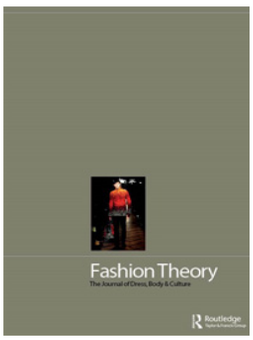

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Fashion Theory

The Journal of Dress, Body and Culture

ISSN: (Print) (Online) Journal homepage: https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rfft20

Kwame Nkrumah's Suits: Sartorial Politics in Ghana at Independence

Abena Dove Osseo-Asare

To cite this article: Abena Dove Osseo-Asare (2021): Kwame Nkrumah's Suits: Sartorial Politics in Ghana at Independence, Fashion Theory, DOI: 10.1080/1362704X.2021.1878591

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/1362704X.2021.1878591

Published online: 25 Feb 2021.

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Fashion Theory
DOI: 10.1080/1362704X.2021.1878591

Kwame Nkrumah's Suits: Sartorial Politics in Ghana at Independence

Abena Dove Osseo-Asare

Abena Dove Osseo-Asare is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Texas at Austin where she holds a courtesy appointment in the Department of Population Health at Dell Medical School. She received her PhD in the History of Science from Harvard and is the author of *Atomic Junction: Nuclear Power in Africa after Independence* (Cambridge, 2019) and *Bitter Roots: The Search for Healing Plants in Africa* (Chicago, 2014). Her interests

Abstract

This paper examines the wardrobe of the first prime minister and president of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, to show how he created a set of "suits" or "looks" to mirror his overlapping traditional, modern, pan-African, Ghanaian, and Socialist political identities. It expands research on dandy culture to indicate how an African sensibility, mixed with inspiration from Asia, provided a wider repertoire of looks for postcolonial dressers beyond strictly Western or traditional African options. The paper begins with an overview of early discourse in the Gold Coast Colony (now Ghana) on the pros and cons of wearing cloth wrappers to show Ghanaian elites' longstanding ambivalence toward wearing

include how people create and share ideas over time and place.
osseo@utexas.edu

unsewn garments. While Kwame Nkrumah became famous for intricate kente cloths draped like togas, he also invested in custom-made British suits. In addition, Kwame Nkrumah wore fluttering *batakari* tops of hand-woven cloth to rouse the country at independence. By the early 1960s, he transitioned to wearing dark long-sleeved suit jackets in a style that came to be known in Ghana as "Zhou Enlai." This research on Nkrumah's fashion legacy shows how a business "suit" can be more than just a Western-style garment. It also complicates discourses surrounding cultural appropriation and intellectual property rights in textiles.

KEYWORDS: Africa, attire, cloth, clothing, collars, cultural appropriation, Ghana, kente, Kwame Nkrumah, masculinity, politicians, sartorial politics, suits

When the Duchess of Kent visited Ghana in 1957 to commemorate the new country's independence from the United Kingdom, Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah danced with her at a celebratory ball, his right hand lightly placed against her back. The new leader wore a white lace short-sleeved shirt, over which he had arranged a richly woven golden-orange kente cloth. The hand-woven cloth draped over his left shoulder. He accessorized this elegant dress with flat sandals. Unbeknownst to the Duchess, Nkrumah had selected the *Obi nkye obi kwan mu si* kente design to denote forgiveness and tolerance of the "one who strays into your path," an artful jab at a former colonial oppressor (Figure 1). In 1960, when President Kwame Nkrumah arrived at the United Nations to deliver a speech entitled, "The Forces of Imperialism," he donned a similar white top—perhaps even the same one—and another kente cloth worn like a toga. The kente cloth swirled in folds to his feet where it mingled with an ornately carved wooden scepter that he clutched like a walking stick. This time, he wore a *sika futoro*, or "gold dust," design to suggest the wealth of Africa that had lured European traders for centuries. His entourage wore dark, sharply tailored suits (Ofori-Ansa 1993; Wondergren 2016).[1]

Ghana's first prime minister and then president Kwame Nkrumah used his dress code to express his political and personal identity as a modern African leader. In the early years of his political career, he wore business suits to rival any in Europe, and in fact imported bespoke suits from London to Accra. But on the night he declared independence, he and the other independence leaders who mounted a platform raising their fists excitedly in the air above the crowds, sported fluttering *batakari* tops. These handwoven cream-colored cotton smocks have wedge insets from the waist (refer to Figure 6). Originally woven and sewn in what is now Northern Ghana, Akan kings and soldiers further south appropriated these smocks for war dress (*batakarikɛse*), sewing on

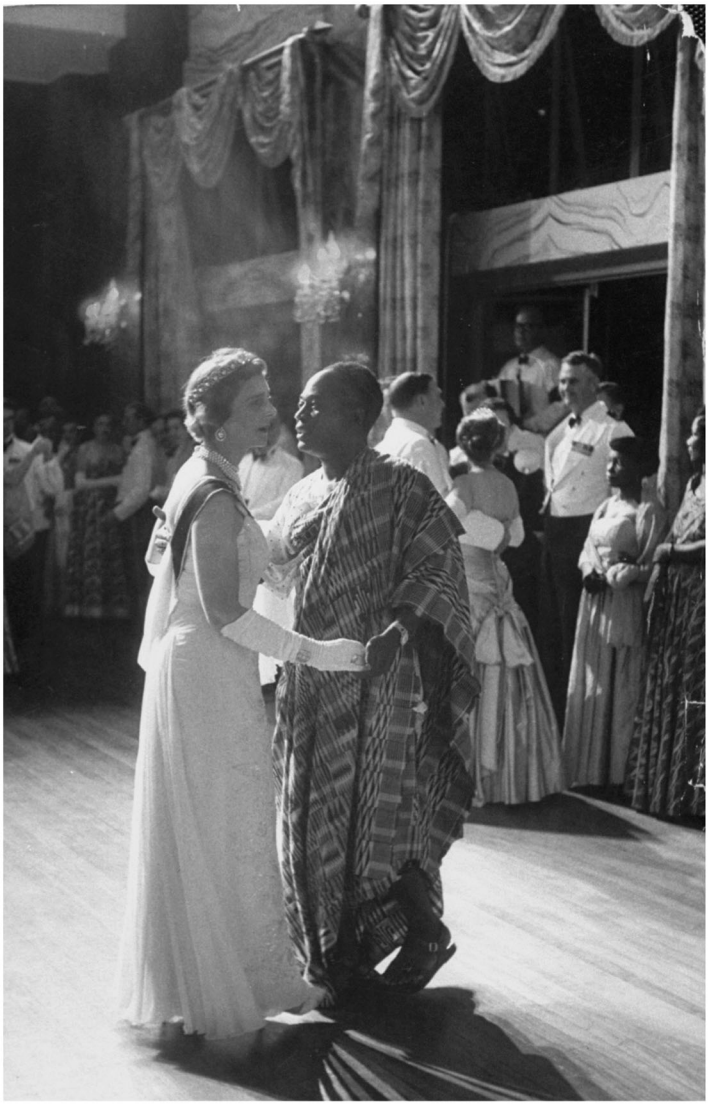

Figure 1
Kwame Nkrumah dances with Princess Marina, Duchess of Kent in Accra, 1957 (Source: LIFE Picture collection/Getty Images, photo by Mark Kauffman).

leather packets with Qur'anic charms for good luck (Ayesu, Howard, and Asubonteng 2015, 248; Fuller 2014, 61). Nkrumah's team claimed simple white and black *batakari* as they made their rallying cry to end colonization. On overseas trips, Nkrumah swapped between his famed kente cloths and bespoke business suits. In the early 1960s, as his political friendships moved East, he gradually transitioned to wearing Chinese-style suits.

Nkrumah took up regional dress including *batakari* from the Hausi, Dagomba and Mossi-speaking regions, and kente from the Asante region to indicate national unity. His interest in supporting weavers was in some ways similar to the Mahatma Gandhi's nationalist promotion of hand-woven fabrics like khadi in India as an important indigenous trade. Weaving became so associated with the project of nation building in India that nationalists placed a spinning wheel on the Indian flag (Baruah 2000; Trivedi 2003). Khadi, a thick almost denim-like material that incorporates simple woven patterns, is a durable fabric of the masses. In contrast, kente—a fabric with more time-intensive complex weaving patterns—is historically associated with the wealthy or those with royal status. Through Nkrumah's popularization and investment in kente weaving collectives, kente emerged as a garment for most Ghanaians to wear on special occasions. Overtime, it gradually became acceptable to cut up the intricate patterns to make clothing, bags, and even shoes (Boateng 2011; "High demand for 'Fathia Fata Nkrumah' Kente" 2017).[2]

This article expands research on how men adopt and deploy business suits by exploring how Nkrumah created a larger repertoire of different "looks" or "suits" beyond formal Western business attire—from picturesque togas of handwoven kente fabric, to *batakari* tops, to Indian-style tunics and Chinese-style jackets (Gunn and Moloney 2010, 21). The concept of "looks" suggests archetypal garments that the wearer combines to create a personal esthetic. Even if the color, weight, or fabric change, the overall proportions for each of the separate looks are similar. Tim Gunn, the US fashion guru who popularized the concept of looks at the beginning of the twenty-first century suggested that everyone select four to six combination of garments to take up as a personal uniform, for instance sheath dresses, turtlenecks with slacks, or crisp button-downs with skirts (Gunn and Moloney 2010). In this sense, Gunn democratized the late-twentieth century idea of "runway looks" high-end fashion designers styled for models to wear. Researchers have adopted this concept of looks to interpret the history and politics of wardrobes as an assemblage of different uniforms. In his book *Chinese Looks: Fashion, Performance, Race*, Sean Metzger reflected on the making of different looks in China and the United States focusing on several archetypes of Chinese dress including the tuxedo, cheongsam or qipao and Mao suit (Metzger 2014). Similarly, I argue that Kwame Nkrumah drew from Ghanaian cultural referents to identify a number of archetypal looks to create his personal esthetic. This is in keeping with ongoing practices in Ghana in which office workers assume different looks for different days of the week in their private and personal life, including Western-style business attire for Mondays through Thursdays, with Fridays through Sundays highlighting made-in-Ghana esthetics for African-dress Fridays, funerals and weddings on Saturdays, and perhaps church services on Sundays (Spencer 2020).

Taking cues from a folder I found in the Ghanaian National archives labeled "Kwame Nkrumah's Watches, Suits, and Clothing Etc." that referred only to Western clothing purchased abroad, I have sought to recreate evidence for what might have been in files related to purchases of all his different looks including the batakari, kente, and Chinese-style suits, were they to exist. Further, I have sought to place these different looks in dialogue with one another to understand when and why Nkrumah selected each type of garment for specific occasions and events. Toward this end, I have closely examined several of his personal garments housed in the Museum of the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park in Accra, Ghana alongside a collection of photographic plates there in order to examine "the wardrobe as an archive" (Metzger 2014, 6). I consider this material evidence alongside the receipts and correspondence related to his business suit purchases preserved by his private secretary, the British woman Erica Powell, in files now held at the Ghana Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD). I examine all of this data alongside other written archival records on Ghanaian woven fabrics and imported cotton goods. Finally, I incorporate expert opinions from doyens of Ghana's fashion scene familiar with the history of textile and fashion trends in this West African nation. These include Cecil Morton, one of the sons of Nkrumah's Ghanaian tailor, Dan Morton (Morton 2019).

In what follows, I seek to broaden the concept of male business attire as exclusively Western in design and origins. The Western-style suit with jacket and trousers emerges for me as one—but only one of—several business "looks" during the twentieth century. Scholars have documented the global rise of the business suit from the 1950s, showing how as sociologist Gijsbert Oonk puts it, "in general the suit looks surprisingly similar in Europe, South Asia, the Americas and Africa" (Oonk 2011, 530). This research indicates that there are several commonalities between the rise of this archetypal western business suit elsewhere and the Gold Coast/Ghana experience (Chibnall 1985). The first is that a Western-style business suit has consistently been a costume of the prosperous, or the would-be prosperous. Steve Chibnall notes that the purchase of one's first suit was important to the fashioning of a personal narrative of prosperity and success in the 1940s in the United States, particularly among Blacks and other minority groups. He relates how Malcom X bought his first suit on credit, then sent photographs of himself back to relatives to suggest that he had attained a certain lifestyle by relocating to an urban center (Chibnall 1985, 60). Similarly, studio photographers from Accra to Dakar and Lagos rented props and garments, including business suits, to clients hoping to project the image of a thriving, modern lifestyle. Their collections of posed and informal portraits feature many young men in business suits (Keita 1997; Mussai 2016; Barnor 2015). Widely-acclaimed Malian studio photographer, Malick Sidibé famously captured a young man in a slick suit and leather

shoes bending to dance with a barefoot woman in short white frock in Bamako on Christmas Eve in 1963 (Sidibé 2008).

The second commonality is that a Western business suit links the wearer to spheres of influence through membership in networks of global trade and education. Oonk addresses the appropriation of the suit among South Asian businessmen in East Africa in the 1950s to 1980s. He suggests that an affection for British-style boarding schools may have influenced the merchant class's widespread adoption of the business suit. This taking on of British-like garments was somewhat ironic since it occurred simultaneously with an embrace of non-European dress alternatives in both the African countries where the South Asian businessmen resided and India where many of them traced their ancestry. The rise of the suit corresponds to the widespread use of English, a phenomenon that David Singh Grewal, in his analysis of network power, explains provided "access to a significant and growing network—perhaps the most important network in the history of humanity, and certainly the most farflung" (Grewal 2008, 75).[3]

The third commonality between the adoption of suits in Ghana and other places is that a suit can be read as either resistance to or support for African independent leadership, depending on the context. Nkrumah, as we shall see, began to spurn his beloved business suits in favor of other looks, including Asian-style jackets as his relations with Western powers waned and his coffers dried up. He also strategically took up looks made of handwoven African fabrics to complicate Western hegemony through politics and dress. That being said, his countrymen would continue to wear business suits for decades to come, as a way to gain access to financial success and signal prosperity.

While an African president or dictator might reject Western business suits, for those outside of the political elite, reclaiming the suit could be a way to show contempt. For instance, in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of Congo), the autocratic regime under Mobutu Sese Seko endorsed Africanization, or the wearing of African garb, including caps and other accessories made from animal skins. Mobutu also mandated a simple jacket sewn like a heavier men's dress shirt called the *abacost* (anti-suit, or literally "*à bas le costume*/against the Western suit") worn without a tie (White 2008, 71). In response, people enduring economic hardship, censorship, and political oppression turned to businesses suits as a form of protest. Young Congolese men traveled to Milan and Paris to purchase the latest designer suits straight off the runway, returning with packed suitcase to cities like Kinshasa where they sold them and made enough for their next run to Europe (MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga 2000). Their Congolese customers, the sapeurs, members of the *Société des Ambianceurs et Personnes Élégantes* held dance parties and promoted soukous music with a vibrant, African swing. The sapeurs favored a bald head or graying hair, a walking stick, bit of a belly, and perhaps a cigar to complete the dandy look of a nicely aging prosperous

gentleman (Makouezi 2013; Tamagni, Smith, and Goodwin 2009; Hecht and Simone 1994).[4] Similarly, Kurds struggling to survive in Iraq have turned to dress cults such as the "Mr. Erbil Gentleman's House," whose members videotape and photograph themselves wearing sleek new suits to suggest the revival of a strong civil society with commercial aspirations ("Iraqi Kurdish fashionistas make a splash" 2017; MacDiarmid 2017).[5] They have also revitalized Kurdish looks based on handwoven textiles to shape an iconography for the modern dandy.

This paper argues that Western business suits in African contexts cannot be fully understood without reference to the larger repertoire of looks with which people interchange them. It builds on the work of scholars of African dress like Leslie Rabine who has argued that in the case of Senegal's first president Leopold Senghor, who wore both French suits and Senegalese boubous, African leaders "remain anchored in a secure identity and move flexibly into any cultural guise" (Rabine 2013, 176). Overall, Kwame Nkrumah popularized at least six different looks for men, including a Western suit, a safari suit, a "Zhou Enlai" (or Chou En-lai) jacket, the *batakari* top, kente cloth, and a light-weight cotton shirt with "Nehru collar." These looks set new standards for what men could wear in formal settings after independence and brought elements of traditional dress for African royalty into the arena of national politicians. Worn interchangeably, the looks were all fully modern; the handwoven ones did not necessarily reflect a more "traditional" or indigenous worldview.

More recently, the fashion set in Ghana has sought to combine elements from these different "suits" into single looks. For instance, the Ghanaian musician Okyeame Kwame, winner of the "Fashion Slayer" and "Most stylish Artiste" awards, wore printed kente-style cloth with a partial white suit to a recent fashion event (Figure 2). One online commentator, "Fashionable," cognizant of the power of Ghanaian fashion since the days of Nkrumah noted, "I love this creativity. Pls anytime you go out there to the u.s [sic] or Europe just showcase this and you'll be surprised it will trend. This is different. Next time just have a nice gold chain on" ("Ghana's Black Panther? Okyeame Kwame appears at Glitz Style Awards in unique style" 2018). Another commentator was more critical, "They want to create something to become an international recognition [sic] but it doesn't add up" ("Ghana's Black Panther? Okyeame Kwame appears at Glitz Style Awards in unique style" 2018). These concerns about the global and national acceptance of different looks forged in Ghanaian identity politics are precisely what I address here.

"On the wings of the elegant": theories of modernity and dress in Ghana

Clothing is a rich subject in Ghanaian history, as its history speaks to ethnic tensions and political alliances between those who wore wrapped

Figure 2
Musician Okyeame Kwame arrives at Glitz Style Awards September 2018 (Source: Glitz Africa).

fabric, sewn garments, animal skins, beads, or even plants.[6] Cloth, along with alcohol, gunpowder, weapons, and beads shaped local economies as people used them in bartering and other economic transactions for centuries through overland, riverine, and ocean networks of commerce (Goody and Goody 1996; Allman 2004).[7] Fabric, particularly cotton cloth woven in South Asia and East Asian silks, was the original currency for the transatlantic slave trade. People were literally exchanged for the coveted material (Kobayashi 2019, 132). By the late nineteenth century, cotton fabric, mass-produced in Europe and printed with designs sourced in African and Asian milieus, began to supplant local textile production on the Gold Coast (what is now Ghana). Women entrepreneurs in particular built up vast amounts of wealth and social capital through selling cloth (Gott 2009; Petersen, Sfinx Film, and National Film Board of 1992; Junger et al. 2002). Merchants imported ready-to-wear garments to port cities. Tailoring houses including those associated with Accra's Afro-Brazilian "Tabon" community, renowned for their sewing skills found eager clients from the late nineteenth century throughout the twentieth (Quayson 2014; Morton 2019). By independence in 1957, Ghanaians could draw on a variety of referents in deciding what to wear, including Christian and colonial guidelines on morality as well as the royal traditions of Asante kings (Leach 2008; Comaroff and Comaroff 1997).

Fabrics and garments imported by Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English merchants from Asia and Europe formed the basis for transactions in conquest. On the Gold Coast, a geography of textiles and garments related to the proximity to cotton growing regions and camel trade routes (in the North) and imported fabric and clothing on ships (in the coastal South). At the time the British sought to conquer the Gold Coast in the late nineteenth century, imported clothing made from machine-woven fabric was a novelty and luxury in areas removed from the coast. A chief in the Northern territories received "two silk dresses," as thanks from the British delegation that wished to set up a threatening cannon in his own square. Weavers unraveled such silk garments to repurpose the threads in elaborately patterned handwoven cloths (Spring and Hudson 2002).

These weavers used imported silk garments as merely fodder for their own creative efforts. Elaborate weaving communities (dyers formed separate organizations) proliferated in cotton-growing areas of West Africa, with weavers incorporating imported threads into designs (Byfield 2002). Imported silk fibers became another strand of local dyeing and weaving cultures. But African fabric makers increasingly found themselves in competition with European manufacturers. Some of these even sent scouts to scope out new designs and color trends on the ground in West Africa, after which they promptly registered the "new" designs back in Europe. Researchers like Christopher Steiner have shown people living in West Africa did not cultivate static dress cultures, but rather were highly attuned to local fashion and textile trends. Market research data preserved in museums and archives in Europe show the lengths to which cloth manufacturers went to be certain that African customers would purchase their mass-produced designs from the late nineteenth century. These foreign designers freely stole and appropriated African designs, and in turn African customers freely combined handmade and imported fabrics into their wardrobes (Steiner 1985).

In the interior forest areas, Asante subjects wrapped in woven fabrics came to see the relative nakedness of some of their Northern neighbors as less desirable. As the historian Jean Allman has documented, a longer legacy of antipathy to those lacking woven fabrics, both locally produced and imported, bred a regional chauvinism among Asante families. Later, Nationalists wove these attitudes together with Christian propriety to insist that those in the the former Northern Territories of the Gold Coast Colony should be provided with clothing (Allman 2004). Colonial pass laws and stringent policies to prevent the circulation of books and even clothing may have played an undue effect on fostering some of these regional tensions. The Ghanaian historian Steven Addae documented how colonial officials in the northern town of Tamale hoped to stave off nationalism by suppressing clothing. The colonial officials felt that there was a correlation between access to books and

clothing, more widely available in the coastal South, and agitation for independence (Addae 1996).

During the British colonial period, merchants continued to import yards of manufactured cotton fabric as well as stockings, lace, and apparel through coastal ports (see Figure 3). Fabric emerged as an important sign of wealth for families not only in the Gold Coast, but also across West Africa. As anthropologist Hudita Nura Mustafa described for Senegal, "[c]loth, as a gift embodying the giver's spirit, was meant to bind social ties" (Mustafa 1998). Women wrapped new babies in European machine-woven fabric and accepted bundles of cloth as dowry. With the advent of sewing machines (often added to the dowry), more and more people could quickly make up sewn garments. Women wrapped a two-yard length piece of cloth on the torso or sewed it to make a *kaba* (top), pairing it with a two-yard sarong or sewn skirt (slit) (Gott 2009). Men wrapped six yards as a toga, or by the late nineteenth century opted for suits or shirts and slacks. The penchant of Ghanaians, especially at the coast, for tailored garments can be seen in early photographs. By the 1920s men commonly wore stylish suits, especially if they were Christian converts with some formal schooling, while those with less social status might labor in cloth wrappers worn below the waist (see Figure 4). The colonial government proposed strict pricing on imported clothing from which they drew revenue, including tailored shirts which by 1946 ranged in price from 23 to 11 shillings given a grade of brands from A to E (Gold Coast Gazette 1946).

Indeed, in the writings of literate Africans along the coast during British colonial rule, we can trace a struggle to carve out both

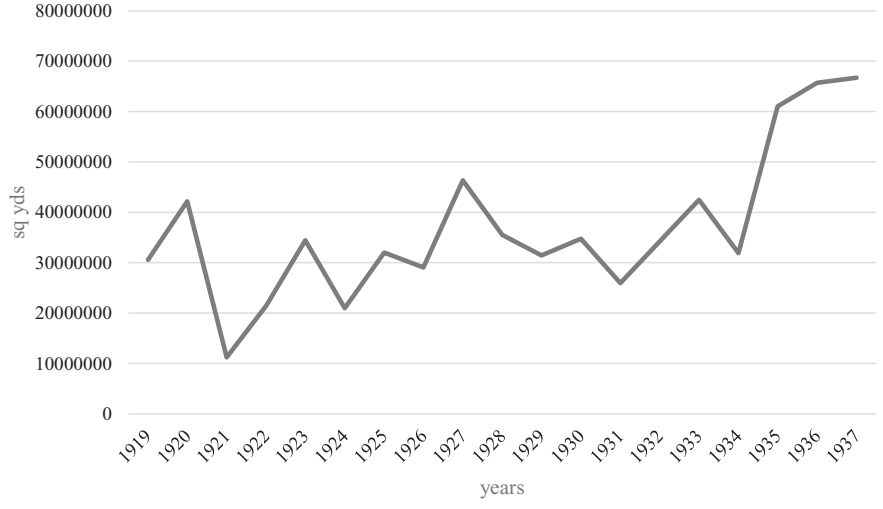

Figure 3
Interwar imports of manufactured cotton piece goods into gold coast colony, 1919–1937, by square yards (Source: Gold Coast Blue Books, data compiled by author).

Figure 4
Men in suits listen to Basel missionary while man in cloth holds state umbrella, Akropong, Gold Coast 1928 (Photo by Wilhelm Ananda Stamm, Source: Basel Mission Pictures Archives, D-3-.64.084. Original caption: "Rev. Kurtz reading the address from Basel. A servant of the King is holding a state umbrella over him.").

nationalism and a dress for modern Africans. Proto-nationalist groups like the Aborigines Rights Protection Society in seaside towns like Sekondi and Cape Coast used their literacy and European esthetics to propose the end of British colonial rule of the Gold Coast Colony prior to the later nationalist movements that included Nkrumah. As early as 1915, the philosopher, lawyer and prolific writer Kobina Sekyi, a member of this Society, wrote in Fante and English to interrogate some of the choices at hand for those hoping to be modern Africans, including dress. In his important play, *The Blinkards*, first performed at the Sekondi Cosmopolitan Club in 1915, Sekyi created an Anglophile character named Mr. Borɔfo (Newell 2002, 75). This well to do, highly educated man feels equally constrained in "boots and thick stockings" and cloth togas or "native dress." He is able to speak better English than Fanti, and yet laments the trip his wife took to England where she adopted new tastes. In the play, Mr. Borɔfo paces while musing "It serves us jolly well right for allowing ourselves to be dazzled by all this flimsy foreign frippery. The worst of it is that some of us got into these foreign ways through no fault of our own. We were born into a world of imitators, worse luck … and blind imitators at that … They see a thing done in England, or by somebody white; then they say we must do the

same thing in Africa. It is that confounded *must* that annoys me. Why *must*? Dash it all!" (Sekyi 1997, 7–9).

These early musings point to the ongoing dilemma of Gold Coast/Ghanaian men on what to wear for day-to-day activities—stiff clothing, or lighter, more flexible unsewn garments. In particular, Mr. Borɔfo describes being beaten at school for removing his boots, and yet explains "I must confess to my shame, that I feel hampered when I put on the native dress, because I do not know how to wear it properly; it is always slipping from my shoulder. That is why I wear pajamas in the house: they are the freest clothing my wife will permit" (Sekyi 1997, 9). In the character of Mr. Borɔfo we see a yearning for a third way in the shape of pajamas that is perhaps not unlike Nkrumah's turn to Asian suits. It is unclear if "pajamas" here refers to a silk set with button down shirt and loose trousers, or a cotton tunic with baggy pants, more in keeping with Sahelian and Saharan fashion of the time. As Janet Hess has argued in her discussion of Nkrumah and Congolese nationalist Patrice Lumumba's masculinity and comportment, the Gold Coast colonial subjects sought to chart a path to independence in the face of strict social and physical racial segregation and limited British expectations of Africans (Hess 2012). Dress emerged as a contested terrain on which protonationalists and nationalists fashioned their bodies.

The late Ghanaian philosopher Kwame Gyekye argued that the new national cultures in African countries that emerged in the 1950s grew out of a careful selection of the more "elegant features" of African societies. Gyekye noted that once nationalists selected the best cultural practices of the nation, they carefully engaged in an artful process of "refinement and pruning," to cultivate a better version for all to enjoy. In his vision, modernity rose up "on the wings of the elegant" (Gyekye 1997, 281). This interpretation of African political culture grew out of Gyekye's extensive grappling with the relationships between African cultural values, tradition, and modernity, and marked a hybridized interpretation of the referents for modern African life. Nkrumah's "sartorial politics," or politics of dress, fit within this logic of elegant selection among the Ghanaian elite (Mustafa 1998; Watson 2004; Kriger 2010).[8] As we shall see, Nkrumah and his supporters carefully selected the textiles and colors in his various "suits" to create a tasteful, sharp image for the leader that incorporated different cultural building blocks. While Gyekye suggests that the elegant elements of past traditions came primarily from African cultural trends, here I show how Nkrumah's esthetic took up pieces from spaces across the globe.

"Your status and taste": Nkrumah's suits from London to Accra

Nkrumah's early suits reflected his own ambitions and those of his admirers. On one occasion, "a loyal servant" who heard him speak at

the Sekondi Optimism Club in 1948 sent a photograph of a Hector Powe design that might befit "my hero" (RG 17/1/66).[9] This admirer, perhaps himself a tailor, personally took Nkrumah's measurements on one occasion and later ordered a Powe suit as a present for the leader, "[i]n selecting the garments every consideration was given to your status and taste, and I trust that you will derive maximum satisfaction from them" (RG 17/1/66).[10] This introduction from an admirer may have solidified the relationship with Powe. From 1959, Nkrumah regularly received custom suits, including dinner jackets and vests from the tailor on Regent street in London, a company who designed "for men who know good clothes" (RG 17/1/66).[11]

For Nkrumah to receive a single custom suit involved a cast of characters, from those who selected the fabrics and designs on his behalf, to those who sewed and transported the final product to him. Before Ghana was fully independent from England, K.A. Gbedemah hand-carried a British suit made for Nkrumah in his luggage in December 1956. The suit, custom made for Nkrumah was sewn by Cecil Gee on Charing Cross Road in London. The tailors and designers behind Nkrumah's early suits made sure to adjust them in some ways to a tropical climate. For the Cecil Gee suit, K.B. Ayensu, then clerk of the Ghana National Assembly had personally selected the fabrics in "good quality light weight tropical suitings" (RG 17/1/66).[12] At a cost of £21, this was most likely a heavy investment for Nkrumah before he became Prime Minister and then President of the independent Ghana, but one that would be but a pittance compared to his later purchases.

After independence, Nkrumah's office corresponded with Seil, Putt & Rusby Inc., an analytical chemist research and consulting company, about light colored silk suiting that might be less stuffy for Ghana. For a cost of around $100, he was able to obtain 16½ yards of silk dupioni in shades of beige and "pearl" (RG 17/1/66).[13] Later, L. C. Cartwright of Foster D. Snell, Inc., a group of consulting chemists and engineers in New York City, dispatched a shipment of silk suiting sufficient for two costumes in gray and natural through Pan American Airlines (RG 17/1/66).[14] Merchants at Kingsway department stores in Accra were asked to send several white linen and woolen jackets over to the Prime Minister's office even as Nkrumah sought lighter options for his new role. By August, his office had sent additional requests to Kingsway for two "only linen tuxedos" as well as "Black coat/striped trousers," "2 piece dinner suits," and a pair of "3 piece S. B. Suits" as well as assorted socks, shoes, "stiff collars" and various silk ties, with the cost amounting to £281 (RG 17/1/66).[15]

The Ghanaian embassy staff in London were tasked with procuring suits and suiting fabric on behalf of the Prime Minister (RG 17/1/66).[16] Even with all of these individuals working on getting him the necessary garments for his job, there were problems, most notably around importing, exporting, and obtaining the perfect fit. It is difficult to do proper

fittings when the tailor and customer reside on different continents. After "one rushed fitting" during a visit to London at E. C. Squires, a Civil, Military and ladies' tailor on Sackville Street, Kwame Nkrumah was disappointed to find that a number of suits made for him, including a white dinner jacket and several mohair suits in blue gray, dark gray, and midnight, did not fit properly upon arrival in Accra. E. C. Squires requested a detailed letter with all information on necessary adjustments, or alternatively a visit from the Prime Minister himself since "it is usual with a new client to have three" measurement sessions instead of the single one with Nkrumah (RG 17/1/66).[17]

How did Nkrumah hit on different manufactures? Nkrumah learned of new designers not only through supporters who wrote to his office, but also through his own reading. In some cases, British manufacturers advertised in Ghanaian newspapers. Even though Nkrumah sponsored government propaganda newspapers like *The Evening News*, he seems to have at least glanced at independent newspapers on occasion (see Figure 5). In 1959, after leafing through the *Daily Graphic*, he requested that a secretary ask the Manager at London-based D. Senker & Sons Ltd. to send an expedited order of "four pairs of shoes in style 3821, as advertised recently in the *Daily Graphic* … in black made of soft glazed kid" (RG 17/1/66).[18] Honored that the Prime Minister of Ghana had taken their advert to heart and apparently wished to " … lead with the *Italian Look*" in their "Denson Personality Shoes," the company asked Nkrumah's personal secretary to draw outlines around his feet so that they could be made to fit him perfectly. Someone must have had the pleasure of doing the tracings, as his personal secretary Erica Powell wrote, "The Prime Minister takes size 9, but to ensure a good fit, I have attached hereto a sketch of his two feet" (RG 17/1/66).[19] In a follow-up letter, the director S. Senker apologized for the delay on the shoe order, but explained that the company would prefer to also have "the girth measurements of his foot" to enhance the overall fit of the finished product (RG 17/1/66).[20] Not wanting to risk making eight shoes that did not fit, Senker sent a test pair before proceeding with the rest of the order. The pair fit, and Nkrumah requested that the rest of the shoes be manufactured and sent to Accra (RG 17/1/66).[21] Given the long delay, it seems plausible that the shoes were not actually made in either Italy or England, and that further correspondence might lie between Senker and his manufacturer, perhaps in India.

Nkrumah accessorized his Western-style outfits with suspenders, ties, and fine watches. In 1961, he received a white-gold ROLEX watch, inlaid with jewels and forty-four diamonds, through the UTC department stores in Accra at a significant cost of £683. Unfortunately, the watch was not to his liking, and E. K. Okoh had it sent back to Switzerland through UTC's agent for "certain alterations" (RG 17/1/66).[22] Apparently, Nkrumah requested that it be inscribed with the note "First President of Ghana." He also asked them to exchange the clasp

Figure 5
Suits and shoes for Nkrumah (Source: Photos and Clippings in Private Secretary Erica Powell's file in PRAAD RG 17/1/66 Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc., 1946–65).

for a different design and adjust the bracelet to his wrist size. While Rolex could comply with some of the requests, they were unable to redesign the clasp, "as the Rolex clasp with crown has been patented, we are not allowed to have any alterations made." Offering to refund the cost of the watch and cancel the order, they asked the President "to consider the complications involved in the manufacturing and to keep in

mind the traditional high standard of Rolex and the good name we enjoy the world over" (RG 17/1/66).[23] The following year, two further Swiss watches arrived for Nkrumah, also of 18 K gold, this time by Audemars Piguet. Again, he asked for adjustments to be made, including engraving with "Dr. Kwame Nkrumah." It was necessary to arrange for them to be "exported and re-imported to Ghana" (RG 17/1/66).[24] In 1963, he inspected four watches shipped in from Switzerland and requested that at least three "be engraved with the words 'KWAME NKRUMAH."' Presumably, the fourth in the lot, an 18 K white gold ladies watch with diamonds was meant for someone else. For Nkrumah, Swiss timepieces were the gold standard; he wore them, provided them as gifts, and outfitted his home and office with Swiss table and wall clocks, all of which he sent back to the mother country for repairs. Some were gifts, perhaps, but he also may have purchased some himself.

By March of 1962, the now president-for-life Kwame Nkrumah may have been running up against some cash flow problems, which impacted his purchasing of suits from his now-favorite vendor, Hector Powe. After a curt reminder arrived for an outstanding balance on his account, someone jotted a note directly to Erica Powell, "Pay him off that we may rest in peace. All these damn clothes have been [fritted?] away" (RG 17/1/66).[25]

By then, Nkrumah was clearly interested in finding alternatives, looking for clothing more suited to the tropical climate in Accra as well as easier to clean. His business suits would have required dry-cleaning and careful care. Indeed, the Dan Morton tailoring house where he obtained some of his Ghana-made suits established one of the first dry-cleaning services in Accra. Its founder began his professional career working in the laundry of the American Airlines Company offices in Ghana before gaining government sponsorship to pursue a tailoring course in Britain (Morton 2019). The historian Ama Biney has uncovered that Nkrumah's writings as early as 1950 express a desire to find more suitable garments for Ghanaians "that will not require a maximum sweat and labor in washing and ironing" (Biney 2011, 113). His forays into hand-woven garments and then Chinese-style suits, speak to this urge not only for less costly, locally-produced garments, but also for ones that did not require imported solvents to clean.

"An over-exuberant spirit of nationalism": suit alternatives from Ghana-made cloth

Northern smocks in presidential fashion

On the night that he announced Ghana's independence, Kwame Nkrumah did not wear a Western business suit. Flanked by other members of "The Big Six," including Emmanuel Obetsbi-Lamptey, Ebenezer Ako-Adjei, Edward Akufo-Addo, and William Ofori Atta, Nkrumah

and his team wore handwoven smocks in the *batakari* style used for battle dress among the Akan. These smocks, presumably woven in the North, suggested the possibility for a new national unity between southern, western, and eastern and northern Ghana. Erica Powell, his private secretary recalled the evening:

> We came to the old polo ground across the way where, with several of his ministers, he was standing on a small wooden platform draped with the new Ghana colours. They were all wearing fugus, the dress of the Northern Region of Ghana, and on their heads they wore their 'prison graduate' caps—white, Nehru-type, stamped with the initials 'PG'—a reminder of what they had suffered to get where they were that day. (Powell 1984, 108)

The gray-blue and white striped smock, with chunky stitching that Nkrumah was said to have worn on that important night is now housed inside a glass case at a small museum adjacent to the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park in Accra (Figure 6). It seems a bit darker than the one in photographs, so perhaps it was one of several that Nkrumah had in his personal wardrobe.

According to Osuanyi Quaicoo Essel and Emmanual R.K. Amissah of the Department of Art Education at the University of Education in Winneba, who are scholars of smocks in Ghana, Ghanaians use several names to refer to this garment. In addition to the English "smock," these include *batakari* (Hausa for "outer garment"), *fugu* ("cloth" in Mossi), and the less common *bingmbaa* (Dagomba for smock) (Essel and Amissah

Figure 6
(Left) Kwame Nkrumah's Smock (photo by author, Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park). (Right) Kwame Nkrumah declares Independence, March 1957 (L-R) Casely Hayford, Komla Agbeli Gbedemah, Kwame Nkrumah, Kojo Botsio, and Krobo Edusei (Source: Getty Images/The LIFE Picture Collection, photo by Mark Kauffman).

2015, 33). They note that weavers make smocks from thick cotton threads, woven in wide strips on wooden looms. The strips are then lapped together with cotton threads to form a larger cloth from which garments can be constructed through artful removal of panels and simple joining. The names of the smocks trace their historical lineages to families living in the northern parts of the modern-day country of Ghana, including the Hausa, Mossi, and Dagomba-speakers. In wearing the smock, Nkrumah was not only signaling national unity and military victory, but also appropriating a cultural garment that he would not necessarily have grown up wearing as child in a Nzima-speaking home. Nkrumah's choice of clothing on this of all nights speaks to the messiness of cultural appropriation of fashion and design in post-colonial Ghana, from the smock, to adinkra symbols, to kente (discussed in the next section) (Boateng 2006, 2008; Leissle 2012).

From independence night on, the cultural ownership of the *batakari* or *fubu* smock has faced contestation, particularly among elites in the south of the country who made claim to it as a national garment. Two years into Nkrumah's reign as leader of independent Ghana, the prominent writer and activist Efua Sutherland went so far as to recommend to the Ministry of Education that all school children, or at the minimum, young boys, should wear hand-woven smocks over shorts as a national school uniform. The Ministry of Education rejected this suggestion, with some even mocking it as an over-zealous form of nationalism. One official advised the Minister for Education, "I feel that school children should be spared this regimentation arising from an over-exuberant spirit of nationalism. Scottish children, to give one example among many, do not go to school in Highland Kilts!" (PRAAD RG 7/1/89)[26] Overall, officials at the Ministry of Education appreciated Sutherland's efforts, which were primarily designed to encourage the weaving industry in the north. But aside from the nationalist tone smocks might set, there were economic considerations. The handmade smocks would be costlier to produce in bulk than uniforms of machine-made khaki. And, from the perspective of education policy makers, khaki shirts suggested a more formal and proper demeanor than the folksy smock.

It is fascinating to consider what might have happened to handweaving and appreciation for the smock in Ghana if Efua Sutherland's plan to make them the uniform for schoolchildren during the Nkrumah era had found support. The National Museum in Ghana now houses several independence-era statues, one of which depicts Nkrumah in a smock. The statue was defaced after the 1966 coup d'état (see Figure 7), an effort that reflects a desire to perhaps dethrone both Nkrumah and the smock (Sanders 1966).

Nonetheless, over the years, the smock has reemerged as a national dress. Smocks are worn now throughout Ghana for festive and everyday wear, as well as political mobilization. Ghana's longest-serving leader, Jerry Rawlings (1979, 1981–2001), a flight lieutenant in the Ghanaian Airforce, took up the smock as a de facto political uniform as he recast

Figure 7
Decapitated Kwame Nkrumah statue with a *batakari* after the 1966 coup (Source: Getty Images, photo by Express/ Archive Photos).

himself from a military leader into a civilian one. During the 1990s, Rawlings was often seen at rallies and public events wearing a striped smock over a long-sleeve, light-colored button-up dress shirt in an effort to channel the success and hope of the early Nkrumah era. He commissioned smocks in the colors of green, white, and red for his new National Democratic Congress party. His preferred look has shifted into pop culture. While children occasionally wear smocks, they are more typically seen on adult men and from time to time women who wear a longer dress version without insets as well as the shorter tops. In 2015, former President John Mahama, who shared Rawlings' political party, established smock days on the first Fridays of the month to encourage Ghanaians to wear hand-woven garments (Mohammed 2018).

Smocks have become so closely associated with Ghanaian national identity in West Africa that smocks commonly feature in parodies of people from Ghana. For instance, the video for the 2018 hit song "Come and See My Moda" (Come and See my Mother) by Ghanaian singer MzVee, made in collaboration with Nigerian singer Yemi Alade, featured actors playing both Nigerian and Ghanaian love interests trying to woo the female singers. "Make it official, if you really mean am/ Come and follow me all the way to Ghana," sings MzVee from a Nigerian streetscape as Yemi Alade counters, "Come and follow me all the way to Nigeria" outside a rural scene in Ghana. While the Ghanaian actor Chris Attoh channels a sleek Nigerian entrepreneur as he sits in a fancy car and wears a freshly pressed dress shirt, the would-be Ghanaian lover, played by comedian "Akrobeto" Akwasi Boadi, is a

Figure 8
Still from video for MzVee ft Yemi Alade, "Come and See my Moda" (Source: Lynx Ghana Ltd).

slight man in a *fubu/batakari* living in a modest tin-roofed home (see Figure 8) ("MzVee ft Yemi Alade – Come and See My Moda (Official Video)" 2018).

Ghanaians remain fascinated by and yet relatively ignorant about protocol around smocks. When president Nana Akufo-Addo went to Northern Ghana to attend the enskinment (crowning) of a new king for the Dagomba in early 2019, he wore a light-yellow smock with matching baggy trousers and light brown suede boots that reached to his knees. The Dagomba area had been experiencing an ongoing power struggle, and Akufo-Addo along with regional leaders, and everyday Ghanaians were grateful that conflict had subsided. In this instance of a president donning *bingmbaa*, Akufo-Addo was taking up a very specific, regional dress code to show his humility in the face of regional authority, while the pale-yellow color signaled the need for continued peace. His outfit was the subject of much discussion, but the message of peace and humility seems to have been lost on most Ghanaians. They lamented the very unusual color for a president and the knee-high leather boots with which he accessorized the outfit. Cartoons and social media suggested that the outfit, combined with Akufo-Addo's short stature gave an impression of *Sesame Street*'s Big Bird (Mubarik 2019).

Kente: the Ghanaian Toga

Kente cloth, in contrast to northern smocks, has reached global acceptance, in part through its promotion by first president Kwame Nkrumah. Nkrumah proudly wore kente cloth at state functions, staging a completely new costume for Africa's first Black president. Ironically, it was the Ghanaian toga-like garment, the kente cloth, that garnered him fans overseas. In March 1961, Nkrumah made his first trip to the United

States as President. He sported several different looks. For his address at the United Nations, he slung an elaborately woven kente cloth over a white, short-sleeved shirt. In meetings with American President John F. Kennedy at the White House, he wore a bespoke business suit.

A draped kente is part of a larger subgroup of dress known in Akan languages in Ghana as *ntama*, or literally cloth. The new iconic statue of Nkrumah outside his mausoleum in Accra shows a figure draped in *ntama*. There are no markings on the statue to indicate whether it is supposed to be machine-woven cotton fabric imported from factories in Holland, or hand-woven kente fabric (see Figure 9). From photographs, it seems that Nkrumah preferred his *ntama* to be kente, rejecting imported Dutch wax print fabric. It is interesting to note the similarities between this statue and the one that was defaced during the 1966 coup d'état (Figure 7). While during Nkrumah's life-time the *batakari* was a sign of the nationalist struggle, by the late twentieth-century, the kente cloth reigned supreme.

Nkrumah's appropriation of kente cloth was strategic as his embrace of the *batakari*. I take cues from the work of scholars of Ghanaian dress like Osuanyi Essel who suggest that Nkrumah's use of handwoven textiles like kente was a gesture toward national unity overall (Essel 2019, 42). Further, Nkrumah transformed kente from a garment of Akan royalty into a garment for not only nationalist elites, but also for world leaders (Diop 2020). Kente cloths were equally accepted in the West and the East, providing a vehicle for Ghanaian sartorial export.

Figure 9
Kwame Nkrumah statue (photo by author, Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park).

Ghanaians presented kente cloth as prized gifts to both American and Soviet leaders beginning in the 1960s. Members of Kwame Nkrumah's trade delegation to the Soviet Union draped a kente cloth around Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev. Nkrumah presented the United Nations with perhaps the largest kente piece woven and stitched together to date (Fening 2007, 64). With kente, Nkrumah appropriated an Akan woven tradition and made it not only a Ghanaian cultural item, but one with Pan-African appeal. At the same time, the style of wearing kente drew on Roman iconography of the toga, a symbol of the first empire to control Europe.

In discussing how kente weavers come up with new patterns and designs, master weaver Samuel Osae Bampo described to me how weavers pick and choose from all the different elements already available in their collective repertoire. Kwame Nkrumah typically selected cloths made from strips of kente woven with one of two overall designs. The *sika futruo*, or "gold dust," design symbolized wealth and prosperity and was a cloth Nkrumah appropriated from the Asante ruling class. It has a repeating zigzag and features mostly golden colors. He also wore s*ika fre mogya*, which means "money makes or calls blood," meaning "if you do not have money you will be sick." It is a fairly simple design, appropriate for men to wear, and has opposing sections of stripes in different widths, using primarily the colors red, yellow, blue, green, and black in the cross weft against a golden warp. The cloths Nkrumah wore would typically be single or double weave and more modest colors (Bampo 2019).

In contrast, when Kwame Nkrumah wed the Egyptian beauty Fathia Halim Ritz on the last day of 1957, a kente weaver named Kwabena Num (Kwabena number 5) created a new vibrant triple-weave pattern in her honor popularly known as "Fatia Fathia Nkrumah." The strips are woven in repeating sections of nested zigzags often in yellow, green, and red followed by a block of steps usually in gold and blue (refer to Figure 10). Originally meant for women, this design continues to be quite popular with younger generations ordering strips in pinks, purples, and turquoise. According to Bampo, when Nkrumah lost power in the 1966 *coup d'état*, Kwabena Num, the weaver who originated the design renamed it "one person alone can't govern a country" to evade any criticism from the next regime opposed to Nkrumah's increasing autocratic rule.

While many are familiar with the story of the name change, few are aware of the weaver behind it all. Listening to Bampo, and then returning to the archival records of the Kente Weaver's Cooperative Society now housed at the Ghana Public Records, Archives and Administration Department, I learned more. Kwabena Num served as the founding president of the Society after it was established in November 1960. As national president, Kwabena Num oversaw an experiment to coordinate the efforts of kente weavers in the Eastern and Brong Ahafo Regions, as

Figure 10
Sample of *Fatia Fathia Nkrumah* design kente woven by Samuel Osae Bampo in blue, gold, red, and green threads (photo by author).

well as Kpedze District and Bonwire District in the Ashanti Region.[27] In Ghana, Bonwire is often associated with the establishment of kente weaving. It is said that the craftsman town of Bonwire near the Ashanti capital of Kumasi is where the fabled fabric began to be produced (Kraamer 2006).[28] What is interesting here, is the extent to which kente weaving had become a national project by the 1960s and the role of Nkrumah's government in promoting a collectivized approach to its production. By that time, Kwabena Num had at his disposal G£150,000 to spend on advance purchases of yarn and spinning supplies for the society (RG 4/2/287).[29]

The Zhou Enlai Jacket: a third way

Around the time that he strengthened ties to China and received Zhou Enlai on a state visit in January 1964, Nkrumah began wearing buttoned coats without lapels (O'Brien 1998, 294). When Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai met with President Nkrumah in 1961 during his state visit to China, the Ghanaian leader donned a long kente cloth in the *sika fre mogya* motif ("money makes or calls blood").[30] Photographed

Figure 11
(Left) Zhou Enlai suits: Kwame and Fathia Nkrumah with Chinese Foreign Minister Chei Li and Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai during Chinese state visit to Accra in 1964 (Source: Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park) (Right) Suit Jacket of President Nkrumah shows small, raised, Prussian-style collar (photo by author, Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park).

as he was about to depart, Nkrumah wore a suit jacket with a tie. But by late 1963, Nkrumah had filed away his English suits and began to wear what in Ghana was known as the "Zhou Enlai" suit. In a photograph from the 1964 visit of Zhou Enlai and Chinese foreign minister Chei Yi, Nkrumah stood between his two visitors wearing a darker version of their stark suits (Figure 11).[31]

This Zhou Enlai suit with a long-sleeved jacket and close-fitting collar came onto the scene as Nkrumah turned to the East for political and economic support. It also coincided with a weakening of his own clothing budget. The BBC journalist Elizabeth Ohene has noted that many suspected that Nkrumah had also begun wearing a bulletproof vest after an attempt on his life in 1962; the suit allowed him to hide it. The Zhou Enlai suit represents a more socialist, but also more paranoid Nkrumah (Ohene 2019) (Figure 12).

In historical memory, the suits are referred to in Ghana interchangeably as "Chou En-Lai" and "Nehru" suits. They were both eventually labeled "political suits," often sewn with short sleeves, which were more suitable for the warm, humid West African climate. There are however, subtle differences between these two styles of suits. In contrast to a business suit coat, both of these styles button all the way to the collar, hence its appeal to hide bulletproof vests. Cecil Morton, of the famous clothing house of Dan Morton Tailors in Accra explained further details. The Zhou Enlai style collar is more specifically called a "Prussian Collar." A Prussian collar has a stand with collar, whereas a Nehru "collar" is only a stand (Morton 2019). The photographs of Nkrumah in his Zhou Enlai jackets have full collars, though without lapels. Nkrumah's clothing collection at the Memorial Park also includes

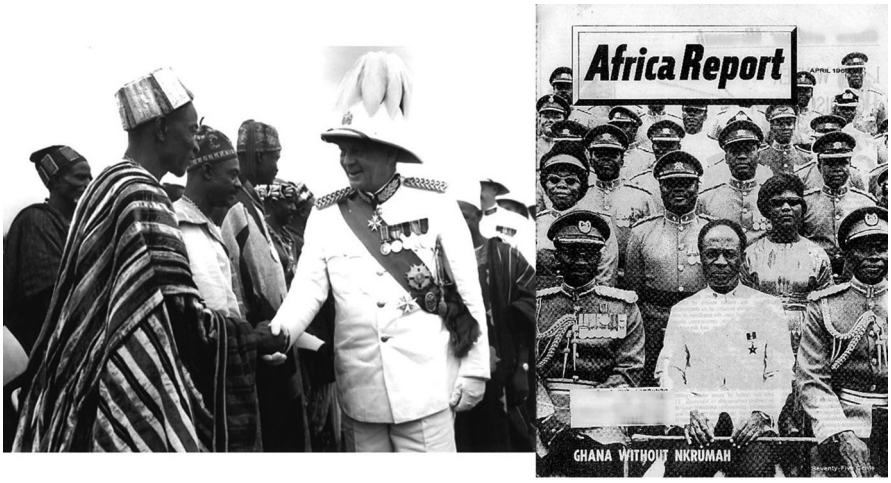

Figure 12
Buttoned up: Left: British Gold Coast Colonial Governor Arden Clarke greets Heads of Royal Households in smocks and caps at a Coronation Durbar, 1953 (Source: UK National Archives). Right: Cover of *Africa Report*, April 1966 one month after the end of Nkrumah's government, "Ghana without Nkrumah" shows modified military suits with collar stands (Source: Camera Press/Africa America Institute).

several white linen shirts with Nehru collars presented to him by Indian delegations. The collar-less Nehru suit also harkened back to the more military-like coats of the colonial leadership as fashions cycled and were remade in postcolonial climates (Figure 11). Note both last Colonial Governor and Nkrumah favored white coats with only collar stands. By the 1980s, the political suit design became less about the collar (some even had small lapels folded back) and more of a light-weight trouser suit with buttons on the top and matching trousers, often in gray or subtle pinstripe.

Nkrumah was not the only trendsetter who looked Eastwards for fashion inspiration during this period. The French Designer Pierre Cardin also introduced a modified "Nehru jacket"—a specific style of "collarless jacket, which was tight fitting and double-breasted"—around 1957, with it gaining wider appeal by 1964 (Tompkins et al. 1994, 154).[32] The Beatles were important customers of the more common single-breasted Nehru design, helping to present a new look to audiences that was both respectable and a bit rebellious, with an Asian flair. Gradually the look trickled down to the masses. Pierre Cardin's Nehru jacket was even featured in children's photos for a Sears catalogue cover in 1969 (*The Best of Uncle John's Bathroom Reader* 2012). The late-night newscaster in the United States, Johnny Carson took on what had become an all-American look (Apparel World 1985, 49).

After the military takeover and coup d'état that ousted Nkrumah in 1966, the former president lived in exile in Conakry, Guinea, until his death in 1972. Visitors recalled how he typically wore a white "political

suit" as a kind of mourning coat as he lamented the demise of the Ghana he had hoped to create (Kwame *Nkrumah* 1974, 221–2). The buttoned shirt jacket with either long or short sleeves, a Prussian, pointed, or Nehru collar all became components of male formal business attire in West Africa, thanks in large part to the circulation of Nkrumah and his sojourns to Asia. In 1971, Mobutu, the ruler of Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo) went so far as to issue a decree that all men were required to stop wearing businesses suits and wear a political suit or what he termed the *abacost* ("down with the suit") (Lagae and De Raedt 2014, 179). By 1992, Mandela led post-apartheid South Africa in his signature "Mandiba shirt" style, merging the relaxed look of a long-sleeved shirt jacket with batik fabric (Maynard 2004, 56).[33]

Conclusions: curating postcolonial elegance

In West Africa, uneven access to cloth and the techniques and technologies for fashioning fabric created cultural inequalities. Communities that retreated from slave raiders lost access to the imported fabrics and muskets that were the reward for participating in human trafficking during the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Families that wore hand-woven smocks or simply strips of waist beads fitted with simple loincloths faced discrimination from those who wore machine woven cloth stitched with mechanized seams. People who felt it would be more African to reject sewn garments and wear either imported waxprint cloth or kente togas lamented how these loose stretches of fabric slipped off their shoulders. Some, like the character in protonationalist Kobina Sekyi's play *The Blinkards*, opted to wear pajama sets instead. At independence, leaders ushered in a new era through a careful mix of clothing that referenced this fraught fashion history.

A fascination with African dandy culture and the rise of the Western business suit has obfuscated the nuances of male fashion and the array of "looks" men have had at their disposal on the continent. The first Prime Minister and then President for Life of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah used a variety of looks beyond business suits to signal political and cultural messages. In the early days of his emergence as an anti-colonial leader, he wore Western-style business suits. His interest in English suits harkened back to a long period of Gold Coasters bringing in their suits from Europe. From the moment he declared independence, he experimented with bringing elements of Ghanaian traditional and cultural attire into the national and international arena. He wore a *fubu* or *batakari* (smock) on March 6, 1957, when he declared independence, and a kente cloth when he danced at an independence ball with the Duchess of Kent. When he spoke at the United Nations, he wore a majestic kente cloth to decry the role of imperialism in hampering the development of African countries. Throughout this time, he remained obsessed with wearing the highest-caliber fitted English and Ghanaian-made business suits. Ghanaian observers

imbued his dress code with additional significance including the meaning of woven patterns. And even when he wore suits there were added layers. Images of Kennedy and Nkrumah in dark suits and overcoats sharing an umbrella outside during his visit to Washington D.C. catapulted the status of the Ghanaian leader (Figure 13). An umbrella is the symbol of a monarchy and power and is held over Ghanaian royals at ceremonies. When Ghanaians saw that the two leaders shared an umbrella, it indicated for them that Nkrumah and therefore the Ghanaian nation could be seen as an equal on the world stage to the United States.

By the early 1960s, faced with a dwindling personal and national budget and weakening Western support, he entertained visits from Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai and began to wear a formal suit with Asian influences. Nkrumah's approach to curating his postcolonial wardrobe produced an interchangeable array of looks that represented

Figure 13
Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah and US President John F. Kennedy share an umbrella February 1961 (Source: Getty Images, photo by Afro American Newspapers/Gado).

multiple identities and political allegiances. Ghanaian independence styles did not yet hybridize different looks in the same garment, as would later Ghanaian pop stars, but they did signal that business could be conducted in something other than a Western-style suit.

A review of the mix of garments that hangs in the Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park and lingers in the photograph collection adorning the museum walls complicates easy narratives about "tradition" and "modernity" in postcolonial Ghana (Appiah 1991). It unsettles anxieties about appropriation of indigenous and Western attire and undermines strict codes for who gets to wear what (Coombe 1993; Murphy 2014; Boateng 2011). Nor, it should be clear, are these overlapping fashion choices "inconsistent" (Appiah 1993). For Kwame Nkrumah, creating a postcolonial esthetic involved sampling several different fashion trends, with ties to Northern Ghana, Asante and Ewe weaving traditions, Chinese and colonial collars, as well as European suits. The business suits did not fully constitute a "mimicry" of the West, nor did the *batakari* and kente fall firmly into the arena of cultural theft of one ethnic group from another (Bhabha 1984, 1997).[34] The fact that Nkrumah could simultaneously wear these various designs, and that all can remain displayed together in one room in the museum in his honor, reminds us that African modernity absorbed multiple "elegant features" from multiple traditions to create its own brand of professionalism (Gyekye 1997, 108–9).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Acknowledgements

Thank you to Eyram Amaglo for facilitating interviews and site visits in Ghana. Thank you to Cecil Morton of Dan Morton Tailors, Samuel Osae Bampo of the National Arts Centre, and Alhaji Abubakari Issah Osman of the Kwame Nkrumah Museum Park for their insights on Ghanaian textiles and design. My thanks also to the many organizations who provided permissions for the images in this article. Thank you to Kimberly Jenkins and Jonathan Michael Square of the Fashion Justice Workshop for early inspiration on Black fashion and collars.

Notes

1. Kente designs interpreted in consultation with Samuel Osae Bampo and reference to Howard University professor's poster (Ofori-Ansa 1993).

2. In contrast, socialists leaders in China promoted machine woven fabric (Eyferth 2012).
3. Also (Gordin 2015).
4. On sapeurs in the Republic of Congo (note cover of English translation), see (Mabanckou 2013).
5. Instagram feed of Mr. Erbil, https://www.instagram.com/mr.erbil. On Kurdish fashion in Iran, see also (Houchang 1993, 213–4).
6. On the case for cloth as historical subject and source, see (Ulrich 1991, 1990; Reddy 1986).
7. In Tanzania (Schneider 2006).
8. Fashion photographer Scott Schuman popularized the term "sartorial" with the launch of his influential fashion blog The Sartorialist in 2005 <http://www.thesartoralist.com>. (Rosser 2010; Schuman 2012, 2015)
9. D. Anderson, Accra, to Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, December 1, 1960 in Public Records and Archives Administration Department, Accra, Ghana (PRAAD) RG 17/1/66 ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946watc–65)
10. Anderson to Nkrumah in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
11. Invoice to Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister, from Hector Powe Tailor, Regent Street, London, January 8, 1959 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
12. Letter to Rt. Hon. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah from Cecil Gee, Charing Cross Road, London, December 18, 1956 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
13. Invoice to Dr. the Hon. Kwame Nkrumah from Seil, Putt & Rusby, Incl, New York, NY, May 22, 1957 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
14. Letter to Dr. the Hon. Kwame Nkrumah, Prime ministry of Ghana, from L.C. Cartwright, Foster D. Snell, Inc., New York, Ny. May 17, 1957 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
15. Invoices from Kingsway to Kwame Nkrumah dated August 26, 1957 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
16. Handwritten note to Dr. Kwame Nkrumah from E.C. Squires, Civil, Military and Ladies' Tailor, Sackville Street, London, September 4, 1958 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
17. Letter to Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Primeminister [sic] of Ghana, from E.C. Squires, October 21, 1958 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
18. Personal Secretary, Government House, Accra to Manager, D. Senker & Son Ltd., Kingsland Road, London, July 2, 1959 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
19. Personal Secretary to Kwame Nkrumah, to S. Senker, Kingsland Road, London, July 29, 1959 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).

20. Letter from S. Senker, London to Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, Accra, August 21, 1959 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
21. Letter from S. Senker, London to Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, Accra, September 14, 1959, also handwritten note on bottom of letter "Replied 19/9/59. (Shoes fit O.K. please send other 4 pairs as ordered.)" in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
22. E.K. Okoh, Secretary to the Cabinet, to The Controller of Customs, Accra Airport, December 19, 1961 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
23. Paul Schneider, Manager, UTC Department Store, Accra to.
24. E.K. Okoh, Secretary to the Cabinet, to The Controller of Customs, Accra, June 27, 1962. Letter from Paul Schneider, Manager, UTC Department Stores, Accra, to Miss Erica Powell, Personal Secretary to the President, Accra, June 26, 1962 in ("Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc." 1946–65).
25. Letter from Leslie Powe, Hector Powe Tailor, March 9, 1962 to Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, Flagstaff House, Accra, Ghana.
26. P.S. to Minister for Education, September 17, 1959 in ("Northern Smocks and School Uniforms" 1959).
27. "Resolution of the Proposed Ghana Kente Weavers' Co-Operative Society passed during a delegates conference held on Thursday 10th November, 1960," in ("Kente Weavers Co-operative Societies" 1960–1961).
28. Others claim Ewe origins, or Akan origins in Côte d'Ivoire. On disputes over the origin of kente see (Kraamer 2006).
29. "Estimates of Expenditure of the Proposed Kente Weavers' Co-operative Society Limited for the year 1961/1962," in ("Kente Weavers Co-operative Societies" 1960–1961).
30. Photography collection, Kwame Nkrumah Memorial Park, Accra.
31. Photography collection, Kwame Nkrumah Memorial park, Accra.
32. Thank you to Kimberly Jenkins for bringing the Pierre Cardin link to my attention at the Fashion and Justice Workshop in Austin, February 3, 2018.
33. Thank you to Sumathi Ramaswamy for reminding me of the Mandiba shirts and their connection to Nkrumah's looks.
34. On appropriation in fashion: (Shand 2002; Raustiala and Sprigman 2006; Green and Kaiser 2017; Rosman 2018)

ORCID

Abena Dove Osseo-Asare http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1889-5239

References

Addae, Steven. 1996. *The Evolution of Modern Medicine in a Developing Country: Ghana 1880–1960*. Durham, NC: Durham Academic Press.

Allman, Jean Marie. 2004. "'Let Your Fashion Be in Line with Our Ghanaian Costume': Nation, Gender, and the Politics of Clothing in Nkrumah's Ghana." In *Fashioning Africa: Power and the Politics of Dress*, edited by Jean Marie Allman, 144–165. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Apparel World. 1985. National Knitwear and Sportswear Association.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 1991. "Is the Post-in Postmodernism the Post-in Postcolonial?" *Critical Inquiry* 17 (2): 336–357. doi:10.1086/448586.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 1993. *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Ayesu, S. M., E. K. Howard, and K. Asubonteng. 2015. "Socio-Cultural and Economic Significance of Textiles in Akuapem Odwira Festival." In International Conference on Applied Sciences and Technology*: Kumasi Technical University*, 241–53.

Bampo, Samuel Osae. 2019. Master kente weaver, interview with author, Accra Arts Centre, Ghana, July 9.

Barnor, James. 2015. *Ever Young*. Paris, France: Maison CF.

Baruah, Sagar. 2000. "Impact of Khadi on the National Movement: The Assam Case." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 61: 695–703.

Bhabha, Homi. 1984. "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse." *October* 28: 125–133. doi:10.2307/778467.

Bhabha, Homi. 1997. "Of Mimicry and Man." In *Tensions of Empire*, 152–160. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Biney, A. 2011. *The Political and Social Thought of Kwame Nkrumah*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan US.

Boateng, Boatema. 2006. "Walking the Tradition-Modernity Tightrope: Gender Contradictions in Textile Production and Intellectual Property Law in Ghana." *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy & the Law* 15: 341–357. https://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/jgspl/vol15/iss2/11/

Boateng, Boatema. 2008. *Local and Global Sites of Power in the Circulation of Ghanaian Adinkra*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Boateng, Boatema. 2011. *The Copyright Thing Doesn't Work Here: Adinkra and Kente Cloth and Intellectual Property in Ghana*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Byfield, Judith A. 2002. *The Bluest Hands: A Social and Economic History of Women Dyers in Abeokuta (Nigeria), 1890–1940*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Chibnall, Steve. 1985. "Whistle and Zoot: The Changing Meaning of a Suit of Clothes." *History Workshop Journal* 20 (1): 56–81. doi:10.1093/hwj/20.1.56.

Comaroff, J., and J. L. Comaroff. 1997. "Chapter 5: The Empire's Old Clothes: Fashioning the Colonial Subject." In *Of Revelation and Revolution: The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier*, 218–272. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Coombe, Rosemary J. 1993. "The Properties of Culture and the Politics of Possessing Identity: Native Claims in the Cultural Appropriation Controversy." *Canadian Journal of Law & Jurisprudence* 6 (2): 249–285. doi:10.1017/S0841820900001922.

Diop, Arimeta. 2020. "Congressional Democrats Decided Now Was the Time to Break out the Kente Cloth." In *Vanity Fair*. Accessed June 8 2020. https://www.vanityfair.com/style/2020/06/nancy-pelosi-democrats-kente-cloth

Essel, Osanyi Quaicoo. 2019. "Dress Fashion Politics of Ghanaian Presidential Inauguration Ceremonies from 1960–2017." *Fashion and Textiles Review* 1 (3): 35–55.

Essel, Osanyi Quaicoo, and Emmanual R. K. Amissah. 2015. "Smock Fashion Culture in Ghana's Dress Identity-Making." *Historical Research Letter* 18: 32–38.

Eyferth, Jacob. 2012. "Women's Work and the Politics of Homespun in Socialist China, 1949–1980." *International Review of Social History* 57 (3): 365–391. doi:10.1017/S0020859012000521.

Fening, Ken Okwae. 2007. "History of Kente Cloth and Its Value Addition through Design Integration with African Wild Silk for Export Market in Ghana." In *Proceedings of the Trainers Course and Fourth International Workshop on the Conservation and Utilisation of Commercial Insects, 14th November to 8th December, 2006*, edited by S. K. Raina, E. M. Muli, E. K. Nguku and Kioko E. N., 62–66. Nairobi, Kenya: The International Centre of Insect Physiology.

Fuller, Harcourt. 2014. "Commemorating an African Queen: Ghanaian Nationalism, the African Diaspora, and the Public Memory of Nana Yaa Asantewaa, 1952–2009." *African Arts* 47 (4): 58–71. doi:10.1162/AFAR_a_00183.

"Ghana's Black Panther? Okyeame Kwame appears at Glitz Style Awards in unique style." 2018. In *Ghanaweb (via Citinewsroom)*. September 5. Accessed August 13 2019. https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/entertainment/Ghana-s-Black-Panther-Okyeame-Kwame-appears-at-Glitz-Style-Awards-in-unique-style-682495#

Gold Coast Gazette 1946. Accra: Government Printing Office.

Goody, Esther, and Jack Goody. 1996. "The Naked and the Clothed." In *Cloth of Many Colored Silks: Papers on History and Society Ghanaian and Islamic in Honor of Ivor Wilks*, edited by John Hunwick and Nancy Lawler, 67–89. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Gordin, Michael D. 2015. *Scientific Babel: How Science Was Done before and after Global English*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Gott, Suzanne. 2009. "Asante Hightimers and the Fashionable Display of Women's Wealth in Contemporary Ghana." *Fashion Theory* 13 (2): 141–176. doi:10.2752/175174109X414259.

Green, Denise Nicole, and Susan B. Kaiser. 2017. "Fashion and Appropriation." *Fashion, Style & Popular Culture* 4 (2): 145–150. doi:10.1386/fspc.4.2.145_2.

Grewal, David Singh. 2008. *Network Power: The Social Dynamics of Globalization*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Gunn, T., and K. Moloney. 2010. *Tim Gunn: A Guide to Quality, Taste & Style*. New York, NY: ABRAMS.

Gyekye, Kwame. 1997. *Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hecht, David, and A. M. Simone. 1994. *Invisible Governance: The Art of African Micro-Politics, New Autonomy Series*. Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia.

Hess, Janet B. 2012. "Nkrumah/Lumumba: Representations of Masculinity." In *African Intellectuals and Decolonization*, edited by Nicholas M. Creary, 27–36. Athens: Ohio University Press.

Houchang, E. Chehabi. 1993. "Staging the Emperor's New Clothes: Dress Codes and Nation-Building under Reza Shah." *Iranian Studies* 26 (3/4): 209–229.

"Iraqi Kurdish fashionistas make a splash." 2017. *BBC News* January 22. Accessed August 20 2019. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-38692382

Junger, Karin, and Carmen Cobos, Films Ryninks, Ikon, and inc Filmakers Library. 2002. *Mama Benz & the Taste of Money*. New York, NY: Filmakers Library.

"High demand for 'Fathia Fata Nkrumah' Kente." 2017. *Ghana Web via Kasapafmonline*, September 15. Accessed February 2 2021. https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/business/High-demand-for-Fathia-Fata-Nkrumah-Kente-581344

Keita, Seydou. 1997. *Seydou Keïta/André Magnin (ed.); Texts by André Magnin and Youssouf Tata Cissé*, edited by André Magnin and Youssouf Tata Cissé. 1st Scalo ed. Zurich: Scalo.

Kobayashi, Kazuo. 2019. *Indian Cotton Textiles in West Africa: African Agency, Consumer Demand and the Making of the Global Economy, 1750–1850, Cambridge Imperial and Post-Colonial Studies Series*. Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kraamer, Malika. 2006. "Origin Disputed. The Making, Use and Evaluation of Ghanaian Textiles." *Afrique: Archéologie & Arts* (4): 53–76. doi:10.4000/aaa.1316. .

Kriger, Colleen E. 2010. "Silk and Sartorial Politics in the Sokoto Caliphate (Nigeria), 1804–1903." In *The Force of Fashion in Politics and Society: Global Perspectives from Early Modern to Contemporary Times*, edited by Beverly Lemire, 143–166. Surrey, England: Ashgate.

Kwame Nkrumah. 1974. *Panaf Great Lives*. London: Panaf Books.

Lagae, Johan, and Kim De Raedt. 2014. "Building for "L'Authenticité": Eugène Palumbo and the Architecture of Mobutu's Congo." *Journal of Architectural Education* 68 (2): 178–189. doi:10.1080/10464883.2014.937235.

Leach, Fiona. 2008. "African Girls, Nineteenth-Century Mission Education and the Patriarchal Imperative." *Gender and Education* 20 (4): 335–347. doi:10.1080/09540250802190172.

Leissle, Kristy. 2012. "Cosmopolitan Cocoa Farmers: Refashioning Africa in Divine Chocolate Advertisements." *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 24 (2): 121–139. doi:10.1080/13696815.2012.736194.

Mabanckou, Alain. 2013. *Blue White Red: A Novel*. Translated by Alison Dundy. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

MacDiarmid, Campbell. 2017. "Mr. Erbil: Kurdish Dandies Start Iraq's First Fashion Club." In *Vocativ*.

MacGaffey, Janet, and Rémy Bazenguissa-Ganga. 2000. *Congo-Paris: Transnational Traders on the Margins of the Law, African Issues*. London: James Currey.

Makouezi, E. G. 2013. *Dictionnaire de la SAPE: Société Des Ambianceurs et Personnes Élégantes*. Paris: Publibook/Société écrivains.

Maynard, Margaret. 2004. *Dress and Globalisation*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

Metzger, Sean. 2014. *Chinese Looks: Fashion, Performance, Race*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Mohammed, Wunpini Fatimata. 2018. "The Northern Smock: Threading, Color, and Design." *Popula*. Accessed February 2 2021. https://popula.com/2018/10/15/the-northern-smock

Morton, Cecil. 2019. Master tailor, interview with author at Dan Morton Tailors, Accra, Ghana, July 17.

Mubarik, Abu. 2019. "Everybody's Talking about Akufo-Addo's Yellow Smock and Boots at Yaa-Naa's Investiture." In *Pulse*, January 26. Accessed September 13 2019. https://www.pulse.com.gh/news/local/everybodys-talking-about-akufo-addos-yellow-smock-and-boots-at-yaa-naas-investiture/x6zc2wz

Murphy, Jessyca. 2014. "The White Indin': Native American Appropriations in Hipster Fashion." In *Unsettling Whiteness*, 127–138. Netherlands: Brill.

Mussai, Renée. 2016. "James Barnor: Ever Young, Never Sleep." *Nka Journal of Contemporary African Art* 2016 (38–39): 152–161. doi: 10.1215/10757163-3641799.

Mustafa, Hudita Nura. 1998. "Sartorial Ecumenes: African Styles in a Social and Economic Context." *The Art of African Fashion*, 13–48.

"MzVee ft Yemi Alade – Come and See My Moda (Official Video). 2018. *Youtube*.

Newell, S. 2002. *Literary Culture in Colonial Ghana: How to Play the Game of Life*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.

O'Brien, Conor Cruise. 1998. *Memoir: My Life and Themes*. London: Profile Books.

Ofori-Ansa, Kwaku. 1993. *Kente is More than a Cloth: Significance of Ghana's Kente Cloth*. Hyattsville, MD: Sankofa Publications.

Ohene, Elizabeth. 2019. "Letter from Africa: The Fashion Faux pas of Bullet-Proof Vests." *BBC News*.

Oonk, Gijsbert. 2011. "Clothing Matters: Asian-African Businessmen in European Suits, 1880–1980." *Comparative Sociology* 10 (4): 528–547. doi:10.1163/156913311X590619.

Petersen, Katia, and T. V. Sfinx Film, and Denmark National Film Board of. 1992. *Mama Benz an African Market Woman*. New York, NY: Filmakers Library.

Powell, Erica. 1984. *Private Secretary (Female)/Gold Coast*. London, UK: C. Hurst & Company.

PRAAD RG 7/1/89 "Northern Smocks and School Uniforms." 1959.

PRAAD RG 4/2/287. "Kente Weavers Co-operative Societies 1960–1961."

PRAAD RG 17/1/66 1946–65. "Watches, Suits, Clothing Etc."

Quayson, A. 2014. *Oxford Street, Accra: City Life and the Itineraries of Transnationalism*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Rabine, Leslie. 2013. "Photography, Poetry, and the Dressed Bodies of Léopold Sédar Senghor." In *African Dress: Fashion, Agency, Performance*, edited by Karen Tranberg Hansen and D. Soyini Madison, 171–185. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Raustiala, Kal, and Christopher Sprigman. 2006. "The Piracy and Paradox: Innovation and Intellectual Property in Fashion Design." *Virginia Law Review* 92: 1687–1777.

Reddy, William M. 1986. "The Structure of a Cultural Crisis: Thinking about Cloth in France before and after the Revolution." In *The Social Life of Things*, edited by Arjun Appadurai, 261–284. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rosman, Katherine. 2018. "The Itsy-Bitsy, Teenie-Weenie, Very Litigious Bikini." *The New York Times*, 1.

Rosser, Esther. 2010. "Photographing Fashion: A Critical Look at the Sartorialist." *Image & Narrative* 11 (4): 158–170.

Sanders, Charles L. 1966. "Kwame Nkrumah: The Fall of a Messiah, Deposed President Indicted by His People as Tyrant-Thief Who Nearly Ruined Ghana." *Ebony Magazine*, 138–146.

Schneider, Leander. 2006. "The Maasai's New Clothes: A Developmentalist Modernity and Its Exclusions." *Africa Today* 53 (1): 101–131. doi:10.1353/at.2006.0063.

Schuman, Scott. 2012. *The Sartorialist: Closer (the Sartorialist Volume 2)*. Penguin UK: Penguin Books.

Schuman, Scott. 2015. *The Sartorialist: X*. Penguin: Penguin Books.

Sekyi, Kobina. 1997. *The Blinkards, A Comedy: And the Anglo-Fanti, a Short Story*. Oxford, UK: Heinemann.

Shand, Peter. 2002. "Scenes from the Colonial Catwalk: Cultural Appropriation, Intellectual Property Rights, and Fashion." *Cultural Analysis* 3: 47–88.

Sidibé, Malick. 2008. *Malick Sidibe/Fondation Zinsou*. Leuven: Exhibitions International.

Spencer, Claire. 2020. "Wax Print: Africa's Pride or Colonial Legacy?" *BBC News*, Accessed June 29 2020. https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/extra/4fq4hrgxvn/wax-print

Steiner, Christopher B. 1985. "Another Image of Africa: Toward an Ethnohistory of European Cloth Marketed in West Africa, 1873–1960." *Ethnohistory* 32 (2): 91–110. doi:10.2307/482329.

Tamagni, Daniele, Paul Smith, and Paul Goodwin. 2009. *Gentlemen of Bacongo*. London: Trolley.

The Best of Uncle John's Bathroom Reader. 2012. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Tompkins, V., J. Baughman, R. Layman, and V. Bondi. 1994. *American Decades: 1960–1969*. Framington Hills, MI: Gale Research.

Trivedi, Lisa N. 2003. "Visually Mapping the 'Nation': Swadeshi Politics in Nationalist India, 1920–1930." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 62 (1): 11–41. doi:10.2307/3096134.

Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher. 1990. "Of Pens and Needles: Sources in Early American Women's History." *The Journal of American History* 77 (1): 200–207. doi:10.2307/2078652.

Ulrich, Laurel Thatcher. 1991. "Cloth, Clothing, and Early American Social History." *Dress* 19: 39–48.

Watson, Cecelia A. 2004. "The Sartorial Self: William James's Philosophy of Dress." *History of Psychology* 7 (3): 211–224. doi:10.1037/1093-4510.7.3.211.

White, Bob W. 2008. *Rumba Rules: The Politics of Dance Music in Mobutu's Zaire*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Wondergren, Alex. 2016. "Video Clip: Kwame Nkrumah Forces of Imperialism Speech at United Nations 1960." *youtube.com, December 25*. Accessed October 13 2019. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AbTg4xmSfSc