot to the capital from every corner of the land, witnessed the stirring ceremony. Gold Coast became Ghana, the first country south of the Sahara to achieve independence. The country's flag of red, gold and green with a black star in the middle of the gold was the pride of Africa.

In Nkrumah's address to the people was that "at long last the battle has ended! And thus Ghana your beloved country, is free forever. And here again I want to take this opportunity to thank the chiefs and people of this country, the youth, the farmers, the women, who have so nobly fought and won this battle. Also I want to thank the valiant ex-servicemen who have so cooperated with me in this mighty task of freeing our country from foreign rule and imperialism."²⁰

Nkrumah further informed the people that, "Today, from now on, there is a new Africa in the world and that new Africa is ready to fight his own battle and show that after all the black man is capable of managing his own affairs."²¹ On account of this, four years into Ghana's independence, eighteen African countries also celebrated their independence.

In addition, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah pleaded with Ghanaians to work towards a united strong and harmonious country with rule of law, accountability, transparent governance and responsible citizens. Nkrumah did not only lead Ghana into independence, he also maintained his cultural identity based on his traditional values which he proudly show-cased by wearing the kente to majority of his political functions. This made the kente not just any cloth but a significant historical piece and also gained its currency on the world stage. More specifically, the kente made an impact on his national, political and social aspect of empowerment for all Africans. He demonstrated this by wearing the kente on Ghana's Independence Day as a symbol of cultural identity, and liberation from the struggle of the entire continent. As stated in the October issue of the Trans Africa Forum (1999), "kente is one of Africa's proudest boast, and

²⁰ Yuri Smertin, *Kwame Nkrumah*. International Publishers, New York . 1987, p. 58.

²¹ Ibid

resonates with the richness of history, culture, and authentic African ingenuity. This has made many Africans adopt kente as a symbol of liberation from African struggle.”²²

Kwame Nkrumah: First President of Ghana

Kwame Nkrumah was born in the western Gold Coast in 1910. He became very popular in the political scene after working his way through Lincoln and Pennsylvania Universities in the United States. He served as the President of the African Students’ Association of U.S. and Canada. He continued his schooling in Britain where he studied law at the Gray Inn. He also became active in African organizations while in London. It was this time that he took it upon himself to write a Declaration which invited all Africans to join in the struggle to obtain freedom from colonialism.

The conference held in Manchester in the autumn of 1945 exposed Nkrumah to Thomas Griggths. Griggths was a Guyanese café owner who invited leaders of the movement for colonial freedom to Manchester for a meal in his restaurant during the fifth Pan-African Conference. The driving force behind the conference was the Trinidadian activist George Padmore, who was formerly known as Malcolm Nurse. Padmore selected Nkrumah as his assistant. Although this was Nkrumah’s first stage appearance in politics, he was able to take full control of the conference. This automatically launched his career as an apprentice politician. Padmore became one of Nkrumah’s faithful and trusted advisers, unfortunately Padmore’s death in 1959 coincided with the take-off of Nkrumah’s career. “Padmore’s main contribution to

²² Joe Howard, Intern-Trans Africa Forum, Washington, D.C., October, 1999.

Nkrumah's maturation was not a belief in armed violence, but a commitment to African unity as, perhaps, the only possible way out of poverty and colonial fragmentation."²³

Ako Adjei, a student associate of Nkrumah, recommended him as a general secretary of a political convention in the Gold Coast to a host of lawyers, businessmen, chiefs and intellectuals. His speeches and writing skills gained him the position. On his way to Gold Coast he made a stop in Liberia, some believe he was trying to locate his father, but instead, he did not like what he saw. Illiteracy was on the rise, the country was functioning on American dollar, and black bourgeoisie were mimicking the Europeans.

Dr. J. B. Danquah, a lawyer who held a doctorate in moral philosophy and had royal connections, helped to pave the way for Nkrumah and became his mentor. Danquah invited Nkrumah to return to the Gold Coast to serve as the secretary for the new party, United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC). The party was not radical enough for Nkrumah, so he resigned and formed the Convention People's Party (CPP) in June 1949. This was the birth of Nkrumah's Pan-African era. Nnamdi Azikiwe and Aminu Kano of Nigeria were present at the December 1953 Pan-West African conference. The focus of the conference was on the establishment of a strong and truly West African state capable of protecting itself from outside invasion, and able to preserve its internal security.

For the first time in African history, Nkrumah invited seven independent heads of state for a summit meeting in Accra. After forming the Ghana-Guinea Union with Sekou Touré on November 23, 1958, he later replaced it with a Ghana-Guinea-Mali Union on April 29, 1961. His intention was this will serve as a future United States of Africa.

²³David Birmingham. *Kwame Nkrumah: The Father of African Nationalism*. (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1990) 7.

Kwame Nkrumah's Pan-African Vision

“Nkrumah’s vision of African culture as the core segment of Africa’s political freedom and socio-economic transformation resulted from his understanding history.” His speeches and published writings manifested through the important ones such as, Toward Colonial Freedom, The Motion of Destiny, a speech he delivered to parliament in 1954, The African Genius and Consciencism, a book on political philosophy for the new Africa. His draft of Towards Freedom which he started in the United States was completed in Britain. His main focus in the book Towards Freedom was decolonization strategies as an act of culture. The book also talks about his cultural thought during the second European world war in which he writes:

In 1942 ...while I was a student in the United States of America, I was so revolted by the ruthless colonial exploitation and political oppression of the people of Africa, that I knew no peace. The matter exercised my mind to such a degree that I decided to put down my thoughts in writing and to dilate on the results of some of my research concerning the subject of colonialism and imperialism.²⁴

Kwame Nkrumah’s wish for the entire continent was to see Africa unity. He wanted his dream to be a reality. Dompere puts it this way, “The grand goal in the new African social order to be established in accord with Nkrumanist scheme of things is complete freedom for all Africans at home and in the Diaspora. Complete African emancipation has three segments: political, economic and social freedom.”²⁵

Nkrumah’s vision for the United Africa was to strengthen and develop ties and friendship among the member states politically, diplomatically, economically, and culturally. Secondly,

²⁴Kwame Nkrumah. *Towards Colonial Freedom*. (London: The African Publication Society, 1962) in Kwame Botwe-Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah's Politico-Cultural Thought and Policies: An African-Centered Paradigm for the Second Phase of the African Revolution*. (London: Routledge, 2005) 51.

²⁵Kofi Kissi Dompere, *African Union: Pan-African Analytical Foundations*. (London: Adonis & Abbey Publishers Ltd., 2006) 169.

they will be able to consolidate their independence and safeguard their territory. But unfortunately, his proposal was rejected, however, he pointed out that the only three choices available to Africans are first to unite and save our continent, secondly, to disunite and disintegrate our continent, and to sell out to foreign powers. Although Nkrumah did not win the support for his African Unity proposal, he was not prepared to accept defeat. He again proposed that either the Organization of African Unity (OAU) move forward to development through an effective African Union or step backward into stagnation, instability and confusion. This will leave the African nation wide open to further exploitation and foreign intervention. He then asked:

Who is there to oppose or frustrate us, if we only have the courage to form an All-African Union Government? Can the industrialized nations do without our copper, our iron ore, our bauxite, our coffee, cocoa, cotton, ground-nuts, palm oil or will they be running after us, as we have been running to them for trade equitable terms?²⁶

His Pan-African vision was rejected, but Ghana became the Mecca of freedom fighters, he became the role model and mentor for the continent. On December 1958, Nkrumah sponsored an All African Peoples Conference in Accra to mark the final point in both non-violent and armed struggles toward the total liberation of all African territories. Thirty-six liberation movements and other Pan-Africans from Europe, USA and the Caribbean on African soil, this was the greatest union. Dr. Du Bois was the brain behind this sixth Pan-African Congress through the help of George Padmore. Nkrumah changed it to All-African People's Conference. Some notable attendees were Nelson Mandela, Robert Mugabe, Patrice Lumumba, Julius Nyerere, Tom Mboya, Frantz Fanon, Amilcar Cabral, Joshua Nkomo, Holden Roberto,

²⁶ Kwame Nkrumah. *I Speak of Freedom*. (London: The African Publication Society, 1962) in Kwame Botwe-Asamoah, *Kwame Nkrumah's Politico-Cultural Thought and Policies: An African-Centered Paradigm for the Second Phase of the African Revolution*. (London: Routledge, 2005) 136.

Horace M. Bond, a former President of Lincoln University, Marguerite Cartwright, an African American journalist and Shirley Graham Du Bois represented W.E.B Du Bois who was not able to make it. In a speech that Mrs. Du Bois read from her husband, it stated, “If Africa unites, it will be because each part, each nation, each tribe gives up a part of the heritage for the good of the whole.”

Nkrumah’s Concept of Development of Ghana

Next to Unity of African States was Education in Nkrumah’s hope for Ghanaians. There has never been development research without the focus intimately relating to policy issues. Researchers have always proved poverty as synonymous with development. The politics of trade has been classified as globalization yet, a developing country such as Ghana is being challenged by the Chinese textile industry hegemony. Not only are the Chinese dumping their cheap and inferior textile into the Ghanaian textile market, but America and Europe are also discarding their second hand clothing into Ghana. Imirhe expressed in the Business Week Magazine (2006) that “textile companies in Ghana want government to give them more protection from foreign competition, especially illegal competition”. But when the government took office 2001, it said it recognized the negative impact of trade liberalization policy on domestic businesses and would address the issue in two fundamental ways. “Firstly, by adjusting tariffs, and secondly by eventually promulgating anti-dumping legislation.”²⁷ The Ghanaian textile market such as Akosombo Textile, Tema Textile and other Ghana made textile businesses have completely collapsed. Without questioning the assumption or importance of Chinese textile industry, one

²⁷Toma Imirhe. The Travails & Triumphs of Ghana's Textiles Industry. *Business Week Magazine*, August 7, 2006, iv.

needs to know or ask this question. What are the Chinese textile and the second-hand clothing industry really doing to the Ghanaian Textile Market?

The influx of Chinese textile and clothing production in Ghana is the result of Chinese' expanded links to Africa which have created discourse and how safe is those ties. Much room has not been given to Ghana to become an effective player in the globalization game. There is no doubt that Ghana and its people have already benefited from advances such as technology, and infrastructure. This is not enough to eliminate or eradicate the scourges of poverty, inequality, and under-development.

For Ghana to fully accomplish these long-term goals, its leaders in conjunction with other major world players will have to establish policies to address challenges. For example, Ghana's trade policy has to be revised. Mr. Allan Kyerematen, Minister of Trade and Industry addressed the private sector session of the Third AGOA Forum, which met in Washington. He told the audience of ministers, ambassadors, and business executives that,

“It is no longer a contentious issue that trade is one of the most important tools for expanding growth in the global economy—thereby enhancing the well-being of the people of this world. For us in Africa, developments in the post-Cold War world have made the choice between aid and trade quite obvious. The unpredictability of aid flows and the strings attached to them have made aid an unreliable instrument for the achievement of rapid, sustainable development.”²⁸

Although the United States in particular has sought to help Ghana integrate itself into the world economy, a significant initiative of both Clinton and Bush administrations have been the African Growth and Opportunity Act which encouraged exports and lowered trade barriers for 33 African countries including Ghana. Oils and minerals make eighty percent of the value of

²⁸ Charles W. Corey. Trade, Not Aid—Key to Africa's Economic Growth, Says Ghana Trade Minister. (USINFO.STATE.GOV: Washington, 2004).

African exports to the US.²⁹ This shows that the 20% of other commodities has a slim chance to survive in the trade economy. Neoliberal principles have also been embodied in the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) since the year 2001. NEPAD has been endorsed by the African Union (AU) and businesses in South Africa and around the world as a unique antidote to poverty.

Jim McDermott, the United States Congressman known as the “Father of AGOA” has explained that the United States cannot rely on private sectors exclusively to aid in supporting Africa’s effort to development. Private companies are not interested in Africa’s infrastructure. On the other hand, China is seen as a support initiative for African nations to address development issues that cannot be solved by the neo-liberalism’s corporate initiatives. China’s interest in Africa is the promotion of investment in infrastructure and human capital. Most of the time, aids coming from developed countries is often subject to conditions that benefits the donor economically and politically.

China showing an interest in Ghana may be for the above reason. So far, China has not created or established any new businesses for the Ghanaian masses. Since language is the number one barrier, China has an excuse for bringing its employees for its own benefit. In addition to China’s self-imposed quotas in various Africa countries, the Minister of Commerce, Bo Xilai announced that the Chinese government would be building up clothing and textile factories across the region, as well as committing itself to purchasing more cotton from West African producers.³⁰

²⁹Barry Sautman and Yan Hairon, Friends and Interests: China’s Distinctive Links with Africa. (African Studies Review, vol 50, no 3, December 2007) p.82.

³⁰Chris Alden, *China in Africa*. (Zed Books Ltd.: London, 2007) p.82.

The research question is if Ghana cannot redeem itself with all the resources in its possession, how can China redeem Ghana? The Colonialism, which aid to turn Africa and Asian countries into political allies that same colonial experience prepared the ground for their economic rivalry.

Downfall and Legacy of the Kwame Nkrumah Era

Dr. Kwame Nkrumah's leading Gold Coast to independence was an end to the struggle against European rule throughout Africa. His political scene started in 1947 when he returned from the United States and Europe after completing his studies. He was appointed as general secretary of the UGCC. There was a noticeable differences the other executives of the organization, therefore, he was forced to vacate his post in 1949. He then founded the Convention People's Party (CPP). This organization served as a vanguard in fighting for independence for Gold Coast. The major legacy of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was the role he played in the social revolution in the Gold Coast to Ghana emancipation. The independence revolution encouraged and dismantled Europe's colonization of Africa.

Nkrumah learnt about the plight of an African in the context of global racism from his Assistant Headmaster, Dr. Kwegyir Aggrey at Achimota College where he was a student. Dr. Aggrey studied in the United States and was an advocate for racial harmony. He preached to Africans that the only way they can emancipate themselves from economic and political injustices was to have access to formal education. Falling back on Dr. Aggrey's, favorite words, "when you educate a man you have educated an individual, but when you educate a woman, you have educated a whole village" set the tone for Nkrumah to offer the market women an opportunity to participate in adult education. Nkrumah believed that only educated people can

best provide protection of freedom in independent Gold Coast and beyond. This forced him to pass the first public policy Bill on education in 1951. He supported this Bill at independence as Free Compulsory Education at all levels. Institutions were established to train teachers to fulfill the needs of basic education.

In addition to Nkrumah's government adding two universities to the only existing one since 1948, he had in place a public health program that eradicated several infectious diseases, provision of public amenities and infrastructure such as roads, railways, transportation, sources for energy which provided healthy living for all Ghanaians. Nkrumah left a healthy legacy that may never be replaced by any other Ghanaian government.

On February 1966 while Nkrumah was away on a state visit to Vietnam, his Government was overthrown. Up till today, Nkrumah emerged as one of the major African leaders in world history.

Kente

Historical Background of Kente

Figure 6 shows the holistic components of the kente cloth. Even though to date, there is still an uncertainty about who the original weavers were. There are two versions of oral tradition about the originality of the textile. The Anlo-Ewe believed the ancestors of Agotime weavers were held in captivity by the Ashantis, since they did not understand the language, they had to teach the Ashantis how to weave so they adopted a sign language and the use of words such as 'kee' which means to create the shed by pressing the treadle and 'tee' refers to the use of the reed to compress the weft yarn tightly. Kee and tee were converged to form keetee or kente.³¹

³¹ Ahiagble Bob Dennis. *The Pride of Ewe Kente*. (Accra, Sub-Sahara Publisher p12

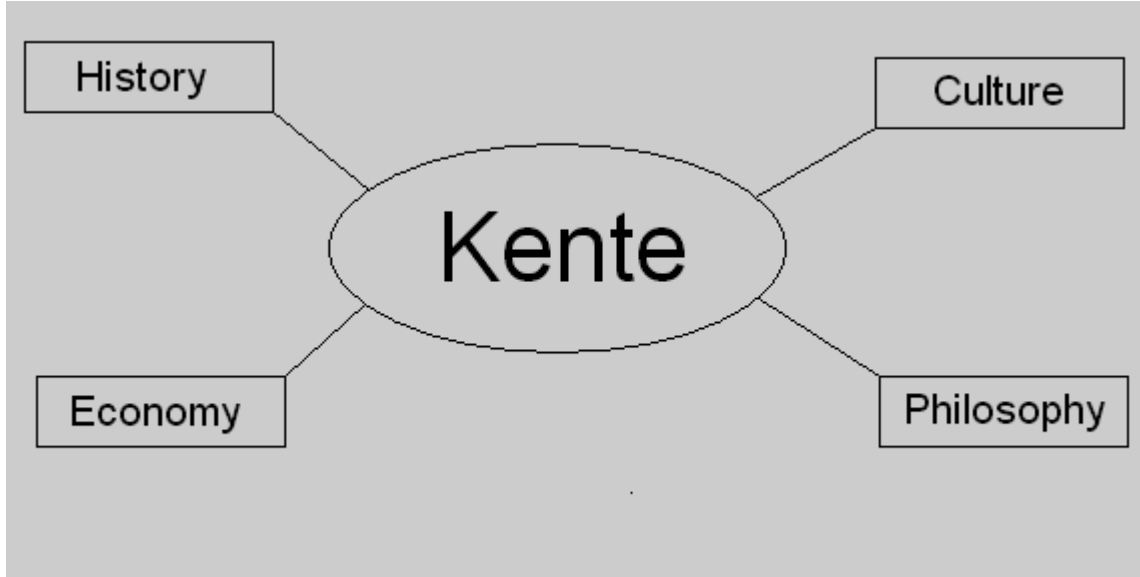


Figure 6: Kente as a Holistic Commodity

On the contrary, Asamoah-Yaw argued in his book how this well known myth about the kente cloth originated from the spider-web paradox. It stated that, “Once upon a time, two brothers namely Nana Koragu and Nana Ameyaw went on a hunting trip. While searching for a prey, they saw a spider on a tree weaving a spider-web. They became very curious about this production. They became so amazed by the spider’s skill. They went home practiced the process and this is how the weaving of the kente cloth started”.³² To date, the origin of the process is yet to be identified.

As stated earlier, part of tradition in kente weaving was adopted by most African countries, but it became popular in the Gold Coast around the 17th century and incorporated into the wealthy kingship tradition as an elaborated social system. Since then, this brilliant colored textile has been worn during special social and sacred ceremonies in the Ashanti and Ewe kingdom by chiefs and kings.

³² Ernest Asamoah-Yaw. Kente Cloth: Introduction to History, (Accra, Ghana: Ashante, 1994), p 6

‘The earliest surviving examples of the kente cloth date from the 16th century; consisted of woven strips of blue-and-white silk sewn together. This cloth signified the wearer’s status and through its patterns might also allude to a proverb or a historic event. Today, a more brightly colored version of kente cloth is popular among all social classes.’³³

Cultural Aspect of the Kente

The weaving of kente has been handed down from generations. But as Dennis puts it, “many weavers talk about kente as their heritage and about maintaining the weaving tradition which they have inherited from their forebears. It is a trade that is mostly passed down through families. He also stated that, the European missionaries in the nineteenth century mentioned how productive the Ewe weavers were.”³⁴ Although there is still an ongoing debate as to who were the original weavers, there has not been any type of ethnic conflict between the Ashantis and the Ewes. Rather it has created diversity in the production of the kente as a whole. On the link www.hypertextile.net it is stated that the urgent objective of kente weaving is the creation of social development. And because of the time and effort exhibited by the village weavers, some type of credit should be given to them. As a sign of appreciation of their contribution to this production, they were acknowledged by UNESCO in 2003 by declaring that “kente weaving is the living cultural heritage of humanity.”³⁵ In addition, it was stated on the same link that in the cultural fabric of the Ewe the loom is intimately linked to music and dance. The explanation given is that:

These three arts are traditionally learnt and practiced by everyone. Hand-in-hand Weaving opens with a textile performance by the weavers of the village of Klikor,

³³ Ibid. 25

³⁴ Ahiagble Bob Dennis. *The Pride of Ewe Kente*. (Accra, Sub-Sahara Publisher) 11.

³⁵ <http://www.hypertextile.net>

along with their families including the children. They bring along their best cloths and instruments. To the accompaniment of a sacred weaving song, they weave and dance before the traditional kings, diplomatic representatives and delegations from the government. A new born child is delegated to the memory of this event and named Exhibition.³⁶

Although the Anlo-Ewe and Ashantis are the primary weavers of kente, the focus of this study as expressed earlier is about the Ewe kente. According to Dennis, “within the Ewe society, kente has become a visual presentation of history, oral literature, philosophy, moral principles, religious beliefs and rules of social conducts.”³⁷

All these visual presentations can be located in the three weaving centers in the Volta Region, namely Kpetoe, Dzelukope, and Agbozume. They are hardly influenced by external designs, and yet have gained market globally. They have also indicated that “the hand-woven kente cloth known as Kete in the Ewe language is not just any kind of fabric that we use to cover ourselves. Kente weaving is a genuine form of popular art, rich in traditions and also continuous new design inventions. Hand-weaving is effectively one of the vital organs of the Ewe culture”.

Philosophical Views Imbedded in Kente

The Ghanaian culture is believed to be saturated with philosophies. Nkrumah’s philosophy has been examined in most of the Anlo-Ewe and Ashanti designs. His main philosophical view was Unity for Africa. Nkrumah truly believed that the continent will not be able to move ahead without being united. This is analyzed in the Ashante kente design Abusua Ye Dom, literally meaning United, the Extended Family is a Force. The flexibility of philosophical ideas woven into the Anlo-Ewe and Ashanti designs are different and unique but

³⁶ <http://www.hypertextile.net>

³⁷ Ahiagble Bob Dennis. *The Pride of Ewe Kente*. (Accra, Sub-Sahara Publisher) p. 12.

carries the same message to say they share the same philosophical ideas. For example, the Ashantis design *Abusua Ye Dom* as described by Ofori Ansa (2009) calendar literally means Unity or A United extended family is a force, in others words, a symbol of strong family bond, the value of family unity, collective work and responsibility. On the other hand, Dennis's Anlo-Ewe Kente design Akpedo or Novie has the same philosophical idea 'Togetherness or Unity.' Nkrumah's main task was to see a United State of Africa in his life time as described in his speech.

Economic Profile of Kente

Even though majority of the weavers are illiterates, their production brings out the God given talent they possess. Their workmanship is very intricate, elaborate and time consuming, unfortunately, they have not been able to escape poverty, even though Kente has become one of most the popular global textile. This production is a relatively small informal sector, which makes it impossible to generate foreign exchange because of their indirect trade. For example, it is impossible for the weavers to export their own goods for this reason they are sold to individuals at a fraction of what they really worth. The middle man makes the profit. It is clear evidence that their labor is mostly in vain and impossible to re-invest their capital more or less their profit, if any. Kente is mostly sold as strips in the West. These popular strips are used during commencement, by scholars, and also as accent for choir or pastorial robes. In many ways, kente can be seen as a tool for transmitting or shaping development.

CHAPTER III

SYMBOLIC MEANINGS OF KENTE DESIGNS AND NKRUMAH'S IDEAS

This chapter reflects the objective of the study and the thesis statement as stated in chapter one. It brings Nkrumah and Kente together. In other words, the chapter on Nkrumah's ideas is related to the symbolic meanings of the kente designs. To do this, seven themes were identified and used as the basis of the relationships. They included unity, development/progress, majesty/dignity, political protection, life contradictions/impatience, and others. The five most important themes of this study in relation to Nkrumah and Kente are presented in Figure 7 below.

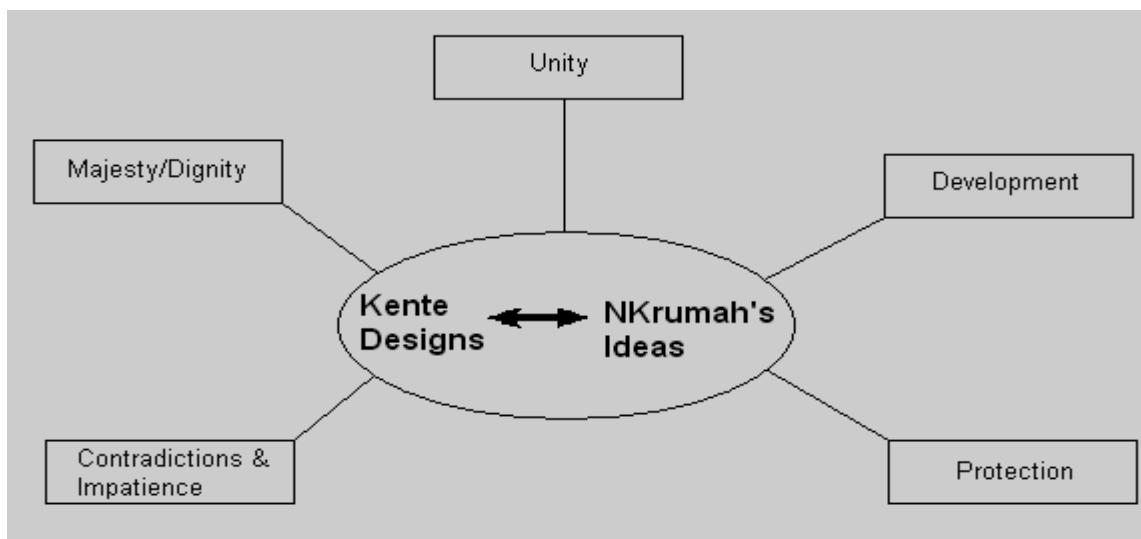


Figure 7: Symbolic Meaning of Kente Designs and Nkrumah's Ideas

The kente is a hand woven ceremonial cloth with its roots in Ghana. The literature places its origins to the 12th century when it was worn by Kings, Queens and other highly placed people within the state. From its beginning it has been woven using simple looms by the weavers. Culturally, kente is not just worn as a cloth but also to as a visual representation of historical, philosophical, ethical and a moral value representation of the African culture. It is

worn for inspirational and as a reflection of artistic nature of the African ancestors for ceremonies, festivals, and other sacred occasions and used as gifts for weddings, child naming ceremonies, graduations and other special events. Over the centuries, the popularity of kente has grown beyond Ghanaian borders. The status quo of kente has drastically changed. It is now common to find kente in various ceremonial, cultural functions including academic commencement, pastoral and choir robes all over the world. It has also become part of home décor. This was well informed in a recent western newspaper, Detroit Free Press. Kim Palmer who wrote the article “African Décor is Making a Comeback,” stated that,

Today, an African American of Kenyan descent is in the White House and African arts and crafts aren't just for world travelers and customers of pricey galleries; they are also available at mass-market retailers such as Pier 1 and Target. African style is more accessible than ever. “At first it was kind of a fad,” said Angie Scott, a St. Paul interior designer and owner of Access Dezin. But globalization is fueling broader awareness and appreciation of other cultures and their aesthetic traditions. For many Black Americans, African-inspired design remains a celebration of cultural pride. “We are just drawn to those pieces and being in touch with our ancestry, said Scott.”³⁸

Although the cultural policy of Ghana states that the government shall assist small and medium scale indigenous clothing industries to develop and improve their marketing strategies and their presence on the world market, there is little evidence of government efforts to protect and promote the industry. The production of the cloth remains uncoordinated due to lack of support for the industry. Given its worldwide growing popularity there are two possible risks: first, there is danger of the cloth being franchised by foreigners. Second, there is a danger that a foreign company may introduce a technology to mass produce the product. This would not only dilute the cultural authenticity of the cloth and render it less attractive but also such a

³⁸Kim Palmer. African Décor is Making a Comeback. Detroit Free Press, February 15, 2009, p 4H.

development may collapse the industry in Ghana and leave many currently involved in the communal tenure without any source of income.

The Basic Frame Work-Ewe Kente (Adanuvo)

This reports both the direct and indirect affinity between the cultural and messages of the kente designs as presented in the Anlo Kente by Dennis (2004) and the philosophical view points of Kwame Nkrumah. These themes are investigated from one particular cloth, Adenuvor the composite cloth and vanguard of all the designs cloth and analyzed in relation to the other designs. To do this, one has to take out six broad themes under which the affinity is discussed as indicated previously.



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 8: *Togodo or Adanuvo*

In the *Adenuwo* the numerous figurative symbols inform us that this world is a very big place but through vigilance and prudence it is possible to maintain a balance in life. In the past, kings and people of high status and wealth wore Adenuwo/Togodo cloth. It symbolizes superior craftsmanship, royalty and creativity.

Unity

One of the most important foci in Nkrumah's political life was his search and call for Africa Unity as shown by both the content and title of his book Africa Must Unite (1963). His concept of unity was so strong that it became an African anthem or a proverb. Together we stand, divided we fall. Unity of the whole continent was a paramount importance that Nkrumah set out to explore and to establish a United States of Africa. Rather unfortunate, he did not receive enough support from most of the African leaders who joined him in fight for their freedom.

The unity philosophy has been woven into so many of the Ewe Kente designs. Designs such as *Akpedo*, *Haliwoe*, *Atideka* and *Sasa* all symbolize unity. According to Ahiagble, *Akpedo* means Togetherness or Unity. It is woven with different colored threads which are piled together for the weft and in some cases for the warp. It expresses the popular Ewe saying that 'two heads are better than one', or one tree does not make a forest. This is what Nkrumah believed to be the forefront of Africanity. He set this example by choosing an Egyptian for his bride.

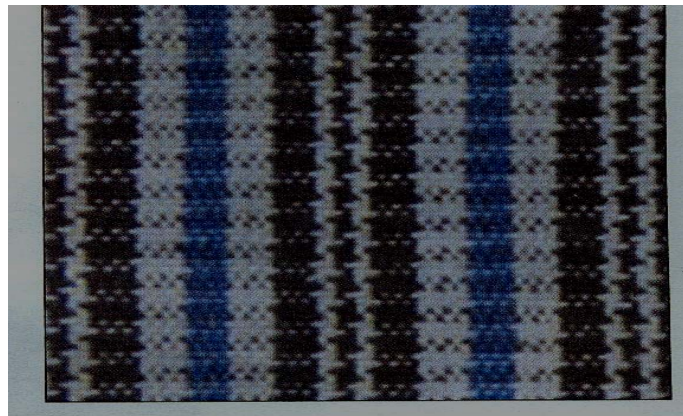


Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 9: *Akpedo/Novie*

Haliwoe, Hali means 'sprouted maize' is used to prepare a local drink popularly known as ekudeme. When the maize is specially treated it germinates and sprouts, and from this process

comes the notion of haliwoe. Haliwoe is ‘lots of sprouted maize’ since ‘Woe’ in Ewe indicates plural. The pattern on the cloth looks like the sprouted maize, hence its name. It symbolizes or underscores the importance of unity, and also symbolizes strength, growth and productivity. In spite of that one can also borrow from Akyea who stated that, the Anlo Emblem and Symbol explains further why unity meant so much to Ghanaians in particular, the Ewes and especially has been part of Nkrumah’s philosophy. Akyea reported that:

The Anlo symbol consists of a cooking pot placed on a stove that has a short piece of firewood in it. This emblem is based on an Anlo saying: “Anlo godoo lifii. Du no eme mase emenya. Naketi deka no dzome bi nu.” This translates literally as: “Anlo deep and murky. You do not know what is going on. One piece of firewood could cook a whole meal.” This conveys the idea that the Anlo are unified and secret society.³⁹



Source: Adapted from Dennis’ Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 10: *Haliwoe*

He further explained that outsiders may stay in this society without ever knowing its secrets; its people are resourceful and can make do with very little in order to create great things. Their Anlo say that the emblem and the saying symbolize their unity as a people. They look out for one another and do not allow outsiders to divide them. The symbol also suggests the way

³⁹ E. Ofori Akyea. *The Heritage Library of African Peoples: Ewe*. New York, The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc., 1998, p 22.

that leaders, like the stove, support their people, who are symbolized by the pot. Some believe that the Anlo emblem sums up the Ewe outlook on life more generally. Outsiders see the Ewe as keeping to themselves, sticking together, being discreet and industrious, and making do with little.

Atideka literally means one tree. Dennis designed this cloth as a symbol that was named after the one palm-nut tree which was planted on a rock at Ado by the soothsayer Yemaja. This tree enabled the villagers to be able to foretell future events. From this one seed, sixteen palm trees instantly grew up. The design symbolizes survival, chieftainship and supremacy.

According to Cooper in the Journal of Pan African Studies, “Kwame Nkrumah was more than a political leader; he was a prophet of independence, of anti-imperialism, of Pan-Africanism.

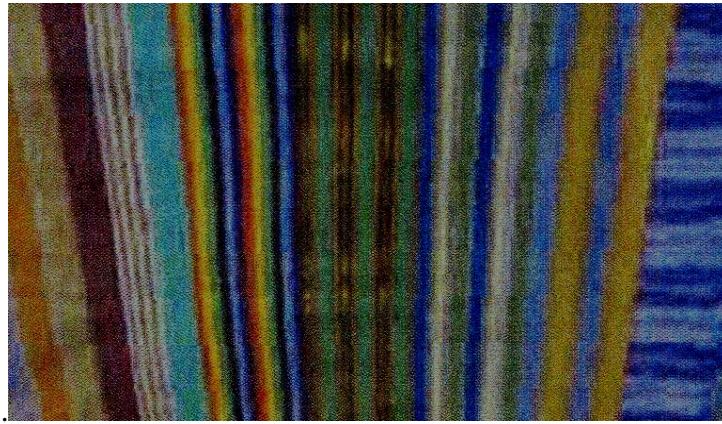
Among these things he also pleaded with leaders and ordinary citizens to use power for a purpose to transform a colonized society into a dynamic and prosperous land of opportunity.

Just as that one palm-nut seed, sixteen trees instantly grew. Nkrumah envisaged a prolific nation.



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 11: *Atideka me tu na xor o*

The strong sense of unity is linked in *Sasa* the sewing of separate kente strips with different designs together. This symbolizes acceptance or unity among a clan or a group of people. In the Retrospect by Ama Biney (2008), the Journal of Pan African Studies, she stated that, Nkrumah believed no single African nation could progress without unifying politically and economically with other African countries in order harness the economic potential and resources of the continent for the betterment of its people. This design is shown in Figure 12.



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 12: *Sasa*

Development/Progress

The word “progress” as used here, connotes the contemporary use of the word “development” one of the few Africa’s leaders, preoccupied with the development to see his/her country develop, was Kwame Nkrumah. Walter Rodney (1982) argued that “development means a capacity for self-sustaining growth. It also means that an economy must register advances which in turn will promote further progress.”⁴⁰ His interest in development was symbolized by his ideological orientation, which was socialism, his extensive infrastructural networks and his

⁴⁰ Walter Rodney. *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Howard University Press, Washington, DC, 1982, p.105.

search and call for Africa Unity did not gain must support. In the hind sight, Mazuri's view of progress went beyond just modernization or industrialization. He saw development more as exploitation. To him progress was an abuse:

The idea of progress once justified classifying societies "from the primitive to the civilized." In the name of progress, the slave trade was once defended as a method of propelling the industrial revolution. In the name of progress, child labor has been exploited from factory to factory. In the name of progress, Rudyard Kipling celebrated race-conscious imperialism. The doctrine of progress can all too easily turn Machiavellian as harsh means are justified in pursuit of noble ends.⁴¹

Nkrumah had been blamed for his extravagant use of resources to develop Ghana through modernization projects such as the Motorway. The completion of this project made travel from the capital–Accra to the Volta Region a smooth ride with no obstacles such as the usual pot holes and unpaved roads. To date the motorway is one of Nkrumah's development projects still in great use. The motorway is a first class dual carriage road built to link the national capital and the port city of Tema. The importance of this linkage derives from the importance attached to both cities that is Accra being the nation's capital and Tema the port city and the country's industrial hub.



Source: Scanned Piece of Kente
Figure 13: Ewe Kente Named After the Motorway Project

⁴¹ *The Collected Essays of Ali A. Mazuri, vol. 2*, (Trenton: African World Press, NJ, 2002) p. 196.

In Peter Omari's book, Kwame Nkrumah: The Anatomy of an African Dictatorship (1970), he criticized Nkrumah for statements such as "Seek ye first the political kingdom, and all other things shall be added unto you."⁴² Omari believed that by 1964, the political kingdom became very unpleasant. Bribery and corruption became the fore runner of Nkrumah's regime including free speech. Although Omari believed Nkrumah's achievements were nonetheless remarkable, they were due largely to his enthusiasm for progress at the expense of the high prices of Ghana's number one cash crop, cocoa on the world market, and his ability to set the educational system, health, infrastructure, roads, and telecommunication were all inherited by him. He also believed that Nkrumah's spending was irrational. Omari blamed Nkrumah for spending a great deal of money on his dream projects such as the Volta River Project, which he mirrored after President Nasser, the Aswan High Dam. Nkrumah strongly believed that he could have industrialized Ghana over-night which was an assumption that made many to visualize him as an impatient leader.

Ayittey, a Ghanaian Economist also made some very damaging comments about the former President. In his book Africa Betrayed (1991) he wrote:

Nkrumah began his massive industrialization effort under the impetus of socialism. The plethora of controls brought in its wake two inter-related and pernicious problems: bribery and corruption. By imposing price controls that required producers to charge prices lower than the free-market prices, the Nkrumah government caused shortages of commodities as producers cut output. Government officials allocated to themselves extra chits that they could give to party lackeys, wives, and girlfriends. Thus was born a practice that Ghanaians called *kalabule* or profiteering.⁴³

⁴² T. Peter Omari. *Kwame Nkrumah: The Anatomy of an African Dictatorship*. Maxon Paperback, 1970, p 99.

⁴³ George B. N. Ayittey. *Africa Betrayed*. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1991, p. 166.

On the other hand, Dennis believed that Nkrumah's interest as in development was symbolized in one of the Ewe kente known as *Toku* literally meaning 'The big animal is dead' to him, it was an indication of getting rid of the Europeans. This design is shown in Figure However, Ghana did not take full control of its affairs. Rather, the dependency discourse escalated. Ayittey and Omari both believed that although the colonizers left, Nkrumah copied their ideology which he imposed on the Ghanaians. It is rather unfortunate that they saw Nkrumah's hard work as an annoyance.



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 14: *Toku*

It is important to know that Nkrumah's intention for Ghana and Africa as a whole was that each individual will attain at least their basic needs through education and also advance economically by establishing an industrialized Ghana. Modern social scientists such as Dr. David noted in his publication in 1997 – Conversation of Economic Development, focused on authentic transformation of human society from poverty to riches can be brought about. Seven years later David (2004) published the Humanitarian Development Paradigm. In this book, he pointed out that humanitarian development paradigm does not merely reflect changing thoughts

in development, but it also offers a perspective of understanding in both the nature of development and the process of attaining it. His definition of development can be viewed as the end product or a process. According to David, the humanitarian development paradigm signifies total human welfare, where the quality of life is not limited to only some of the overall human needs.⁴⁴ Therefore based on this conviction, he suggested that to be authentic, development must take into account, among other things, a greater degree of pluralism in the development thinking and process, the way the benefits are shared out, and the social organization on which it relies.

Wilfred David's humanitarian paradigm is also linked to Ubuntu. Ubuntu is an African philosophical concept with several dimensions. First, the individual must not be ignored but, the individual is not as important as the community; therefore, the total wellbeing of the community is pursued, as opposed to the individual happiness. In search of Ubuntu, therefore, one gives up his comfort and convenience for the overall good of the larger community to which he belongs. In this regard, the progress and development of the whole (larger community) is the foremost and imperative. Second, Ubuntu speaks to the generosity of the human spirit and does not condone greed and exploitation and any other act that does not allow for the progress of the whole community. Consequently, it speaks to the connectedness and the interdependence of humanity. Insofar as development is concerned, the goal is to pursue and implement policies that uplift both the physical and mental wellbeing of all humans.

In the pursuit of developmental goals therefore, Ubuntu as a system of belief becomes relevant. In this regard, development must be about the people vis-à-vis providing the fundamentals of development: access to quality education, access to potable water and sanitary

⁴⁴ Wilfred L. David. *The Humanitarian Paradigm: Search for Global Justice*. University Press of America, Lanham, 2004, p 57.

conditions, healthcare, personal security, food, public infrastructure, respect for the environment and respect for human rights and human dignity. In recent years, Wilfred David has been at the forefront in terms of advocating, addressing and pursuing humanitarian and/or Ubuntu-styled development. In earlier times however, Kwame Nkrumah was the unwavering advocate of this concept. For him, development should center around and address the need and transformation of the everyday people. When people are well fed, well-clothed and suffer very minimal want and needs, they are likely to pursue objectives that takes into consideration the complete wellbeing of humanity.

In Sen's (1999) Development as Freedom, he believed that human rights have also become an important part of the literature on development.⁴⁵ To illustrate this point, he wrote, "consider the idea that personal freedom for all is important for a good society. This claim can be seen as being composed of two distinct components, to wit, that the value of personal freedom is important and each individual should be entitled to it when in a good society and also in equality of freedom everyone matters. The freedom that is granted to one should be granted to all.

Mahbub ul Haq (1995) published his book, Reflections on Human Development in which he stated that "what we need to sustain is human life. Sustaining the physical environment is a means, not an end, just as GNP growth is only a means towards human development...A more meaningful concept, therefore, is sustainable human development, putting people at the center of the environmental debate."⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Amartya Sen. *Development as Freedom*. Anchor Books, New York, 1999, p 227.

⁴⁶ Mahbub ul Haq. *Reflections on Human Development*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, p. 78.

The betterment of the Ghanaians was Nkrumah's priority. He promoted this by encouraging positive cultural values which he used kente as the local and international messenger. He also encouraged formal and informal education as a vehicle of propagating cultural values.

Majesty/Dignity

Nkrumah's notion and display of majesty or dignity could be found in his very use of the kente cloth. His nationalistic passion was captured in the hand woven textile, kente. His gallanted personality gave him names such as Otumfo, Osagyefo and Kantamanto. Nkrumah at a point became the Messiah. In Obiri-Addo's book, Kwame Nkrumah: A Case Study of Religion and Politics in Ghana, he wrote, "When our history is recorded, the man Kwame Nkrumah will be written of as the Liberator, the Messiah, the Christ of our day, whose great love for mankind wrought changes in Ghana, in Africa and the world at large."⁴⁷

The two designs linked to Nkrumah's philosophical expression woven into the kente are *Nlorlordzanyi* which means 'The writing has come to sit'. Dennis argued that, the cloth expresses the system of governance where the traditional council liaises with the offices of the higher authorities to make by-laws and to regulate the activities of people living in the various communities. It symbolizes authority, development and patriotism.

⁴⁷ Ebenezer Obiri Addo. *Kwame Nkrumah: A Case Study of Religion and Politics in Ghana*. University Press of America, Inc, Lanham: MD, 1999, p. 29



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 15: *Nlornlodzanyi*

The second design in Figure 16, which is *Amegbor*, meaning 'Come back,' refers to the permanent Ewe kingdom established at Notsie. The kingdom was acclaimed as the ancestral home of all Ewes after they arrived from Hogbe or Notsie. Sovereignty and dignity are symbolized in this design.



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 16: *Amegbor*

An image of shows Kwame Nkrumah and Mordecai Johnson the first Black President of Howard University in the year 1963 from the archive of Mooreland Spingarn is shown in Figure 17.



Source: Mooreland Spingarn Archives
Figure 17: Kwame Nkrumah's Visit with Howard
University's First Black President: Mordecai Johnson

Another kente design which symbolizes majesty is *Woha Tsi Nat*. According to Dennis it literally means you too can make it and wear it. The kente became a very popular design among the female students at Achimota Secondary School in Accra, one of the earlier schools founded in the colonial time. The West would have referred to it as sorority regalia. What also became part of uniform on the school campus were the brown sandals with holes on top for ventilation, and a well padded sole which can be analyzed as a sign of comfort and unity. Those were not the only signs of unity. The school motto “Ut Omnes Unum Sint” which means “that all may be

one,”⁴⁸ unity has been the principal African philosophy. This was instilled in Nkrumah since he was a student. That could be why the fight for unity was his social breeding. Education became one of Nkrumah’s major policies. Nkrumah invested in education for his country by introducing a compulsory education law which enabled nearly two million additional pupils to enroll in elementary schools. In addition to offering free education for all children from ages 6 and up, he also established an adult education institution for especially the market women.



Source: Adapted from Dennis’ Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 18: *Woha Tsi Nata*

Nkrumah engaged people not only by his charm but by his many sensible remarks when discussing matters which he was almost completely unfamiliar. This resulted from his gift of perception and assimilation. His presence was noticed wherever he went.

⁴⁸ <http://Ghanaweb.com>



Source: Accessed from Internet
Figure 19: Nkrumah Receiving Citation at Lincoln University

Protection

Like any responsible national leader, Nkrumah was concerned with both his personal protection and the protection of his country. It was not just the physical protection of his people but their social welfare as well. Modern social scientist t will refer to this as human security. In his speech which was printed in his Seven-Year Development Plan he stated:

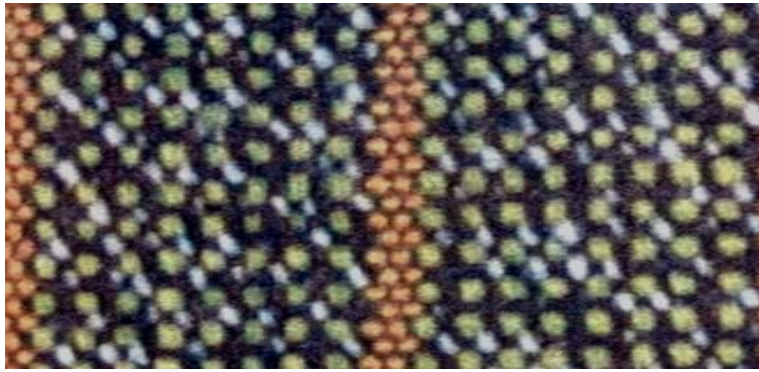
Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to money-lending which along with other problems, has been left to us by colonialism. I know that many of those who are carrying on this business of lending money at criminal rates of interest are non-Ghanaians. But unhappily, not a few of our own people have joined the ranks of those who make quick and easy money out of the difficulties and misery of others.⁴⁹

He called for immediate eradication of this practice. Nkrumah had the interest of the people in mind. He also went on to assure the Members of the National Assembly:

⁴⁹ Ghana Seven-Year Plan for National Reconstruction and Development. Financial Years 1963/64-1969/70. Office of the Planning Commission, Accra p. xxi.

In 1964, the year in which we launch the Seven-Year Development Plan, will be hailed as the turning point in the history of Ghana. In a little over a year from now, we shall be generating electricity from the Volta River Project to feed our expanding factories throughout the country . . . I can already see, in my mind's eye, a picture of Ghana as it will be by the end of the plan period.⁵⁰

Another symbol of protection is *Klogo* which refers to the shell of tortoise. This design carries the shell throughout its motifs. The symbol of protection is woven throughout in the cloth. The name *Klogo* is to commemorate the forefathers who fought and ran away from King Agorkoli. This cloth symbolizes protection, heroic deeds and social vigilance. This understanding is based on the very nature and function of the shell, being hard and protective to a weak-looking creature.



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 20: *Klogo*

Although Omari chastised Nkrumah about most of his activities, he wrote “Nkrumah is believed to have studied spiritualism, also it is said that during his stay in the United States he was a freemason. This influenced him deeply. He fasted regularly on Fridays, and allowed himself time for meditation for Ghana and Africa.”⁵¹ This shows a sign of physical and spiritual protection for himself and his nation.

⁵⁰ Ibid. xxii

⁵¹ T. Peter Omari. *Kwame Nkrumah: The Anatomy of an African Dictatorship*. Maxon Paperbacks, 1970, p 143.



Source: Adapted from Video of Ghana's Independence Day
 Figure 21: Independence Day – Nkrumah and Some of His
 Cabinet Members in an Open Motor Cage

Contradictions

In some respects, Nkrumah can be seen as an epitome of life contradictions. His speech on the day of independence connotes that. In Smertin's book Kwame Nkrumah (1987), Nkrumah addressed his nation by encouraging them that:

We must realize that from now on we are no more a colonial but a free and independence people. But also, as I pointed out, that entails hard work . . . We know we are going to have a difficult beginning but again, I am relying upon your support, I am relying upon your hard work, seeing you here in your thousands, however far my eyes goes . . . Today, from now on, there is a new African in the world and that new Africa is ready to fight his own battle and show that after all the black man is capable of managing his own affairs. We are going to demonstrate to the world, to the other nations, young as we are, that we are prepared to lay our own foundation.⁵²

Gbadebgenyo is a design which literally means 'The happy days gone'. In Dennis' book it was believed that the peace and stability our forefathers enjoyed was irreparably destroyed through the long years of the European trans-Atlantic slave trade, which brought bitterness and divided villages and people. This cloth therefore symbolizes the unity, peace and self-sufficiency

⁵² Yuri Smertin, *Kwame Nkrumah*. Turnhout: International Publishers, 1987, p

which our forebears once enjoyed as one people with a common ancestry and destiny. But the question still being pondered was how good was the good old days? Some may be able to answer this question critically or negatively. In Birmingham's Kwame Nkrumah: The Father of African Nationalism (1998) he may have answered this question to the best of his knowledge.



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 22: *Gbadegbenyo*

The internal reassessment of Nkrumah's contribution to the history of Ghana a quarter of a century after his overthrow must involve an attempt to look at the history of the country after his departure. The achievements and failures of each successor regime are the best yardstick for understanding what Nkrumah tried to do, what he managed to do, and what he failed to do.⁵³

The expression "the past was good" created a conflict between Nyerere and Nkrumah.

As stated in the Journal of Pan African Studies by Ama Biney:

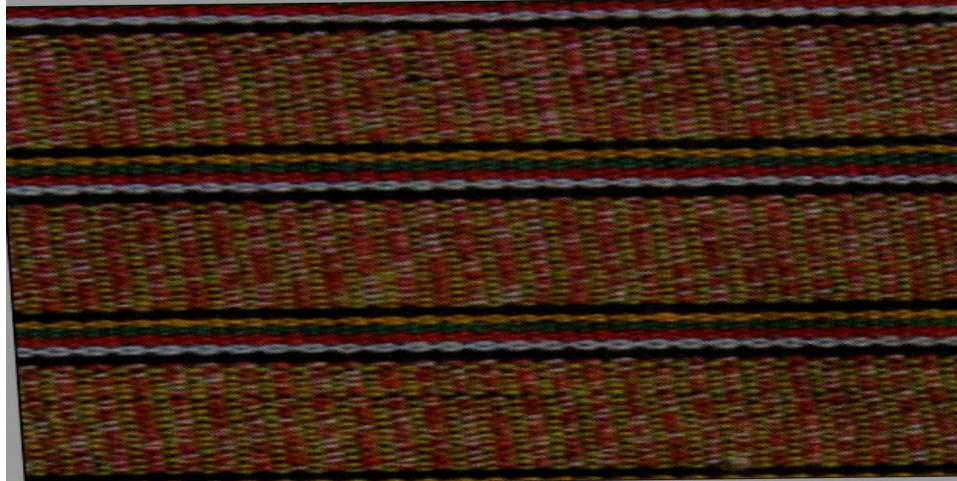
Nyerere made a stinging attack on Nkrumah when he accused him of employing the notion of Union Government for propaganda purposes. He declared: "I am becoming increasingly convinced that we are divided between those who genuinely want a continental Government and will patiently work for its realization, removing obstacles, one by one; and those who simply use the phrase 'Union Government' for the purpose of propaganda."⁵⁴

⁵³ David Birmingham. *Kwame Nkrumah: The Father of African Nationalism*. Ohio University Press: OH, 1998, p114.

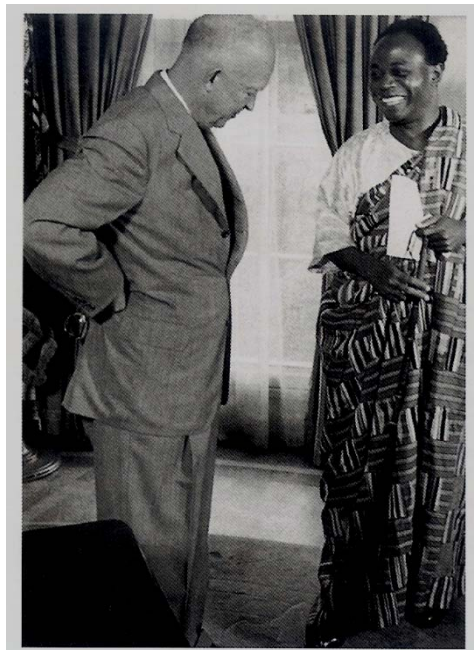
⁵⁴ Ama Biney. Legacy of Kwame Nkrumah in Retrospect. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, vo.2, no. 3, March 2008, p. 138.

Although Nkrumah did not totally reject the past, he had a mixed view of the past which Nyerere opposed. Nyerere believed the past was great. On the contrary, Nkrumah thought the past was full of life's contradictions. Nkrumah however, did not over romanticized Christianity, Islamic or the Traditional religion which also was questioned. However, there was much empirical evidence to prove that the traditional religion was part of the African culture and also the authentic form of worship by the indigenous people. Based on the above evidence, people define what is good at any stage in life. Nkrumah did not totally reject everything African as posited in his book Concenscism. In other words, this reflected in Mazuri's literature, as Triple Heritage.

Ehianega literally means 'it calls for money' the famous proverb which underlines that wealth promotes wisdom, creativity, action orientation and power that an individual may possess. This shows that before a person can maintain personal integrity and high ethical standards, they need to be supported by wealth. Success can only be achieved in the end by using our knowledge and possessions fruitfully. This design carries the notion that a successful undertaking always call for money. Nkrumah had to go back to the colonizers for loan. One can relate to this as influences of cross-culture as well as the capability to enjoy products of the Western culture. Through his years in the United States and Britain, he enjoyed the cultural products of these countries which he brought with him to Ghana.



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 23: *Ehianega*



Source: Ghana 50 Years Independence Magazine
Figure 24: Visit of President Kwame Nkrumah with
President Eisenhower

Political Guile

If there was any element of life which Nkrumah lacked, it was his political-guile. Through all that Nkrumah exhibited in life to the best of our knowledge he lacked the necessary patience which in turn caused his over-exposure and led to his down fall. Ayittey (1991) saw Nkrumah's case as most pathetic. His journey to Hanoi to find solution to the Vietnam War gave way to his over-thrown. Also, his method of dealing openly with the colonialists was confrontational, which was inappropriate for developing domestic policy. These are some of the evidence which showed how he lacked guile or patience.

Others

Haliwoe, and *Gale Anyako*, Kente designs in this section symbolize more than one aspect of Nkrumah's philosophy which will be presented. The design *Haliwoe* literally means the 'sprouted maize' which was analyzed earlier. There are some of these clothes that bring together all that was in Kwame Nkrumah. He stood for unity, progress, growth, and strength. These designs symbolize all that one can find in Nkrumah's character.

The literal meaning *Gale Anyako* is that there is money or richness at Anyako. Anyako is a village on the peninsular of the Keta lagoon, in the South of the Volta Region. This cloth was designed to express recognition of salt as a wealth generating commodity and a preservative, without which food would be tasteless and even 'huge amounts of elephant meat would decay after few days.'

This particular cloth in Figure 25 symbolizes the richness of the worth of the land which is the vegetation and the sea. The salt which is produced by the sea symbolizes one of the richest

mineral resources produced in Ghana. Salt has two viable uses: it gives taste to what we eat and at the same time preserves what we eat.



Source: Adapted from Dennis' Book – The Pride of Ewe Kente
Figure 25: *Gale Anyako*

In addition to the lyrics of the original Ghanaian National Anthem, it signifies the richness of the Ghana land. The flag colors Nkrumah adopted expressed what is imbedded in the colors of the Ghana National Flag as depicted in Figure 26.



Source: <http://Ghanaweb.com>
Figure 26: Ghana Flag

The meanings and the colors of the Ghana flag is presented in Figure 26. The Red stands for the blood of the heroes in the fight, the Green for the precious farms of the birth-right. The Gold marks the richness of the Fatherland (Gold Coast) and the Black Star a symbol of unity. In essence, the flag symbolizes unity and to the same extent, a preservative of African's unity. Nkrumah did recognize the richness of the land.

The Ghanaian National Anthem- Lyrics composed by
- Philip Gbeho (Discarded in 1966)

Lift high the flag of Ghana,
The gay star shining in the sky,
Bright with the souls of our fathers,
Beneath whose shade we'll live and die!
Red for the blood of the heroes in the fight,
Green for the precious¹ farms of our birth-right,
And linked with these the shining golden band
That marks the richness of our Fatherland.

We'll live and die for Ghana,
Our land of hope for ages to come!
Shout it aloud, O Ghana,
And beat it upon the drum!
Come from the palm-lined shore, from the broad northern plain,
From the farm and the forest, the mountain and mine.
Your children sing with ancient minstrel lore:
Freedom for ever, for evermore!

God be with us in Ghana
And make our nation great and strong,
Brave to defend for ever
The cause of freedom and of right.
For ever the flag of Ghana proudly flies
In distant seas or else beneath our skies.
Let peace and fellow-feeling be our might,
And may our name be a radiant light.

This be our vow, O Ghana,
To live as one, in unity,
And in your strength, O Ghana,
To build a new fraternity!
Africa waits in the night of the clouded years
For the spreading light that now appears
To give us all a place beneath the sun:
The destined ending of a task well done.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Ibid. March , 2009

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This thesis presented the symbolic meanings of kente designs and the politico-economic ideas of Kwame Nkrumah, the man who led Ghana into independence and subsequently became its first president. Specifically, the study went beyond the separate study of kente and Nkrumah showed affinity that exists between the symbolic meanings of the kente designs and the political and economic ideas of Nkrumah.

The study was based on the understanding of the relationships between the symbolic meanings of kente designs and the politico-economic ideas of Nkrumah not only marks the integration of two major philosophical entities in Africa, it also contributes to a shift in the understanding of the philosophical foundations of development in the region. In other words, as a contribution to the ideas in contemporary development in Africa, it was contended that Africa, as a socio-cultural entity, can begin to place itself on a sustainable path to development only when it seeks to understand, and utilizes the relationships that exist between the material component of its culture and the ideas of its people.

Thus, it is appropriate to conclude this research that Kwame Nkrumah became very popular in the political scene after working his way through Lincoln and Pennsylvania Universities in the United States. He served as the President of the African Students' Association of U.S. and Canada. He continued his education in Britain where he studied law at the Gray Inn. He also became active in African organizations while in London. It was this time that he took it upon himself to write a Declaration which invited all Africans to join in the struggle to obtain freedom from colonialism.

Nkrumah's vision for the United Africa was to strengthen and develop ties and friendship among the member states politically, diplomatically, economically, and culturally. Secondly, they can consolidate their independence and safeguard their territory. Ghana was the first of the African states to achieve independence in 1957, and its first President, Kwame Nkrumah, became a major figure on the world stage. He adopted the wearing of the Kente and other locally woven cloths as a visual symbol of his commitment to cultural nationalism and Pan-African unity.

The major legacy of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah was the role he played in the social revolution in the Gold Coast to Ghana emancipation. The independence revolution encouraged and dismantled Europe's colonization of Africa. Unfortunately, Nkrumah's government was overthrown in 1966, but he still remains one of major personalities in African political history.

In addition, this study found that the symbolic ideas have had an impact on Africa unity and progress as a tool in economic development. Also, one has to view Nkrumah's ideas as dualistic values which he imposed on the Ghanaian citizens by counter posing the traditional with the western. Tradition to some is an old fashion culture and out-dated, on the other hand to some, western is what is in vogue. This has brain washed the developing countries to adopt a lifestyles which encourage them to consume what they do not produce and produce what they do not consume. Nkrumah believed he could use industrialization as a catalyst for development.

Policies and Reflections

Even though the Ghanaian kente weavers and its users conceive of the fabric in terms of its elegant place in their culture and philosophical orientations, the economic significance of kente is beyond dispute. Kente provides income to those who weave it and those who distribute

it. It is also a foreign exchange earning commodity for Ghana since the fabric is exported, particularly to Europe and Northern America. The question however, is: what is the future of this industry? The importance of this question derives from two developments that have posed a threat to it. One is the increasing imitation of the kente designs and other fabrics by Asians, particularly, Chinese and Koreans; the other is the increase in the inflow of used clothes into the country.

Goods manufactured in Ghana become less attractive to the indigenous people. Ghanaians believe in consuming what they do not produce, but do not consume what they do produce. Textiles have always been an important item of trade in Ghana, and the market is stocked with textiles of different qualities from high end to low end which should allow all Ghanaians to be able to afford. Most of the made in Ghana textiles are superior qualities with proverbial names which are used as a vehicle for communicating morals and status of the designs. Also the quality of the textile assigns the price tag. Both men and women can identify the qualities of these textiles whether they are manufactured in Ghana, Holland or China. They are sold in half pieces of six yards, the quantity needed for a traditional dress. Deborah Heath in the *American Ethnologist Journal*, (1992) wrote an article on Anti-Fashion and Heteroglossia in Urban Senegal stating that,

The most recognizable materials are perhaps those called “wax print” “fancy” or “Lagos”, the meter price is dependent upon the quality dyeing process. This is a factory-produced cotton textile printed in strong colors and large patterns for West Africa market.⁵⁶

⁵⁶Deborah Heath, Anti-Fashion, and Heteroglossia in Urban Senegal. *American Ethnologist*, 1992, 19(2): 19-33.

Also, these same textiles are easily pirated by any country because there is no protection on copy right. However, “globalization fueled by information technology, has brought the issue of intellectual property rights protection to the center of international trade and investment decisions.”⁵⁷ But since Ghana may view this policy as “Western style imperialism” the Ghanaian designs will be left wide open for any type of piracy. This has given China the opportunity to duplicate most of the Ghanaian patterns to be printed on inferior polyester textiles and then exported into the Ghanaian market to be sold to the Ghanaians. This brings down the value of even the cheapest quality of the made in Ghana textiles.

The Impact of Secondhand Clothing Trade in Ghana

The donated clothing shipped from the West to Ghana is sold by charity entities that receive them as donations then exploits Ghanaians by establishing such an industry out of donated clothes. These used clothes are pressed into bales and exported to Ghana. Though it starts as charity, the declared value of the American second-hand clothing exported to Africa was \$59.3million in 2002, according to the International Trade Commission.

In America they are called “Vintage” clothing or consignment shops. There are also the second-hand retail places such as Salvation Army, Goodwill Stores, Thrift Shops of all kinds, where even those who can afford to shop at department stores go in search of that exclusive designer dress for a mere pittance.⁵⁸

Ghana is one of the African States that used to be and still is where the prominent Western designers go to find their inspirations for their new designs ideas. Honestly thinking, Ghanaians have been brain washed as stated earlier they do not believe in consuming what is

⁵⁷Collected Essays of Ali A. Mazuri, *Africanity Redefined*, Vol. 1 (Trenton: African World Press, NJ, 2002) p.179

⁵⁸Dead White Man’s Clothing Get a Second Life in Africa, Shopping for Clothes African Style at Owino Market. African Insight Ezine—July 2004.

theirs. Western styles are viewed as reflection of civilization, and the fastest way to acquire them is to buy the leftovers from the industrialized countries.

Economic and Social Benefits

“Bales of second hand clothes are shipped to Ghana on regular basis. An estimated 40 to 75 percent of used clothing donated to charitable organizations end up not in the hands of the needy in the West but in busy markets across the developing regions, such as in sub-Saharan Africa.”⁵⁹ Karen Tranberg Hansen an expert on used clothing trade also stated that “since the trade liberalization in the early 1990s of many developing countries, there has been a marked increase in the demand for used clothes. Most Ghanaians now buy majority of their wardrobe from the second hand clothing vendors. Plethora of names has been given to this half a billion industry which is also collapsing the Ghanaian textile and garment market. Some call it the “The Dead White Man,” or “Bend Down Boutique” in Ghana. The mass can purchase from lingerie to evening wear, tee shirts to old jeans and college sweat shirts and even baseball caps. Ghanaians claim it is cheaper to purchase a complete suit from the bend down boutique than it is to purchase textile from the market and then have to pay to have it designed into a style of choice. Secondly, the variety and the uniqueness attract consumers to the industry. Technology has brainwashed the Ghanaian state. They enjoy external validation.

⁵⁹Melissa Gorelick, The Secrets of Used Clothes: Western Cast-Offs Reveal Surprising Insights, (UN Chronicle Online Edition).

The Effect of Second-hand Clothing on Culture

Mazuri further stated that:

When Africa emerged from colonial rule, she asked herself if she could actually modernize economically without culturally westernizing. In reality, Africa's answer so far has been to engage in cultural Westernization without economic modernization. Africa has been in double jeopardy by, first, westernizing too fast and, second, by westernizing in the wrong areas of Western culture. Africa westernized in prayer, but not in production; in idiom but not in innovation; in costume but not in computer. Taiwan, South Korea, and Hong Kong adopted mainly the more productive elements of Western civilization, and linked them to their own methods of social organization and cultural modification.⁶⁰

Ghana, including the entire continent believes that what is western is better; therefore, have partially given up on the indigenous culture and tradition. The present generation has lost their sense of what the African culture and values truly mean. The mother tongue has become an inferior language in most schools in Ghana. The traditional wear which Kwame Nkrumah showcased and popularized as the decorative art of the Ghanaian culture, its dignity and pride has been traded with the western culture. Abraham (1962) made a point in his book, The Mind of Africa that,

In agriculture, effort was directed towards export than food for home consumption. Coffee, tea, cocoa, cotton, became intensely cultivated, and Africans continued to be under nourished. Africa is surrounded on all sides by oceans but it had to import tinned fish. Japanese and European fleets fished off the West African coast, took their catches home, and re-exported them in red tins to West Africa.⁶¹

By learning about the culture of this woven textile known as kente, Ghanaians should be able to value their heritage. The production of kente dates as far back as 3000 B.C., out of the history

⁶⁰*The Collected Essays of Ali A. Mazuri, vol. 2, (Trenton: African World Press, NJ, 2002) p. 258-259.*

⁶¹ W. E. Abraham. *The Mind of Africa*. Chicago: Univ of Chicago Pr (Tx), 1963, p.166

and culture of the pre-industrial textile technologies that emerged in the ancient kingdoms of Africa. Clarke further argued that,

Although the Ashantis continued to wear kente in the context of court ceremonial and other important occasions throughout the twentieth century, the present wider popularity of the cloth owes much to political developments in the early independence era. Ghana was the first of the African states to achieve independence in 1957, and its first President, Kwame Nkrumah, became a major figure on the world stage. He adopted the wearing of the kente and other locally woven cloths as a visual symbol of his commitment to cultural nationalism and Pan-African unity.⁶²

As part of tradition, kente weaving was adopted by most African countries, but it became popular in the Gold Coast around the 17th century and incorporated into the wealthy kingship tradition and an elaborated social system. Since then, this brilliant colored textile has been worn during special social and sacred ceremonies in the Ashanti and Ewe kingdom by chiefs and kings. These can be verified from pictures taken by Ross of the Ejisuhene Nana Diko Pim III wearing a rare Asasi Kente, the Queen mother from Fante state of Abeamase wearing Oyokoman Aweneasa Kente, and His Excellency, Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings, former President of the Republic of Ghana, wearing a Kente known as Fathia Fata Nkrumah at a durbar honoring the Silver Jubilee of Otumfuo Opoku Ware II, Asantehene.⁶³ The Kente has also become a precious traditional gift for prominent state officials, the wealthy and influential personalities.

He stated that,

Among the Akans of West Africa, only royalties were allowed to wear a fabric known as Kente cloth. The earliest surviving examples of the Kente cloth date from the 16th century; they consist of woven strips of blue-and white silk sewn together. This cloth signified the wearer's status and through its patterns might

⁶²Duncan Clarke, *The Art of African Textile* (California: Thunder Bay Press, 2002) 71.

⁶³Doran H. Ross, *Wrapped in Pride: Ghanaian Kente and African American Identity* (Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History and the Newark Museum, 1998) 19.

also allude to a proverb or historic event. Today, a more brightly colored version of Kente cloth is popular among all social classes.

According to Mazuri, when Ghana became independent in 1957, its per capita income was about the same as that of South Korea. Forty years later, Ghana has been left far behind economically. Werlin also pointed that while in 1957, Ghana had a per capita income of \$490 and South Korea \$491, by the early nineties, Ghana's income was only \$400 while South Korea's had shot up to \$6000. He went on to analyze this issue by pointing out that Ghanaians speak better English than South Koreans, and are more Christianized than South Koreans. Ghana has universities that are more Western and Eurocentric than South Korean universities. Ghana has had a president named Kwame Nkrumah who wrote more than ten books, an anthropologist Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia, and a medical doctor Dr. Hilla Limann. With all these élites and still more to mention one needs to take time to access Ghana's handicap.

Pricing Policy of Arts and Artifacts of Ghana

Ghana has become one of the most popular tourist centers, and would seem that tourism is perceived to be a major economic growth enabler. In Ghana, policy makers have made several suggestions on how best Ghana can use its international competitiveness and economic gains as a catalyst to improve Development. One of the most socio-economic activities and fastest growing sector is tourism. It has also become the third foreign exchange earner for Ghana beside cocoa and gold. Sixteen percent of annual total foreign exchange is through tourism. "From 1992 to 2002 tourists arrivals in Ghana increased from 213,315 to 482,643 with a corresponding increase in receipts of 166 million US dollars to 519.57 million US dollars in 2002."⁶⁴ With figures such as these Ghana should be able to secure its global market in its arts and crafts and also

⁶⁴ www.ghanatourism.gov.gh

its artifacts. Most tourists come to Ghana to consume these items as souvenir but do not believe in paying what these time-consuming, priceless handmade artifacts are worth.

An advertisement in Figure 4 shows how the kente has become a global commodity, but yet, there are no pricing policies in place. A desperate artist who wants to sell his pieces including the hand woven textile is convinced that \$2 or \$3 is worth more than a day without a sale. This therefore leaves him with time and effort wasted. Ghana's rich resources have to be consumed with respect and valued price tags. Ninety nine percent of designs and/or goods made in the west are technologically produced with less manpower, but yet with none affordable price tags and marketed with dignity and respect. On the other hand, Ghanaian goods such as caving, woven textiles, and other artifacts are handmade, durable and exotic products but has no valuable pricing policy. It seems that Ghanaians are so desperate that they offer these products to tourists for practically nothing. Ghana needs to strengthen its pricing policy. Statistics show that less than 1% of Ghanaians seldom secure visas to Europe or United States. In spite of the restrictions imposed on them, Ghana gives visas to individuals from industrialized countries to go Ghana regularly. Visas are secured in less than a week for travels to Ghana. Ghana has become the number one tourists' attraction and a research laboratory for the industrialized countries. Some tourists are being en-throne as queen mothers and chiefs just because of their economic capabilities. A Street has been named after President Bush when he visited Ghana few months ago. Will it be possible for President Kuffor to receive the same honor in America? Tourists are given preference over Ghanaian citizens when it comes to acquiring property in their home land. The ruling leaders have become panhandlers spending the poor tax payer's money traveling back and forth to the Western countries for loans. Poverty is not how much you have in your pocket or in your bank account. Poverty is how much one has given up on self and allows anyone and

everyone into his territory to be abused and misused. Ghanaians believe Ghana has what it takes to eradicate poverty. It seems China has his own agenda for Ghana and Africa as a whole; therefore, there is a justification as to why “China in Africa.”

Recommendations

The recommendations put forward here are only tentative, and may be open to revision in the future. The master weavers are mainly men; however, the expansion of the industry may be easily achieved if women are given the opportunity to participate in designing and weaving of the kente cloth. Unless the women in large numbers are recruited for this trade, it will be hard to predict how much contribution they can offer. The Ghanaian government should be able to allocate funds and get involve by establishing a micro-credit banking where the weavers can be given small loans to start or expand their existing businesses. The kente is an intrinsic important resource that if Ghana relaxes, foreign investors may take over. Individualism may collapse or weaken this industry; therefore, the government should look into this trade as a cooperative industry or communal production to be able to regulate or control the price tags.

Finally, Historical Black Colleges and Universities should at least include Africa history in their curriculum. There are students on college campuses who have never heard of Kwame Nkrumah, an icon in the 20th Century African political history.

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