

# Decolonising Textiles Naming: Symbols and Meaning in the Ghanaian and Scottish Context

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## Introduction

My PhD is practice-based research focusing on the direct and indirect historical and colonial connections between Scotland and Ghana through the lens of indigenous textiles and how they contribute to dealing with negative legacies of colonialism. The resilience of indigenous cultural heritages of textiles in Ghana and Scotland share identifiable common significance in processes of making, usage, designs, patterns, and meanings that resist and challenge colonial dominance, its legacies, of lost cultures and offer a way to alternative conceptualisations of the idea of and emerging discourses on decolonisation.

## Research Questions

- How does the creation of cultural interconnectedness, cultural exchange, and international relations amount to decolonisation?
- Can an equitably negotiated enriching cultural relationship between people be achieved through the making and wearing of indigenous textiles and clothing?
- Is this in any way a sustainable approach to decolonisation that presents an alternative way to the current decolonisation discourses? What are the linguistic implications thereof?



Fig 1: Gbefaloi "the Travellere image from a case study



Fig 2: Ghana Must Go image from a case study

## Research Methods and Aims

- Fieldwork will be in both conducted in Ghana and Scotland materials and data collections through participatory workshops.
- Materials and data collections will be demonstrated through creative outcomes in the form of curatorial work and public exhibitions. This will be used as case studies to reflect on how my practice may be used as a practice-based method for my research.
- Oral history and knowledge gathering through interviews during fieldwork will be used and reference in the research.
- My research proposes to conduct an ethnographic inquiry into the importance of design, making, and wearing of Kente and Tartan; and how they reconstituted sovereign identities as a decolonisation move, away from colonial categories of the citizen, the state the indigenous community and their languages of cloth and status.
- Adds to the existing knowledge on the social significance of textiles and Symbols to Ghanaians and the Scottish indigenous communities. It also allows for knowledge exchange between the Cultures.