

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

A TEXTUAL INTERPRETATION OF SISAALA BAYIRA PERFORMANCE



MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

2025

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

A TEXTUAL INTERPRETATION OF SISAALA BAYIRA PERFORMANCE

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**A thesis in the Department of English Education,
Faculty of Foreign Languages Education submitted to the
School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the award of a degree of
Master of Philosophy
(English Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

OCTOBER, 2025

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Abdulai Seidu, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, it is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

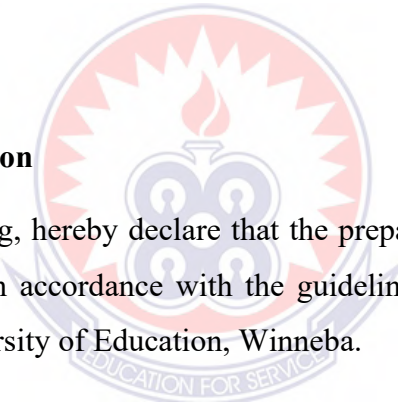
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Supervisor's Declaration

I, Dr. Martin Kyiileyang, hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Signature:

Date:



DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my children, Salima Ajaansuma, Mawsoof Sungte, my wife, Sirina Luku and my parents, Mr.&Mrs Abdulai.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

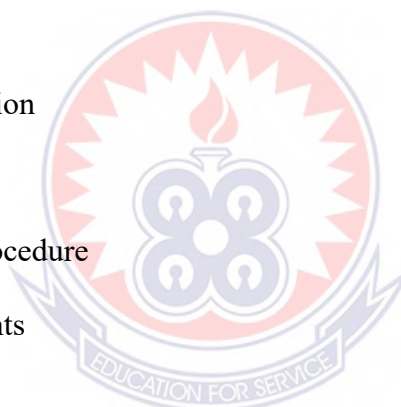
In the course of my academic journey to my thesis writing, a number of people assisted me in diverse ways which I need to mention and commend for their immense contributions either financially or academically. First, I acknowledge the support from my supervisor, Dr. Martin Kyiileyang for his meritorious work done by dedicating time out of his busy schedules to trim off the rough edges to put my work in good shape. Without him, I would not have completed this thesis on time. God bless him. I am grateful to the following individuals: The late Mr. Laatuo Basin (a.k.a Sasko) and Ras Otokori who helped me in the transcription, translation, and interpretation of the data gathered for the thesis. I also acknowledge the efforts of Mr. Yahaya Mumuni, Dr. Gabina Susuoroka, and Mr. Piidima Issahaku who assisted me in various ways during the data collection. To the Head of Department and the lecturers in the department of English Education, I am grateful for your mentorship especially during progress report and mock viva sessions. It was your comments that helped shaped this thesis. To all my course mates, I thank you for your contributions, support and encouragement during the course work through to the thesis writing stage. To the graduate school and the University community at large, thank you for the opportunity offered me to be a member of the University. God bless all of you.

Finally, I duly acknowledged the guidance received from the entire Amora family most especially from Mr. Adam Abdul-Fatawu, and his family.

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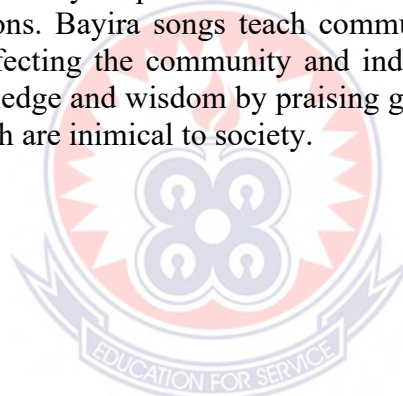


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ABSTRACT

This thesis is based on an ethnographic study of the Sisaala Bayira performance in context. The research was conducted in the Sisaala East and West, the north eastern and western parts of Ghana. The data was gathered through fieldwork on live Bayira performances during funerals in Walembelle, Tumu and Gwollu using observation and interviews as the main research tools. The main purpose of the study was an exploration of the historical context and aesthetic features embedded in Bayira performances. These have literary significance and make meaningful contributions to the development of African orature. The theories which backed the study are Tedlock's and Schechner's Performance Theories. Bayira performances were captured by audio visual recordings which were then translated from Sisaali into English using Newmark's (1988) Theoretical ideas on translation. They were coded and used for critical analysis. The results revealed that Bayira performances are embedded with aesthetic and symbolic representations whereby Bayira performers use figurative language, histrionic gestures and other paralinguistic features as effective performance skills. The art of Bayira performance is tantamount to warfare whereby performers use pithy expressions; demonstrate panegyric skills, exhortation, and admonition and trade in diatribes. The use of symbols brings realism into the art of Bayira performance. Bayira performance has several pedagogical implications apart from moral lessons. Bayira songs teach communal and traditional values and comment on issues affecting the community and individuals in society. They teach people extended knowledge and wisdom by praising good behaviour and condemning unacceptable acts which are inimical to society.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The African dirge has been the subject of extensive academic discourse during the last few decades Finnegan (1970, Pp. 34-47). African ethnologists and scholars have long demonstrated a deep interest in oral traditions, particularly the dirge genre, as a vital component of African expressive culture. The relationship between the Sisaala dirge tradition and the Sisaala Bayira performance is deeply rooted in their shared functions as expressive forms that encapsulate the Sisaala people's worldview, spirituality, and communal identity. Studies such as those by Nketia (1965), Barber (2003), and Phyfferoen (2005) have highlighted the dirge's dual role—not only as a lament for the dead but also as a vital cultural text that reveals African aesthetics, philosophical reflections on mortality, and the interconnectedness of art, ritual, and society. In this sense, the dirge operates as both a performative and intellectual act that binds the community together in moments of mourning and remembrance.

The Sisaala dirge tradition, known as Bayira, embodies these same attributes. Earlier ethnographic studies, including Nketia's *Sisaala Bayira: A Study of Traditional Performance* (1965) and Phyfferoen's *Music and Dance in the Traditional Idioms of the Sisaala* (2005), have explored Bayira primarily through its performative dimensions—examining the music, dance, and rituals that accompany funeral ceremonies. These works underscore Bayira's role as a collective act of mourning and a reaffirmation of social solidarity within the Sisaala community.

However, the current study moves beyond these anthropological descriptions to interpret Bayira as both a textual and performative tradition. By analyzing the poetic structure, metaphorical language, and historical narratives embedded in Bayira songs, the research reveals that Bayira is not only a performance of grief but also a repository of cultural knowledge,

articulating themes of heroism, death, spirituality, and identity. Through this textual interpretation, Bayira emerges as an extension of the Sisaala dirge tradition—transforming ritual lamentation into a broader artistic form that fuses language, rhythm, and emotion.

In essence, the Sisaala dirge tradition and the Bayira performance are interdependent expressions of the same cultural logic. Both serve as vehicles through which the community negotiates its understanding of life, death, and continuity. While dirges focus primarily on mourning and remembrance, Bayira expands this expression into a dynamic performance that celebrates collective memory, transmits moral values, and reinforces social cohesion. The Bayira performance thus stands as a living continuation of the dirge tradition—where text, ritual, and performance converge to embody the holistic nature of Sisaala oral artistry.

The Sisaala people are an ethnic group primarily located in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Some communities are found in neighbouring Burkina Faso. Their traditional beliefs and practices surrounding death are deeply rooted in their cultural and spiritual heritage. The Sisaala people believe in dual soul concept, where every individual has two souls: the “spirit soul” (associated with afterlife) and “breathe soul” (associated with life). The spirit soul joins the ancestors’ realm after death, where it continues to influence lives of the living. Some Sisaala communities believe in reincarnation, where the spirit soul can be reborn into same family or clan. This is the concept of death of the Sisaala people

The Sisaala people speak Sisaali, one of the several languages spoken in Ghana. According to the Niger-Congo language phylum Sanka (2010), it is classified as one of the Gur languages under the Grusi language group. According to Sanka (2010), the language is Sisaali, and its native speakers are Sisaala (Luri, 2009). There are numerous dialectical branches of the Sisaali language, such as Pasaali, Tumuluṅ, Kpatolie, Gelbage, Gbieni, Buwaali, and Bosillu. According to Luri (2009), who cited Sanka (2010), the Sisaala area is located in the Sudanic

savannah zone, which is located to the north between latitudes 10 and 11. The Sisaala East and West Districts are where the Sisaala are most prevalent. They are quite numerous in the Wa East, Nadowli, and the Lambusie districts in the Upper West Region as well. As represented in figures 1 and 2 below:

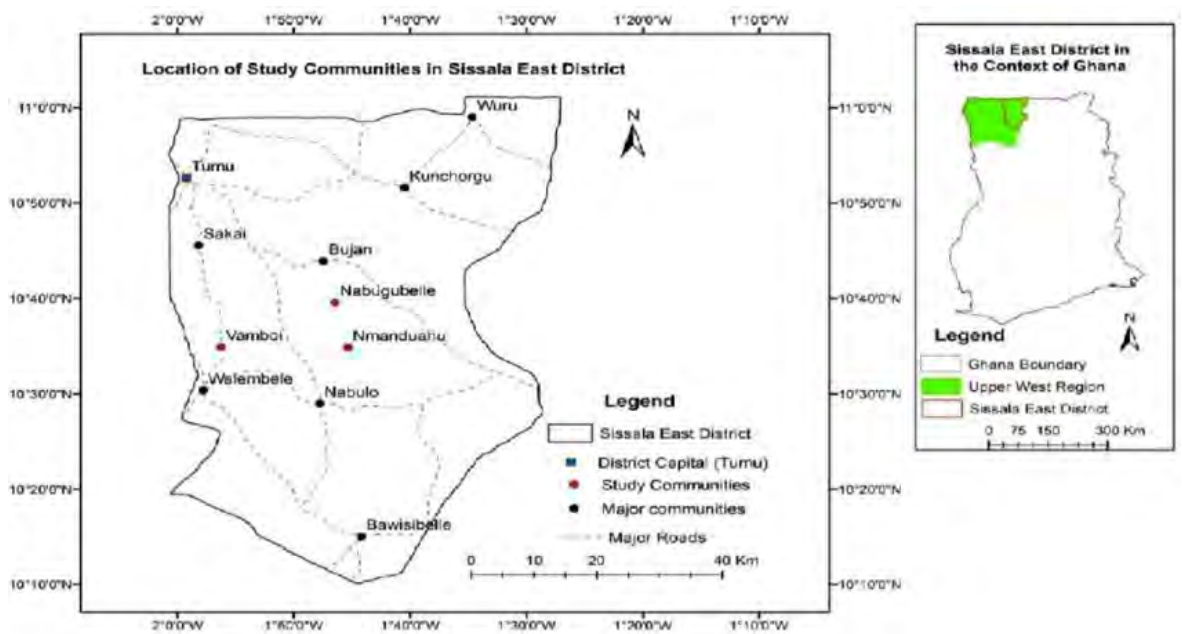


Figure 1. A map shows the *Location of study communities in the Sissala East District, Upper West Region of Ghana.*

Source: Adapted from (Yahaya, (2014)

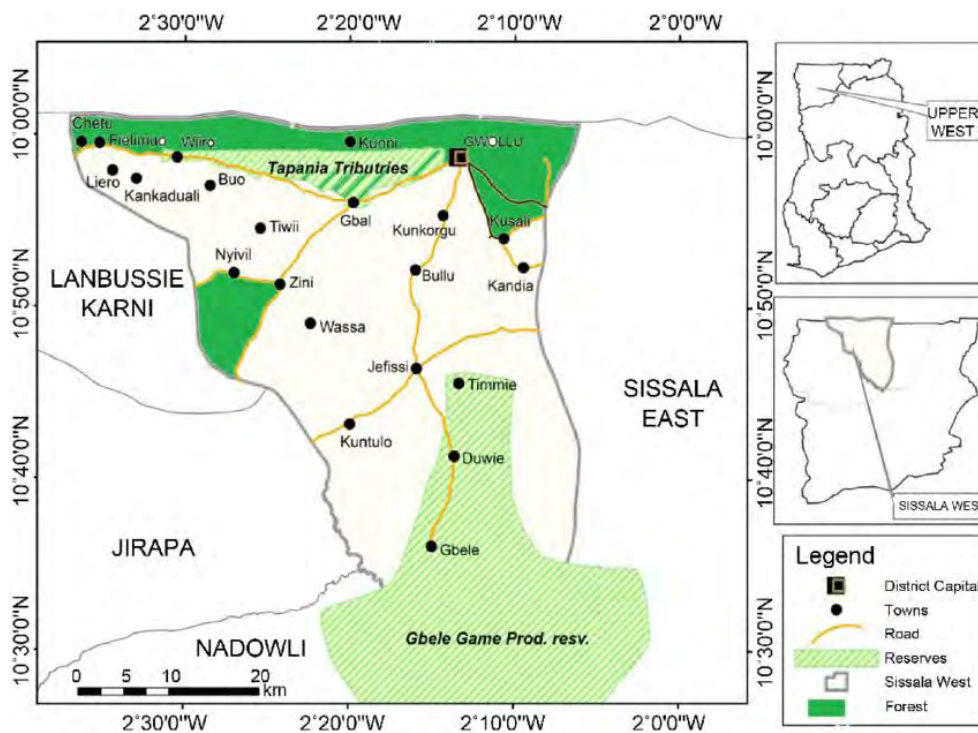


Figure 2. A map showing the location of the study communities in the Sissala West District. *Temporal analysis of the state of the Gbele Resource Reserve in the Upper West Region, Ghana*
 Source: Adapted from Aabeyir, Peprah, and Amponsah, (2024).

The Builsa District to the east and the Kassena-Nankani District to the northeast of the Upper West Region, both of which are in Ghana's Upper East Region, enclose the land. In the Northern Region, the Sisaala area is bordered to the southeast by the West Mamprusi District and to the northwest by the Lawra District in the Upper West Region. It is bordered to the southwest by Wa West District. An expansion into the neighboring Burkina Faso's territory is located to the north. In 2005, Tumu and Gwollu were designated as the district capitals of the Sisaala East and West Districts, respectively, which were created from the Sisaala District. In the same way, Funsu became the capital of the Wa East District.

The Sisaala land has two districts for administrative purposes, and since each district is a constituency, the same is true for political constituencies. Islam and Christianity in particular have had a major cultural impact on Sisaala beliefs and customs. The Sisaala way of life has also been impacted by Western schooling. As a result, people's cultural values, beliefs, customs, and way of life have been continuously changing. It is believed that the Sisaala people are one

people. The foundation of the Sisaala economy is agriculture and livestock rearing. The agricultural sector is defined by the production of livestock and crops.

Despite efforts to promote the sector, productivity remains at a subsistence level. Agriculture employs nearly ninety percent (90%) of the labour force. The principal crops farmed in Sisaala land are millet, sorghum (guinea corn), maize, cowpea, and yam. Cotton, shea nuts, and dawadawa are other cash crops farmed in the Sisaala traditional area. The shea, dawadawa, and baobab trees are important economic trees in the Sisaala communities, and they also greatly boost household income. Animal rearing is encouraged by the greenery on the Sisaala terrain. The Sisaala Bayira performance is an integral part of the cultural heritage of the Sisaala people, an ethnic group primarily located in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The Bayira performances are characterized by their culturally-specific use of repetitions, images, metaphors, and symbols for essence of mourning.

Hunting is a major activity apart from farming among the Sisaala and every adolescent boy of the Sisaala learns to hunt usually in groups. Organized groups during the dry season go hunting using local weapons such as cudgels, spear, and bow and arrow. Group hunting helps hunters arrest their target easily as some animals run so fast that one person cannot catch up with the speed of the animal. Dogs also hunt, so, the Sisaala people rear and train dogs for hunting and use them to support their hunting activities. Currently, with the advancement of technology, sophisticated weapons such as guns are used and an individual can embark on hunting alone. Hunting poetry is similar to military poetry in many ways, especially in that it is often associated with ideas of danger, pride, and glory; it is also frequently seen as a more specialized branch of poetry; and lastly, it frequently focuses on action as well as action contemplation, either in the present or (more frequently) in the past (Finnegan, 2012). Hunting poses a risk to hunters due to the encounters with untamed wildlife and other dangerous species that they must contend with while hunting. After conquering the threat of a wild animal, every professional hunter has either

encountered or will experience a risky or challenging moment during hunting expeditions, and they will attest to what Finnegan called the “danger, pride and glory.”

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Dirges form an integral component of African traditional culture, functioning as expressive mediums through which grief, mourning, and remembrance of the deceased are conveyed. Within the Ghanaian and broader African context, dirges are often performed by women, employing call-and-response patterns accompanied by percussion instruments. However, the Sisaala dirge - like the Bayira performance - deviates from this norm by being predominantly male-centered. The Bayira, in particular, embodies a culturally specific performative art that intertwines music, movement, and language to articulate the intricate emotions associated with death, loss, and continuity within the Sisaala worldview.

Over the years, scholars have made significant strides in documenting and analyzing various aspects of Sisaala funeral dirges and performances. Nketia (1965), in *Sisaala Bayira: A Study of Traditional Performance* established a foundational ethnographic and analytical framework that illuminated the musical structures, ritual contexts, and cultural functions of Bayira within Sisaala funerary traditions. Building on such groundwork, Barber (2003), in *Text and Performance in Africa*, broadened the theoretical understanding of African oral traditions by demonstrating the dynamic interplay between text, performance, and social meaning—though her focus was not exclusively on the Sisaala.

Subsequent contributions have further examined Bayira through different disciplinary lenses. Phyfferoen (2005) explored the integration of music and dance in Sisaala ritual practices, highlighting their role in reinforcing communal identity. Adwedoba (2005), in *The Bayira of the Sisaala People*, examined its socio-religious functions as a communicative medium between the living and the dead. Similarly, Sanka (2010), in *The Sisaala Dirge*, emphasized its poetic

structure, diction, and imagery as vehicles for emotional release and moral instruction. Nketia-Gyimah (2014) advanced the discourse by analyzing the musical and cultural significance of Bayira within modern Sisaala society, while Kpikpi (2017) and Dapila (2020) provided semiotic and multimodal perspectives on its performance, language, and symbolic gestures.

Despite these extensive scholarly engagements, a critical gap persists in the textual interpretation of Sisaala Bayira performances. Existing literature has predominantly emphasized the musical, performative, and socio-cultural aspects, with comparatively limited attention to the literary dimensions—such as symbolism, metaphor, narrative construction, and thematic representation. Consequently, there remains an incomplete understanding of how the textual and poetic fabric of Bayira contributes to articulating the Sisaala people’s worldview of life, death, morality, and identity.

This study, therefore, sought to address this gap by offering a textual interpretation of the Sisaala Bayira performance. It investigates how its poetic composition, thematic preoccupations, and aesthetic techniques communicate collective memory, emotion, and cultural philosophy. Through this lens, the research aims to enrich the discourse on African oral literature by presenting Bayira not merely as a performative ritual but as a living literary text that encapsulates the interdependence of language, culture, and artistry within Sisaala tradition.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to develop an understanding of the Sisaala oral heritage by investigating and analyzing the Sisaala Bayira Performance, a traditional cultural practice of the people, through a textual interpretation of its narratives and poetic techniques as a verbal art.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. explore the historical and cultural contexts of Sisaala Bayira performance within the framework of Sisaala oral traditions.
2. analyze the aesthetic features embedded in Sisaala Bayira performance.
3. assess the literary significance of the Bayira performance in the context of Sisaala oral traditions.

1.5 Research Questions

To achieve the desired objectives, the following research questions were formulated:

1. How can the historical and cultural contexts of the Sisaala Bayira performance be explored within the framework of Sisaala oral traditions?
2. What aesthetic features are embedded in Sisaala Bayira performance?
3. How can the literary significance of the Sisaala Bayira performance be assessed within the context of Sisaala oral traditions?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This research will contribute to the documentation and preservation of the Sisaala Bayira performance as an important cultural heritage. The study will enhance our understanding of the Sisaala culture, traditions and social dynamics through the interpretation of the dance's literary aspects. The findings will fill existing research gaps and provide scholarly foundation for further studies on Sisaala culture, performance arts and African literary traditions. The study will also empower the Sisaala community by validating and promoting their cultural practices, fostering a sense of pride and identity among the members.

1.7 Theoretical Framework (TF)

This section foregrounds the theoretical frameworks which backed the present study. These are: Tedlock's (1972) Ethno-poetics and Schechner's (2020) performance Theories.

1. 7.1 the Performance Theories

This study looks at the textual and aesthetic aspects of Sisaala Bayira performances from two different theoretical perspectives: Dennis Tedlock's ethno-poetics and Richard Schechner's performance theory. These frameworks were chosen for their significance in the study of oral traditions, particularly those that mix poetry, ritual, and performance, such as the Sisaala funeral dirges. Both theories provide a comprehensive interpretive framework for fully understanding Bayira's cultural, linguistic, and performative components.

Tedlock's Ethno-poetics (1972) was a reaction against earlier methods that attempted to decontextualize oral traditions by treating them as written texts. Ethno-poetics emphasizes the value of preserving oral art's cultural and performative elements in translation and analysis. Tedlock asserts that the comprehension of oral texts requires certain components, including pacing, repetition, tone shifts, pauses, and audience engagement. Therefore, the goal of the ethno-poetic approach is to portray the artistic form and oral artistry seen in indigenous performances. Applying this to the text allows for an examination of the lyrical structure and linguistic nuances that define the emotional and creative depth of the Sisaala Bayira. Through this lens, Bayira is a literary representation of collective memory and identity as well as a sorrow for the deceased, exhibiting spirituality embedded in Sisaala oral art (Tedlock, 1972).

Richard Schechner's Performance Theory (2020) offers a more thorough interpretive framework, situating Bayira within the context of its cultural performance and rituals. Schechner defines performance as "restored behavior," which reenacts and changes social experiences. His theory brings theater studies and anthropology together by viewing performance as a socially dynamic activity that involves audience and performer interaction in a common space (Schechner, 2020). Applying this concept to Sisaala Bayira provides a more in-depth understanding of the performance's ritualized community character. The dirge, as a communal gesture of grief and remembrance, promotes cultural continuity and social cohesion. In addition

to its aesthetic worth, the performance's chants, gestures, and musical rhythms have spiritual and social meaning.

The convergence of these two concepts allows for a complete evaluation of Sisaala Bayira as both text and performance. Tedlock's ethno-poetics emphasizes textual and linguistic invention, whereas Schechner's performance theory focuses on the social, ritual, and participatory dimensions. When considered together, they provide a multidimensional framework that captures Bayira's literary talent, cultural symbolism, and performance potential. By bridging the gap between literary and performative interpretation, this theoretical combination ensures that the analysis of Sisaala Bayira covers the full scope of oral performance in Africa.

The theory focuses on storytelling performance, such as the storyteller's use of gestures, facial emotions, and vocal skills. Tedlock highlights the relationship between cultural expression and the community's oral legacy. In the case of Sisaala, ethno-poetics can aid in the discovery of poetic devices, structures, and patterns used in the narrative. It enables the interpretation to evaluate the linguistic and aesthetic components, such as meter, rhythm, repetition, and imagery that contribute to the text's creative expression. According to Tedlock (1972), ethno-poetics is the study of verbal arts in all languages and cultures, with a particular emphasis on the oral conveyance of proverbs, prayers, praise, predictions, curses, and riddles created by the spoken, chanted, or singing voice. Such aims at translating, transcribing, interpreting, and analyzing oral performances to make them cross-culturally accessible as works of art.

The Performance Theory propounded by Richard Schechner was used as a background analytical point of reference for this study. This performance theory as postulated by Richard Schechner was also used as a benchmark for streamlining the research. This Performance Theory was established on four cardinal principles. These were the Expressive Culture, Presentation of

Self, Restored Behaviour and the Concept of Performativity. Performances are the building blocks of a society and the structure of reality of this society rests solely on performances. Schechner posits that to treat any object, work or product as performance - a painting, a novel, a shoe, or anything at all, it means to investigate what the object does, how it interacts with other objects or beings and how it relates to other objects or beings. Performances exist only as actions, interactions and relationships (James, 2016).

Performances are elements that characterize human actions that have gone through the phase of construction and perhaps reconstruction through a multi-stage process, rehearsed and presented in a stylized and highly fashionable manner. As a result, every stated performance must have an origin, succeeded by a learning and transmission process. Since a performance might not necessarily be a reality, then it becomes a second presentation of a practiced art James (2016), On the other hand, Schechner believes that performance is a broad term that encompasses much more than theatrically based experiences. Performances extend to every area of human existence. To generally discuss the concept of performance having briefly enunciated what drama, script, and theatre are, he advances that Performance is the broadest, most ill-defined disc. The whole constellation of events, most of them passing unnoticed that takes place in or among both performers and the audience from the time the first spectator enters the field of the performance- the precinct where the theatre takes place-to the time the last spectator leaves. What this simply means is that a performance can occur even without it being previously arranged either by the performer or the spectator (audience) that is, a performance may occur spontaneously, or improvised.

Secondly, no performance can take place without the presence of the performer and the spectator because every performance is built upon these two parties. James (2016) outlines the major tenets of Schechner's performance Theory as rites, ceremonies, shamanism, eruption and resolution of crises, performance in everyday life, sports and entertainment, play, art-making process, and ritualization.

1.8 Limitations to the Study (LS)

To begin with, time constraints limited the extent of fieldwork and observation. Bayira performances are not daily occurrences; they are staged during special cultural moments such as funerals, harvest festivals, and initiation rites. The irregular scheduling of these events made it difficult to witness all forms of the performance within the research period.

Moreover, financial and logistical challenges affected the researcher's ability to travel widely across all Sisaala-speaking areas. As a result, the study focused mainly on communities where Bayira performance remains most active and accessible. While this approach ensured a deeper engagement with specific performances, it also meant that variations of the performance in other locations could not be fully explored.

The study also faced a limitation in terms of documented literature. Scholarly works specifically focusing on the Sisaala Bayira are scarce, which meant that the research relied largely on oral narratives, interviews, and participant observation. Though these provided rich and authentic insights, they also came with the possibility of memory lapses and personal biases on the part of respondents.

In addition, the study's interpretive orientation—which sought to analyze Bayira as both a text and a performance—naturally reflects the researcher's analytical and cultural lens. While great care was taken to remain objective, interpretation is always influenced to some extent by the scholar's own worldview and critical approach.

Lastly, language posed a minor challenge. Since much of the performance and interview data were in the Sisaala language, translation into English occasionally risked losing subtle meanings and cultural nuances. Efforts were made to verify translations with native speakers to preserve the authenticity of the expressions used.

Despite these limitations, the study offers a valuable and insightful interpretation of the Sisaala Bayira performance. It contributes meaningfully to the understanding of how oral traditions can be examined through textual and performative lenses and provides a foundation for further inquiry into African performance and literary studies.

1.8.1 Delimitation to the Study

This study was carefully delimited to ensure focus and manageability in exploring the textual and performative dimensions of the Sisaala Bayira. The research concentrated on selected communities within the Sisaala areas of the Upper West Region, particularly those where the Bayira tradition remains vibrant and accessible to the researcher. This deliberate focus provided a manageable scope for detailed observation and textual interpretation.

The study was also limited to the textual interpretation of Bayira as a performance art. It examined the structure, language, themes, and cultural symbols embedded in the performance, rather than providing a comprehensive ethno musicological or choreographic analysis. The emphasis, therefore, was on understanding Bayira as a form of oral literature that can be read and interpreted like a text, while acknowledging its performative essence.

Additionally, the research focused mainly on contemporary performances observed within the study period, though historical and traditional references were included to provide context. This choice was made to capture how Bayira continues to function as a living art form that reflects both continuity and change within Sisaala culture.

The study also targeted specific participants—including Bayira performers, elders, and cultural custodians—whose insights were relevant to the textual and cultural interpretation of the performance. Other aspects of Sisaala cultural expression, such as folktales or proverbs, were not explored in depth, as they fell outside the main focus of the study.

By setting these boundaries, the study aimed to maintain clarity and depth in analyzing the Sisaala Bayira as a rich cultural text. This focus ensured a coherent exploration of its literary and performative elements without diluting attention across multiple cultural forms.

1.9 Definition of Technical Terms

Scholarly work of this kind often contains relevant words that need to be defined so that future researchers could refer to the meaning where necessary. The definition of the terms was backed by empirical studies from literary scholars whose sources of literary works could be verified.

- Ethno-poetics is an interdisciplinary approach to the study of oral literature that combines insights from linguistics, anthropology, and literary theory. The theory emphasizes the importance of understanding oral literature within its cultural and historical context, paying close attention to the ways in which language is used to create meaning and express cultural values Tedlock (1972).
- Bayira: Literally means “performance for men”. In the traditional Ghanaian sense “man” or “men” connotes boldness. Traditionally, especially in this part of the world, when one mentions “man” or “men” it is attributed to boldness. It is orally bequeathed or transmitted from generation to generation.
- Performance as defined by Ayinde is a discourse or speech act in which music, performance and drama are fully integrated to comprise an indivisible aesthetic form Ayinde, (2017, p. 298).

- Death, in the view of Wittgenstein, (2020) is not a natural occurrence; it is just the end of the journey, non-event, timeless, and immortal. He claims that we are born to die. It simply serves to expand the boundaries of our current lives and environments.
- Gorico is a one headed drum use for the performance especially Bayira.
- Dondo on the other hand is a double headed drum which is also used for the performance of Bayira in the Sisaalaland.

1.10 Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five main chapters, each addressing a specific aspect of the research topic in a logical and coherent manner. Chapter One introduces the study and provides the background to the research problem. It outlines the statement of the problem, research questions, objectives, significance, and scope of the study. The chapter also discusses the limitations and delimitations that shaped the study's focus.

Chapter Two presents a comprehensive review of related literature and theoretical perspectives relevant to the study. It examines scholarly works on African oral literature, performance theory, and the interpretive approaches used in analyzing traditional performances such as the Sisaala Bayira. The chapter establishes the conceptual and theoretical framework that guides the study.

Chapter Three focuses on the research methodology. It discusses the research design, study area, target population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and procedures for data analysis. The chapter also addresses ethical considerations that guided the fieldwork and interpretation processes.

Chapter Four presents and analyzes the data collected. It offers a textual and performative interpretation of the Sisaala Bayira, exploring its structure, themes, language, symbolism, and

cultural significance. The chapter also situates the performance within the broader context of Sisaala oral traditions and aesthetics.

Chapter Five provides a summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations. It highlights the major insights derived from the study, discusses their implications for literary and cultural studies, and suggests areas for future research on African oral and performance traditions.

This organization ensures a systematic flow from the general background to detailed analysis and final reflections, allowing for a holistic understanding of the Sisaala Bayira as both a textual and performative art form.

1.11 Chapter Summary

Chapter one provided the general introduction and foundation for the study. It began with the background to the study, which discussed the significance of oral traditions in African societies and positioned the Sisaala Bayira performance as a vital cultural and literary expression worthy of textual interpretation. The statement of the problem highlighted the limited scholarly attention given to Bayira as a literary text, despite its rich narrative and performative dimensions.

The chapter also outlined the purpose and objectives of the study, which sought to explore and interpret the Bayira as a textual form of oral literature, examining its structure, themes, language, and cultural relevance. Corresponding research questions were formulated to guide the inquiry.

The significance of the study emphasized its contribution to the understanding of African oral literature and performance studies, especially in bridging the gap between textual analysis and performative interpretation. The scope of the study defined the geographical and thematic

boundaries, focusing on selected Sisaala communities and the interpretive dimensions of Bayira performances.

The chapter further discussed the limitations that affected the study, including time, financial constraints, and challenges related to data collection and translation. The delimitation of the study clarified the specific focus on textual interpretation, distinguishing it from broader ethnographic or musical analyses.

Finally, the organization of the study outlined the structure of the entire research, explaining the content and purpose of each chapter.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Chapter one looked at the background to the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, the research questions and the significance of the study. The review of literature explored the significance of African oral literature, the origins of Bayira performance, research evidence on the Bayira performance and the symbolic representation of the literary elements in the performance. The literature equally discussed the conceptualization of African oral literature, the African dirge as oral poetry. It is also important to note that beyond entertainment, the performance incorporates some histrionic artistic elements. The review enables the researcher to locate the gap and help focus the discussions properly.

2.2. Main Concepts of African Oral Literature

African oral literature is a dynamic and intricate collection of verbal art forms that capture the collective memories, values, and worldviews of African communities. It serves as a conduit for the transmission of cultural heritage, moral principles, and indigenous knowledge from one generation to another.

The study and appreciation of African oral literature rest upon several interconnected concepts, notably orality, performance, and performativity, among others. The foundation of African literature lies in orality. It denotes the predominance of spoken language as the primary medium of creative and cultural expression. In contrast to written literature, oral literature is transmitted and preserved through verbal exchanges, performances, and audience participation. Through performance and communal engagement, cultural knowledge is continuously

revitalized, underscoring the immediacy, flexibility, and accessibility that characterize oral traditions (Finnegan, 2012).

According to Ong (1982) orality is a distinctive mode of cultural existence in which societies without writing systems rely on spoken language for the preservation and dissemination of knowledge. In such societies, the transmission of wisdom, history, and values occurs through storytelling, songs, proverbs, and rituals. Ong further notes that oral cultures tend to engage in “formulaic thinking,” that is, the use of familiar patterns, clichés, and repetitive expressions to facilitate memory retention and ensure consistency in the transmission of ideas.

Ganyi (2014) emphasizes that orality serves as a structured means of encoding and decoding information for educational purposes and cultural transmission. Storytelling, in this sense, functions not only as a mode of entertainment but also as a pedagogical tool for imparting moral values, social norms, and practical wisdom. The oral tradition thus plays a crucial role in shaping identity and sustaining collective consciousness within African societies.

Finnegan (1970) defines oral literature as the verbal art of traditional cultures transmitted by word of mouth. She argues that literature, whether written or oral, is an expression of the values, aspirations, joys, and sorrows of a community, and that these expressions do not depend on literacy for their existence. Finnegan further maintains that the advent of written literature or the documentation of oral forms does not signify the end of oral traditions. Rather, oral literature continues to exist alongside written forms, evolving while maintaining its social and cultural functions.

Performance and performativity are central to understanding the dynamic nature of African oral literature. The term *performance* refers to the enactment of an action within a specific social or public context. It involves the embodiment of social roles, norms, and

expectations through verbal and non-verbal expressions such as speech, song, dance, and gesture. Through performance, the oral artist brings the text to life, engaging the audience in a participatory event that reinforces communal values and emotional connection (Schechner, 2020).

Performativity, on the other hand, extends beyond the act of performance to the idea that actions and utterances can create or constitute social realities. The concept, first introduced by Austin (1955) in his theory of *speech acts* and later expanded by Butler (1990, 1993), suggests that language and behavior do not merely reflect reality but actively produce it. In this sense, performativity explains how oral performances—through repetition, symbolism, and ritual—construct and reinforce identities, belief systems, and social norms.

The concepts of orality and performance intersect profoundly in African oral traditions. Oral literature is not merely spoken; it is *performed*. The spoken word is inseparable from gesture, rhythm, song, dance, and audience participation. The performance transforms the narrative into a collective experience in which meaning is co-created by the performer and the audience. This interactive quality makes oral literature both a linguistic and a performative art form (Barber, 2003; Schechner, 2020).

In many African societies, storytelling sessions, dirges, and praise poetry are accompanied by drumming, chanting, and movement, creating a multisensory experience that deepens emotional and cultural resonance. The performer becomes a mediator between the community and its cultural heritage, using rhythm and tone to evoke shared memories and emotions (Nketia, 1974). The audience, in turn, responds through verbal interjections, applause, or song, completing the cycle of performance. Thus, performance is not an individual act but a communal dialogue that reinforces social cohesion and collective identity.

Furthermore, the performative nature of oral literature ensures its continuity and adaptability. Each performance is unique, shaped by context, audience, and the creativity of the performer. As Barber (2003) observes, this flexibility allows oral literature to remain relevant across time, adapting to new circumstances while retaining its traditional essence. The fusion of orality and performance therefore embodies the living, evolving nature of African artistic expression—an art that speaks, moves, and transforms in harmony with the community's life and rhythm.

In sum, African oral literature is best understood through the interplay of orality, performance, and performativity. These concepts illuminate its dynamic, communal, and adaptive nature as an art form that both preserves and recreates cultural identity. The integration of spoken word, movement, and audience interaction highlights the vitality of African oral traditions as living expressions of social consciousness and moral philosophy.

Performance is thus a fundamental dimension of culture as well as the production of knowledge about culture. It might include anything from individual agents' negotiations of everyday life; to the stories people tell each other, popular entertainments, political oratory, and guerrilla warfare, to bounded events such as theater, ritual, festivals, parades, and more. (Drewal, 1991, p.1).

Performance is a discourse or speech act in which music, dance, and drama are fully integrated to comprise an indivisible aesthetic form. Performance is extremely important in oral literature because, without it, oral tradition remains lifeless. Oral literature is vastly enhanced and it is given its proper character by the manner in which it is performed Ayinde, (2017). The passage underscores the centrality of oral transmission as a mechanism through which cultural knowledge, beliefs, and values are perpetuated across generations. Within the context of the Sisaala Bayira Performance, this continuity of orality manifests through diverse expressive forms such as verbal narratives, songs, chants, and dramatic enactments. These forms collectively constitute an archive of communal memory, embodying the historical consciousness, moral codes,

and social structures of the Sisaala people. As Nketia (1965) asserts, oral traditions in African societies serve as repositories of collective experience and social order, reflecting the interdependence of art, ritual, and community life. Similarly, Finnegan (1970) emphasizes that oral performances are not merely artistic expressions but living cultural practices through which societies negotiate identity and continuity. Through the Bayira performance, ancestral wisdom and lived experiences are artistically reinterpreted and transmitted, ensuring the preservation of collective identity and cultural heritage. Furthermore, the role of the audience in this process is indispensable. Their capacity to receive, interpret, and respond to the performed messages contributes to the dynamic nature of cultural transmission. The audience's feedback—through applause, emotional reactions, and contextual understanding—serves as a dialogic mechanism that shapes meaning and reinforces shared cultural values. In performance settings such as *Paari-gbiele* (funeral contexts), audience engagement becomes a vital component of the communicative process, mediating between performer and community. As Vansina (1985) notes, oral traditions depend heavily on audience participation and social context for their transmission and renewal. Consequently, the Sisaala Bayira Performance operates not merely as an aesthetic or ritual act but as an interactive institution that sustains and renews the oral traditions of the Sisaala society.

Paari-gbiele is an annual post-harvest festival celebrated by the Sisaala indigenes of Tumu Traditional Area in the Sisaala East Municipality of the Upper West Region of northern Ghana. It is celebrated annually to mark the end of successful farming season. It also serves as a momentous occasion for the glorification of the almighty God and the revered agriculturally related deities of the indigenes of Tumu Traditional Area for their protection and blessings of seasonal bumper harvests to the farmers Navei (2021, p.1).

Scholars like (Alembi, 2002; Finnegan, 2012) argue that oral literature (unwritten form) of Africa is very familiar with literate cultures because of its nature. In relation to this, there is a controversy in academy over a clear boundary of definition of literature. However, there is a

great attempt by some scholars to present a sense of what the term is. Finnegan (1970) for instance, defines oral literature as the creativity in the unwritten genres. In another sense, Finnegan (2012, p. 16) puts it simply as what is “passed down word for word from generation to generation and thus reproduced verbatim from memory throughout the centuries; or, alternatively, that oral literature is something that arises communally, from the people or the ‘folk’ as a whole, so that there can be no question of individual authorship or originality.” Furthermore, orality lays emphasis on spoken word (Ong, 1982). He emphasizes the significance of orality on human communication, culture and cognition. He claims oral communication is immediate and dynamic.

African Oral Literature is generally conceptualized as the creative form of unwritten text (Finnegan, 1970; Okpewho, 1992). These scholars, among others in the nineteenth century, conceptualized oral literature as oral tradition. It is conceived as orature, denoting the marriage between orality and literature (Finnegan, 1970). Among European scholars and critics, they believe that oral literature is conceptualized in derogatory sense as primitive ideas. African oral literature encompasses various trends, reflecting the continent’s rich cultural diversity. There are traditional trends consisting of epic storytelling, celebrating heroes like Sundiata. Folktales on the other hand are stories conveying moral lessons and cultural values.

Finnegan, (1970; revised in 2012) puts it that the performativity aspect of oral literature in the mid-1850s was one of its alluring qualities. The performance of songs, stories, and other kinds of expression frequently took place in group settings, with the speaker interacting directly with the audience. Oral literature became a significant component of many cultural traditions as a result, contributing to a feeling of shared experience and community identification. During the second phase of research, these academics significantly contributed to the advancement of the study of African oral literature, establishing it as a rich and active field of study that is still expanding and evolving today. Nketia, (1965) opines that oral literature is seen as a platform for

social critique. It enables communities to address pressing issues, challenge societal norms and promote change. Oral narratives critique social ills, such as inequality, corruption and injustice.

2.3 Main Characteristics of African Oral Tradition

Africa is a continent renowned for its extensive oral cultures. The extensive history of folk culture on the continent is reflected in the oral arts of Africa. Zewde (2000, referenced Hussein, 2005) Argues that Africa's long history of oral art still has a great impact on society's modern way of life. African oral traditions make it easier to pass down knowledge and customs from one generation to the next. African societies continue to pass on their social norms and values, political customs and traditions, economic structure and transitions orally.

Oral traditions are stories passed down verbally from one generation to the other. Folktales and fables, epic histories and narrations, proverbs or sayings, songs, and other forms of oral or musical transmission are used to convey the messages. A civilization can carry information down through the centuries without writing thanks to oral traditions. They aid in understanding the world and are employed in educating both youngsters and adults about significant facets of their culture Finnegan (1970).

Claim Tetteh and Derx-Techi (2016) emphasize that folk songs are native artistic expressions performed in a community's traditional context, reflecting shared institutions, values, and cultural practices. This perspective is closely related to *A Textual Interpretation of Sisaala Bayira Performance*, as the Bayira performance functions in a similar cultural capacity among the Sisaala people. Like the Edina folk songs that preserve and communicate the people's oral traditions and historical narratives, the Sisaala Bayira performance encapsulates the collective memory, values, and worldview of its community. It serves not only as entertainment but also as a medium through which the Sisaala people transmit their cultural knowledge, moral lessons, and social identity from one generation to another.

Oral literature is any speech, whether spoken, recited, or sung, that exhibits to a sufficient degree, the aesthetic qualities of precise observation, vivid imagination, and inventive expression (Oluwadara, 2013 referenced Okpewho, 1990).

Nnyagu (2017) contends that any spoken art that is transmitted orally between generations rather than being recorded on paper is referred to as oral literature. Oral literature is frequently referred to as the literature of the primitive community since it is conveyed verbally rather than via written means.

Finnegan (1970) states oral traditions serve as a moral compass for society and humans and provide them with a sense of place and purpose. It is important for communities to pass on wisdom to young people since there is frequently a lesson or value to impart. Knowledge of culture and history is passed down through parents, grandparents, and other family members. Imagination is stimulated, essential life lessons are imparted, and amusement is provided via storytelling.

As Ganyi (2014) acknowledges, storytelling serves as a significant medium for communication and teaching in Africa and provides the foundation for understanding African knowledge systems and African cosmology, promotes the synergy or unity of nature and humanity within which reality is considered as a whole entity. As a result, storytelling evolves or endures as a common human activity that verifies existence, provides a useful representation of language variation and richness, and allows for the expression of a culture's worldview.

As argued by Adedeji (1971) Oral tradition is described as a "complex body of speech or spoken art created as a means of recalling the past." Oral tradition, he insists, is founded on the ideas, beliefs, symbols, presumptions, attitudes, and sentiments of the people.

Nnyagu (2017) Opines that Oral literature is an aspect of literature preserved not in written form but in oral form. It is highly valued in Africa in general and in Igbo land in particular

mainly because of its didactic nature. Oral genres such as love songs, narrative stories, proverbs, cradlesongs, eulogies and hymns (poems of praise), epic verses and dirges are examples of African oral tradition. In addition to these, each African society has songs concerning wars, social conflicts, and funerary rites. The life situation of the African society ranging from sublime religious ideals to everyday practical advice gained symbolic expressions in oral arts.

Rachel (2011) observes that a dirge is a solemn song or lament that expresses mourning or grief and it is ideal for use at a funeral. It frequently takes the form of a quick hymn. Dirges tend to be shorter and less meditative than elegies. Agro (2020) reiterates that dirges have long been sung to symbolize pain caused by death, but a variety of issues have recently threatened their live performance. Traditional authorities must encourage the live performance of dirges.

Woma (2012, p.1) agrees that funeral music and dirge are forms of public discourse through which Dagara oral history and traditional beliefs are expressed and communicated to the ritual participants by the musicians and dirge singers. As public rhetoric, the textual themes of Dagara funeral and dirge are deeply rooted in proverbial language that addresses issues of moral values, social conflicts and local politics. Because of their political themes, funeral music and dirge are considered by the Dagara as the single most important form of public discourse.

Sanka (2010) looks at the Sisaala dirge by exploring its literary and cultural background as regards its performance in Sisaali. He focused on the aesthetics, cultural, moral and socio-political impact of dirge performance.

James (2016) puts it that culture is a phenomenon that cannot be wiped out from any society, regardless of human technological and innovative achievements, ethnic melting pots, or the expansion of religious ideas. Because culture anchors and defines any society, it cannot be separated from the people. Culture is made up of beliefs that regulate people's behaviour patterns in society and serve to differentiate one culture from another.

James (2016) contends that culture is not carried down physiologically; it is mostly psychological in nature, although it can also include universally accepted and passed-down attitudes from one group of people to another. The features differ from society to society and are usually the outcome of the society's culture. Only through the lens of human behavior can these characteristics or cultural practices be preserved and studied. Culture is a contentious subject since different groups have different opinions about what it is. This broad pattern includes human knowledge, beliefs, and behavior. Language, beliefs, practices, taboos, codes, institutions, production methods, and aesthetic works are all examples of cultural expressions. The culture of a community, which consists of its common values, beliefs, knowledge, skills, and practices, determines how its members act at any given time. It consists of resources, abilities, and information accumulated over time. Celebrations, indigenous knowledge of botanical properties and medicinal applications, architectural designs, historic locations, conventional technology, conventional medical procedures, conventional methods of natural resource management, and other examples include music, theater, performance, and the visual arts. In other words, culture is a social construct developed involuntarily by a group of individuals in the same society who share similar views, values, and even a way of life. Similarly, culture has various meanings, most of which deal with speech actions, rhetorical structures of discourses, society's laws and traditions, and knowledge frameworks.

Matsumoto (2007) also indicates that culture is the way of life emanating from the use of the essential traits of members of a community to deal with challenges posed by the more significant environmental context in which they live, which helps them, meet their natural needs and shared objectives.

Oppong and Osei-Bonsu (2018) state that culture is a way of life that results from a group of people coming together to use their fundamental characteristics to solve the problems caused by the larger environmental context in which they live. This enables them to obtain their basic needs

and common goals. The passion, existence, and essence of a civilization are all aspects of culture.

Sanka, Adjei, and Marfo (2020) believe Tales and dirges are closely related, and in the context of Paasaala funerals, there are certain factors that tie them together. One of these cultural values is music, because it is so deeply ingrained in Sisaala socio-cultural systems and is used to signify numerous areas of daily life as well as important occasions.

Ganyi (2014) contends that within the context of a performance of a tale, the word "dynamic" refers to an event that is adaptable, particularly, as we recognize the idea of communication dynamics in the transfer of cognitive experience or information from one person to another. The storyteller can use this dynamic information transfer through oral communication, which he does a lot of in performance settings. Through direct appeals to the audience's emotions, the use of sophisticated nonverbal modes of communication like extra linguistic methods, the speaker has more freedom and power to psychologically manipulate and engage the audience during oral discourse.

Taluah (2013) opines that the verbal and non-verbal cues that are given during an event-in this case, a funeral-are both considered part of the performance environment. The funeral is a socio-cultural and artistic exchange of activities that includes mourners (kith and kin alike) who are in some way affected by the loss of the deceased, according to the Kasena and many other ethnic groups. Therefore, a thorough understanding of context becomes a critical factor in determining how to evaluate the texts. Therefore, any attempt at evaluating the texts without having a good understanding of the context in which they are situated would be doing them unfairness.

African performances often serve as a platform for social and political community. Through satire, humour, or symbolic representation, performers address societal issues, power

dynamics or historical events, providing a medium for social critique, cultural resilience and identity formation. Music is one of the most effective instruments for people to communicate with one another. Music is all-encompassing, and it may be used by singers to express them and transmit messages to their audiences. The relationship between song lyrics and message occurs as a result of the fact that an artist, whether conscious or not, always impacts their compositions with their intended meaning Taluah (2013).

Nwosu (2019) observes that every significant literary work must communicate an underlying meaning or idea. This assertion is particularly relevant to the present study, as the *Sisaala Bayira Performance* transcends the boundaries of mere entertainment to embody a rich tapestry of symbolic and thematic meanings. According to Mbah and Mbah (2007), themes constitute the fundamental issues, subjects, or concepts that a literary text seeks to communicate to its audience. Viewed from this perspective, the Bayira performance may be interpreted as a literary text that projects the collective consciousness of the Sisaala people through its thematic expressions.

The performance encapsulates a variety of themes such as heroism, ancestral reverence, morality, and communal harmony. The theme of heroism, for instance, is often expressed through songs and narratives that celebrate the bravery and selflessness of ancestors and warriors who defended the community. This serves not only as a form of historical preservation but also as moral instruction for younger generations. The theme of ancestral reverence is manifested through rituals, invocations, and symbolic gestures that affirm the Sisaala people's belief in spiritual continuity and the enduring presence of forebears in communal life.

Equally significant is the theme of communal harmony, which is reflected in the participatory nature of the performance. The collective singing, drumming, and dancing demonstrate the interdependence and solidarity that define Sisaala social existence. These

thematic elements reinforce the idea that the Bayira performance functions as a repository of cultural wisdom and a medium of socialization, transmitting the community's ethical codes and worldview from one generation to another.

Therefore, Nwosu's (2019) observation provides a crucial interpretive framework for understanding the Bayira performance as a literary text grounded in thematic depth. It underscores that cultural performances such as Bayira are not merely aesthetic expressions but also vehicles for articulating philosophical, moral, and social values embedded within the Sisaala cultural system.

For Bula (2019, p.31), Verbal art is not the same as the normal or ordinary speech of human beings. Verbal art is deliberately and skillfully undertaken. The "verbal art" of the verbal artist is always intentionally and artistically executed, not in the act of speaking per se but in that of oral performance." The predominant verbal arts that exist in every African community are folksongs, folktales, proverbs and riddles. The concept of riddle cuts across all cultures even though this verbal art has not recorded a huge harvest of research works from scholars. The attention of scholars over decades has been on folktales, proverbs, songs, and other artistic products that people perceive as more fascinating cited in Friday and Oghenerioborue, (2022, p.33).

The observations of Idogho (2013) and Amali (2012) provide a valuable framework for understanding the artistic and cultural relevance of the Sisaala Bayira performance. According to Idogho (2013), drama exerts both emotional and intellectual influence on participants and spectators alike, serving as a mirror through which human motivations and behaviours can be examined. This perspective aligns closely with the Sisaala Bayira tradition, which functions not merely as an entertainment form but as a collective reflection of life, morality, and identity. In Bayira performances, the interplay of dialogue, dance, drumming, costumes, and symbolic

gestures creates a vivid dramatization of community life, addressing themes such as heroism, death, fertility, and social harmony. These performative elements embody the same essence that Idogho attributes to drama—the ability to engage audiences in deep emotional and intellectual experiences that foster cultural introspection and communal bonding.

Similarly, the views of Amali (2012) and the findings of Friday and Oghenerioborue (2022) on the role of riddles in traditional societies further reinforce the educational and moral significance of the Bayira performance. Amali (2012) argues that riddles perform immeasurable functions in society, particularly in the moral and cultural upbringing of children. This observation mirrors the pedagogical role of Bayira within the Sisaala community, where performances transmit indigenous wisdom and social values across generations. Like the riddling traditions of the Idoma people, which introduce children to the material and non-material aspects of their culture, the Bayira employs songs, chants, rhythms, and symbolic actions to teach lessons about courage, respect, cooperation, and ancestral reverence. It serves as a living classroom where knowledge is not merely told but performed, allowing younger generations to internalize moral values through observation and participation.

In essence, the Sisaala Bayira performance can be viewed as a form of indigenous drama that integrates entertainment with education, emotion with reflection, and artistry with morality. It embodies the same principles that Idogho and Amali associate with traditional dramatic and oral forms—principles that promote self-awareness, social cohesion, and cultural preservation. Thus, Bayira is not only a performance but also a dynamic cultural institution, reflecting the Sisaala worldview and sustaining the moral fabric of the community through art.

Azuonye (1994) believes that the nature of performance, the voice and the mimicry, the stimulus and the response of the audience are central to oral literature. The performance also needs to be placed in its proper setting – the time of the day and the season. Performing culture

refers to lived traditions that emerge with each new performance of cultural norms—popular sayings, performances, music, everyday practices, and rituals—and it takes shape in the space between tradition and individuality. The performance has its messages as well as its aesthetics which can be learned through the language of drums, songs, the clapping of hands, the characterization and the elastic and plastic body of movements of the actors; the participation of the audience, and their imitation of the masquerades and the ululating, the rattles and songs which accompany these dramatic aspects reference Ayinde (2017, p. 298). The life and reality of oral performance are dependent on the performer and the audience. In other words, the existence of oral literature is dependent on performance and audience (Finnegan, 1970) referenced Manison and Mireku-Gyimah (2012, pp.1-2). The oral performer employs many resources to enhance and enliven the Journal of Communication and Cultural performances. These include language itself; then the dramatic elements such as body language, gestures, facial expressions, and mimicry to convey messages which, if in print, could hardly convey the same impact. The atmosphere of the performance, whether formal or informal, is further enhanced by the dress, accoutrement, or visual bearings of the performer (Finnegan, 1970) referenced Manison and Mireku-Gyimah (2012, pp. 1-2).

In the view of Filippou, Harahousou, Kabitsis, & Koleta (2013) folk performance is an aspect of human behaviour, a non-verbal system of communication in which society itself is reflected. Performance, apart from motion, also covers the areas surrounding it; the environment where it occurs and develops the relationships between the performers themselves and between the performers and spectators, the objects used during the performance, and even the performers' costumes.

Undoubtedly, the African verbal genre is not only literature; it is also performance. True, most often than not, at the mention of the term “performance” the sense that first comes to mind is one of dramatic enactment or gesturing to the exclusion of oral rendition. However, with

regard to the performance of the African verbal genre particularly, oral performance is, as noted before, viewed to differ from bodily movements like gesturing, facial expressions, clapping, and dancing- something which Finnegan rationalizes to be as a result of concentration on the words to the exclusion of the vital and essential aspect of performance Bula, (2020).

Performance is also an art that expresses emotions based on human body images and movements. The emotion of performance is conveyed to the audience through the softness and pose of the human body, giving the audience a powerful audiovisual impact. It is a kind of beauty in form. The performers bring out the deepest call of the soul in a beautiful performance, carrying the aesthetic consciousness of human beings and embodying the emotions in people's minds Lu, (2021).

There is a long history between performance and narrative. Performance has been a means of expression for people and societies since ancient civilization (Kreitler, & Kreitler, 1972), referenced Taylor, (2021). Yue, (2017) performance is a form of expression, which has strong artistic and aesthetic values. In respect of the condition of the market economy, the performance works could be called a kind of special commodity which has economic, social, and aesthetic values. In the new historical period, if we want to create excellent works of performance, we should unify the works of aesthetic value and economic value, constantly explore the aesthetic value of performance art and strive for its aesthetic value and economic value of organic integration.

Accessing narrative via the body is a valuable quest since the body is a natural reservoir of insight. We can consider movement to be our most natural mode of communication. Literary analysis requires not only multiple points of view and interpretive analysis of a literary work, but also supporting principles and generalizations based on human situational awareness as well as literary and rhetorical communication practices, such as text types, plot structures, character

types, and rhetorical devices" (Applebee, Burroughs, & Stevens, 2000). One of the most basic motives of performance is the expression and communication of emotion. People or even certain animals often perform as a way of releasing powerful feelings, such as sudden accesses of high spirits, joy, impatience, or anger. These motive forces can be seen not only in the spontaneous skipping, stamping, and jumping movements often performed in moments of intense emotion, but also in the more formalized movements of *set* performances, such as tribal war performances or festive folk dances. Here, the performance helps to generate emotions as well as release them.

Bamaaya, meaning *The River (valley) is wet*, is the most popular social music and dance of the Dagbamba of Northern Ghana. It began as a religious musical performance, but now functions during funerals, festivals, national day celebrations, and other social occasions. Performing "Bamaaya" requires a lot of waist movement and twisting. The maiden name for this music and dance, "Tubankpeli", is now the main performance's movement. Originally, only men took part in the performance while the women would sing, shout praises, and encourage the dancers. Now, Bamaaya is for both genders. Bamaaya performance was originally a religious music and dance of the Kparibas in Dagbon, performed before and after hunting expeditions. It is now performed by most Dagbamba villages in Northern Ghana on diverse social occasions: festivals, funerals, and for recreation after a hard day's work. The religious costume is however retained Lawrence, (2015).

"Bawaa" or "Bɛwaa" (based on the variety of Dagaare from which the term is used) is one of the oldest traditional performances of the Dagaare-speaking people of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Bawaa is a ritual and ceremonial performance performed to celebrate the beginning and end of the rainy season, good harvest, New Year, and other social events Lawrence, (2015). Bodom (2007) notes that group performances are intrinsic to the ceremony; it is a marker of social competence and a way of maintaining community solidarity. The Bawaa is a call to young people to dance and make music together, indeed the term Bawaa literally

means, 'young people come together'. Normally, the Bawaa is incorporated into rites of passage marking birth, puberty, marriage, and death, though it may also occur spontaneously.

Performance therefore may be referred to as a stage show. He outlines the functions of performance, to make or foster community, to heal, to entertain, to mark or change, identity, to perused, teach or convince, to deal with sacred and/or the demonic James, (2016). Performances may be created for a specific purpose, as in the Igogo performance of the Owo-Yoruba, when young men use stamping movements to pack the earth of the grave into place. In Fulani communities in Cameroon, the corpse is placed in a sitting position in a prominent place, and solo and communal performances are performed in the deceased's honour. In some areas, a circle performance surrounds the men performing the required ritual autopsy James (2016).

Yerima, (2005, p.17) in his critical perspective on performance in Nigeria opines that performance represents the identity of the people. Through the body, performance uses the emphasis of areas of the body as metaphors and symbols. The specific parts of the body are used to reveal the history of the people, their occupational engagement, and their environment. Agbayizah (2016) argues that performance offer more than just entertainment across time, highlighting some importance. Ghanaian performances in recent times have been appreciated and perhaps enjoyed more on the pedals of entertainment through performing arts rather than a visual language or artistic statement. Performance is thus linked to creativity and intelligence not from the brain alone but also in the entire body.

Performance forms an integral part of Ghanaian social life and permeates all events in the society with high degrees of communal involvement (Ampem, 1999). Performance is a language and a mode of expressing one's feelings and thoughts which radiates through the body and reflects in arm gestures and facial expressions. All of these are accompanied by vibrant singing and drumming (Asare, 2014, referenced Agbayizah, 2016). Performance is considered an activity that involves coordinating movements with music, as well as brain activation because it is

constantly necessary to learn and remember new steps. Performance as a musical kinetics skill requires the coordination of body movements with rhythmic stimuli, developing the adaptability of the movement (Douka, Zilidou, Lilou & Manou, 2019). In the view of De Bot and Freeman, (2011) performance is seen as a tool to express emotions or tell a story through movement and also praised for its ability to motivate, relax and strengthen memory quoting Fulro, Bachuv, Gadd, and Lez (2020). Performance may thus be seen as a type of exercise that has a significant influence on a person's physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being.

Agbayizah (2016) also agrees that performance is also a multi-cultural technique that improves overall well-being. The reasoning is that no cultural or ethnic group has a monopoly on dancing, thus it acts as a universal therapy for everyone. To him, performance as a cultural identity is demonstrated by the fact that all cultural groups participate in dance as part of their accepted conventions in their societies. Performance has a therapeutic impact because it improves social connections among people. Performance is the creation of rhythmical steps and motions for the sake of producing them. This has to do with a literary device that uses words to convey meaning beyond their literal interpretation. It creates a vivid imaginative and evocative language enhancing communication, making it more engaging, memorable and impactful. Examples of figurative language are: metaphor, personification, hyperbole, allusion, symbolism, imagery, irony, and euphemism.

Yeibo (2012) claims the significance of figurative language in encoding the meaning of a literary piece cannot be overstated. That it serves both functional and artistic functions. This implies that figurative language functions as semantic signifiers in texts while also assisting the literary artist in reaching beauty in form. The critical fact that emerges from the preceding is that figurative language is the cornerstone of the literariness or ornamental nature of literary language, as it allows the writer to exploit and manipulate the latent potentials of language in a

variety of ways for specific stylistic effects. Importantly, this pattern of language use is more prevalent in poetry than in other literary genres (such as theater and prose).

Figurative language can be put into various forms, thus, comparison, which is a way of expressing one thing with another. According to Perrine, (2010, p.73) metaphor is a figure of speech in which a comparison is made between two things essentially alike. Figurative language is a figure of speech that employs words or expressions that have a deeper meaning than their usual or literal interpretation. Figures of speech are deviations from normal ways of speaking or thinking that is intended to have a larger impact.

Perrine (2010, p.73) contends that Figurative language refers to communication that either cannot be understood literally or ought not to be that there are some justifications for the use of metaphor. As a result, it gives the reader creative freedom, the ability to express a lot in a short amount of time, and the ability to add emotional depth.

Djaforova (2017) states that figurative language is defined as various language techniques, which balance normal language use in any type of communication. By normal language it is meant all the components of language directly expressing the intended meaning. Normal meaning is denotative meaning or the basic meaning, which does not require any extra processing effort from the addressee to understand it.

Okere (2013) argues that figurative expressions are the expressive, non- literal use of language for special effects usually through images. Figurative language is one of the richest means of emotional communication and it is an indispensable tool for arousing the feelings of hearers or readers. It enriches literary writing as images and evocative expressions

Nwachukwu-Agbada (2001) argues that the use of figurative language makes for conciseness in speech and writing. In other words, its use gives rise to economy of words, enhances clarification of meaning, provides vivid examples, stimulates associations and

emotions and gives life to inanimate objects and ornaments. The kinds of figurative language people use stem from the underlying values and assumptions of their culture or society.

Figurative language refers to the use of words in a way that deviates from the conventional order and meaning in order to convey a complicated meaning, colourful writing, clarity, or evocative comparison. It uses an ordinary sentence to refer to something without directly stating it. A figurative language is also a form of expression used to convey meaning or touch the feelings and emotions of readers often by comparing or identifying one thing with another that has a naming or connotation familiar to the reader or listener. It is a language used both in written and oral literature, in order to beautify a piece of literary work with the mind of attracting the attention of the listeners and audience (Agyekum, 2007, p. 106).

Ogunsiji (2000) Language may be said to work in two broad dimensions namely literal and figurative dimensions. The literal dimension of language use deploys words in their usual and obvious sense without any additional suggestions. On the other hand, the figurative dimension deals with the suggestive or connotative use of language. Figuration, therefore, implies extended or associative meanings. That is, the use of language in an imaginative manner, to elaborate a thesis or proposition and also to appeal to the emotions of the reader or listener referenced Yeibo, (2012, p. 181).

For the purpose of clearly communicating the mourners' sorrow, figurative language in dirges makes use of both explicit and implicit analogies and allusions. Death is also viewed as a journey that must be made, one that physically separates the living from the dead, who are carrying a message to the land of the dead. According to the saying "aiye loja orun ni le," a dead person who passes away is considered to have left this world, which functions as a marketplace and entered the afterlife, which is seen to be superior to this one Pallis (2022).

Metaphor is a statement which compares one thing to another, basically without the use of connectives, such as "like," "as," "than," as in simile. It states that one thing is something else,

which in literal terms, it is not. In order to show that one is like or more than certain characteristics, the composers of appellations make use of metaphor Samuelsson (2013) For the Kasena, as argued by Taluah, (2013) dying involves a fundamental metamorphosis into a different form of life rather than the complete annihilation of human life. Death is also seen as the soul's rebirth. The Kasena strive to live meaningful lives in accordance with the rules of their traditions since they are fully aware that life is not everlasting and that people continue to exist in various forms and places after death.

Glucksberg (2001) referred to metaphors and idioms as examples of figurative language, which is defined as a language whose meaning does not correspond to that of the literal language. He elaborates on the subject of figurative language interpretation by stating that it depends on context cited in Samuelsson, (2013).

Metaphor is the basis of figurative language, commonly used not only in literature, but also in day-to-day communication and other types of texts. The function of the metaphor is not just to provide an enjoyable picture in the mind of the receiver. Metaphors encourage a re-conceptualization of what is already given Djaforova, (2017, p.38). Metaphor allows the readers to look at the described image from a different point of view, which they would not expect to see in a different context, but as the aim is to attract attention of the customer and sell the product, positive features are expected to be emphasized in this context (Paivio and Clarke, 1986 cited in Djaforova, 2017, p.40).

Taluah (2013) concludes that dirges and war songs typically contain references to the deceased's roles in previous rites of passage when they were still on earth, messages about life and death, boasting about ancestry, and references to their roles in those rituals. The theme of bravery is one that recurs in war songs; life or existence is metaphorically represented by the battlefield, and it needs resiliency to get through the difficulties. Other recurring themes in both

dirges and war songs include death as a transition rather than an end in itself or as a crucial agent that pulls people from the land. Some notions in dirges for ladies laud the beauty of women.

2.4 Major Features of Oral Tradition of the Sisaala People

The Sisaala have an oral tradition, like all other regions in the Savannah. The male praise-singer and genealogist gogo-dingdenne and the female ha-gogo are both knowledgeable about the village's history. In some instances, such as at the court in Tumu, their knowledge also includes the entire Sisaala tradition and that of their related people. The praise-singers will sing someone's praise name or title upon request, according to Sisaala cosmology, which is given to every leader and distinguished person. It is also used to refer to spirits, gods, and semi-gods Phyfferoen (2005).

Bayira is a traditional performance of the Sisaala. Its meaning is derived from these two clan words: "Bal," meaning 'man,' and "Yira," which means "performance". This could then literally mean "performance of men". Bayira, in its right context, is a war song that is normally performed during funerals. Bayira evolved somewhere around the 18th century, when wars or raids were very prevalent in this part of the world. Raids and seizures of territories or boundaries were the order of the day in days gone by. In light of this, those abled men decided to come together in order to be able to defend themselves very well in times of raids or wars. In order to create a warring or fearful atmosphere, the Bayira performance was enacted accompanied by songs of fear, bravery, or encouragement. Words that could ginger or charge one to fight till the last drop of blood in him. This was accompanied by drumming and dancing. Chiesuu (Yelling) or ululations beefed up the performance. Historically, the act was to exhibit fear and display of bravery. It was also to be formidable enough to face any form of attack without fear. Bayira's performance showcases bravery. Amidst this, there is the issue of chewing raw meat, either a goat or a sheep. This portrays acts of bravery and warning or caution to the enemy. Literally, it

means that if a man can chew a goat's meat raw, what will he not do to that of a human flesh? There are also acts of magical performance such as throwing hands in the air and coming down with a cudgel, an amulet, or a sword to portray their level of spiritual potency and fortification. It also shows readiness to defend society come what may; they are both mentally and spiritually prepared to face any danger that might come their way.

With regard to time, Bayira performance can be performed anytime the need arises, but mostly during the passing of a great personality such as an overlord, a warrior or a hunter. However, there is no specific time as regards its performance. It is normally performed during funerals. The properties (props) are items creative artists use in performing performances. With regard to props and costumes, Bayira performers, previously, made use of any wretched dresses and sticks, but in recent times, modern Bayira performers now use improved props like painted axes, staffs, cudgels, cutlasses, muskets, and fortified regalia. There are two types of Bayira, namely, *clan* Bayira and *Nieri* (uncle) Bayira.

The performances reflect an aspect of the Sisaala culture: the pride of being an indigene. With this performance, an aspect of history is preserved. Aside the preservation of historic facts about the people, the use of songs in the performance is also to catch the attention of the viewers and to switch cues. Typically, before Bayira performance starts, the lead singer calls out greetings to the royal fathers and the elders of the land.

The Study of Bayira comprises the people's cultural legacy, which stems from tunes and numerous angles. These comprise Sisaala oral traditions in general, including xylophone riddles, dirges, praise poems, folktales, proverbs, work songs, drum language, and art works. The firing of musketry normally marks the performances, as they perform mostly in files. The firing of musketry gingers them up and also puts acute fear in the enemy. They use instruments such as drums and rattles during the performances. In the past, this was usually in preparation to resist

the enemy's advancement to colonize or raid them. Bayira performances are done by everyone including children, women and men during funerals and festivals. These performances are also associated with hunting and war. During the performance, the men feature more than their female counterparts.

The performance of Bayira performance has several significances. Some of these are:

- To send a farewell message to a chief or warrior who has passed on.
- To instill patriotism into warriors by making the brave to be able to repel any external forces or malevolent elements.
- To create a platform for warriors to display their spiritual activities. Some performers allow themselves to be shot at with loaded guns without anything happening to them.
- To scare away enemies.

The chorus comprises the whole gamut of warriors or performers usually their leaders. During the Bayira performance, the leader calls and the chorus respond but when the response of the chorus is feeble, with that the leader needs to ginger them. They usually move in files. The most fortified leaders lead while the rest follow

In the past, the youth used to dislike Bayira performance because it was believed to be a performance for the elderly. It was also believed to possess spiritual beliefs attached, so, the youth were always scared away. The youth, today, are much interested in Bayira performance Nketia-Gyimah, (2014). They no longer entertain or harbour fears because of the following reasons:

- Some unexplained misconceptions that put fear in them are now clearly explained.
- Some parents also bequeathed to their children those spiritual protections.
- Religious barriers, especially, Islam and Christianity barring, adherents from participating in the performance because it was regarded as heathen hence a believer was

not allowed to participate in Bayira performance, but currently, are explained clearly to them, that they could participate provided they were not going to engage in those paganize acts such as drinking blood or chewing raw goat or dog's meat.

In all African cultures, performance, music, and song help define the role of the individual and the group within the community. In hierarchical societies, a ruler is expected to state his authority in formal performances, and failure to meet the required standard may seriously damage his prestige. Gestures are a type of non-verbal communication used by a speaker to aid communication. The songs of Bayira reflect an aspect of the Sisaala culture, the pride of being a Sisaala indigene. With this performance, an aspect of history is preserved. The fact that Bayira performance emerged from the Sisaala people is captured in the songs, and as a result, from the moment of creation to eternity, the history was well preserved. Aside the preservation of historic facts about the Sisaala people, the use of songs in the performance has also stirred the emotions of the warriors or performers.

Kanwisher, McDermott, & Chun (1997) who argue explicitly that performance uses two expressive channels: the body and the face. The faces are processed automatically and effortlessly by specific cognitive and neural mechanisms and have a strong perceptual and affective effect on viewers. This is most probably true also when dance stimuli include the dancers' faces and facial expressions. It is also true that body morphology and proportions have an impact on viewer's affective responses referenced Christensen, (2013).

McNeill (1985) interprets gestures as the second channel of communication, in which the first channel of communication is actual speech, thus implying that gestures add on to speech production. The Gestural Theory of Language Evolution states that human language was developed from gestures that were a primitive form of communication, as opposed to the vocal signals that might have been adopted by non-human primates. According to Gillespie-Lynch (2017) Gestural Theory of Language evolution states that the languages that humans speak today

arose from an earlier form of communication that was expressed primarily through arm and gestures. That our ancestors were able to communicate intentionally through gestures but could not control their vocalizations. They primarily used gestures to communicate purposefully; spoken language only began to emerge from this primarily gestural form of communication as our ancestor's ability to control their vocalizations enhanced.

Rasaki (2005) identifies the eminent function of performance within the society that performance helps in the identification and classification of geographical locations, biological temperaments, religious beliefs, and political and historical experiences. The Akan cherish and respect the culture of their land. Among the cultural rites of the Akans, is a farewell service to the dead or a funeral rite service. The funeral is a rite of passage performed to bid farewell to a deceased person. "In the Akan society, there is an intimate link between life and death. The Akans believe that when a person dies, his or her soul (kra) becomes a spirit (saman) and this spirit assumes supernatural power" (Boateng and Angela-Cole, 2016, p. 38) referenced Opong and Osei-Bonsu, 2018).

In African societies, performance serves a complex diversity of social purposes. Within an indigenous performance tradition, each performance usually has a principal as well as a number of subsidiary purposes, which may express or reflect the communal values and social relationships of the people. In order to distinguish between the varieties of performance styles, therefore, it is necessary to establish the purpose for which each performance is performed. Though systems traditional to African cultures are rooted in a world view in which there is continuous interaction between spiritual forces and the community. Spiritual beings may inhabit natural elements or animals and may also take possession of human mediums. This possession of persons is usually temporary and confined to ritual, as when the priest of the Yoruba god shango dances into a state of deep trance at the end of annual festival, expressing the wrath of the god of thunder with the lightning speed of his arm gestures and the powerful roll of his shoulders.

Nketia (1999) acknowledges the importance of transmitting and preserving our cultural values. It provides opportunities for children to experience the performance forms of their environment, to ensure continuity of participation in the social life of the communities they belong. These gestures serve as non-verbal communication that gives information about the cultural and historical background of the people in the area.

Mehr et al. (2019 referenced Wilson, (1986, p. 36) African signs and symbols are characterized as "instrumental, demonstrative, iconographic, visual, and institutional." He defined visual communication as the use of colours, clothing, appearance, and general demeanor to convey particular feelings, emotions, and attitudes. Clothes in particular have deep meaning and connect to historical and legendary events. Feathers, pearls, necklaces, and other seemingly insignificant objects take on thematic and philosophical importance when used properly and in context. Since music is one of humanity's most prevalent ways of expression and communication and is present in people of all ages and cultures' daily lives.

The World Affairs Council of Houston, (2019, p.1) claims oral traditions enable societies to transfer information across generations without writing. They aid in making sense of the world and are employed in educating both children and adults about significant facets of their culture. Verbal folklore is no longer just passed down orally in modern society; it is also now broadcast to audiences via new technology and digital gadgets. The Urhobo riddles are a component of the oral traditions that are passed down through the two modalities mentioned above to succeeding generations. Most of the riddles have themes and imagery that the listener will remember cited in Friday and Oghenerioborue, (2022, p.42).

As revealed by Taluah (2013) it is unthinkable to understate the musical quality of the war songs and dirges. Deeply felt emotions are also evoked by music, which is a cognitive skill that produces rhythm. The singing of the dirges is gentle and slow, which is relaxing, while the

singing of the battle songs is loud and fast, which is stirring, regardless of whether the messages or idioms of the poems are comprehended. Even though the dirges and battle songs are entrenched in Kasena cultural traditions, it truly is irrelevant whether the listener knows the language or idioms used because the musical mood alone is entrancing. The dirges and war songs, as musical genres, respectively appeal to deeper emotional and sexual centres.

Oral performance in the Sisaala traditional area is an embodiment of diverse and rich traditions, such as legends, panegyrics, myths, proverbs, rituals, folktales, songs, funeral dirge, lyrics, ballad all of which make up festivals. Every African society has a set of its specific orality and practices designed for entertainment, education and identity of the people. African oral literature is literary in nature owing to extrinsic factors like culture and tradition. Because one of its main advantages over written literature and western literature is that it is typically performed at rituals, religious, and traditional rituals, is rooted in the people who practice its culture, and draws people from the same village, area, or ethnic group, The aesthetic qualities of the oral form being performed are also enhanced by these rites. Because the context - that is, the culture and the oral genre performed—require that the performer and the audience dress and perform in particular ways Binyou-Bi-Homb (2009) In the words of Finnegan, (2012, p.218) Oral Literature in Africa, hunting songs are no longer related with the real hunt and have evolved into a distinct and unique branch of poetry. This viewpoint differs from the Bayira hunting songs since they are performed at the funeral of a deceased hunter. Prior to burial, a team of hunters planned a short hunting journey in commemoration of the departed hunter. When the hunters return from the bush, hunting poetry is immediately performed in full front of the audience around the catafalque of the deceased hunter. Live animals killed in the brief demonstration hunting are roasted and devoured.

2.5 The Sisaala People's Concept of Death

The Sisaala people have a strong reverence for their ancestors. They believe that the spirits of their ancestors play an important role in the lives of the living and that they can offer guidance and blessings. Their ancestors are always honoured through rituals, offerings and prayers.

Sanka (2010) puts it that several of the rituals surrounding death are as ancient as humanity itself. The dirge has a long history and is sometimes referred to as an elegy, a requiem, a funeral lament, a chant, or a song. The performance of this genre has seen numerous transformations. Death, which eventually happens to all living things, is the complete cessation of all life processes. Death has always been shrouded in mystery and superstition, and there is still debate about how to define it precisely because it varies depending on culture and legal systems Pallis, (2022).

Sanka (2010, pp. 26-170) critically examines the performance of the Sisaala dirge from its literary and cultural contexts. The study reveals that in spite of the obstacles posed by faiths, Western lifestyles, and lack of unity, the Sisaala dirge still functions in mourning the deceased and reinforcing cultural, moral, social, aesthetic, and historical values. Organisation of the Sisaala dirge is unlike the Akan. Sanka (2010, p. 70) points out that the Sisaala dirge is a community performance, rather than an individual performance, at the death of a person. Thus, the community grieves for an adult's death, for instance, attending it with the funeral dirge. This includes distant relatives and sympathisers gathering at the homestead of the deceased to prepare the body for burial. The study points out that the Sisaala dirge is performed based on factors such as age, availability of food and circumstance of death.

Sanka et al. (2020, pp. 25-26), noted that the Paasaala dirge demonstrates that repetition is the key structure, as whole lines are repeated to create a refrain, allowing easy participation and memorisation. This technique, often used in metaphorical and proverbial terms, emphasises meaning, rhythm, and allows poets to think of future songs.

Sanka et al, (2020, pp. 34-35) also argue that the artist employs literary devices to enhance the narrative, incorporating ideophones, similes, and puns to depict the old man's sexual virility and physical strength. The narrative also explores the question of whether the old man should prioritise his sight over his sexual potency, and thus adding a dramatic element to the story. Sanka et al, (2020) observe that the Paasaala dirge plays key social functions. That is, the dirge is a sarcastic and didactic funeral story meant to honour an elderly person who has led a life that is deserving of admiration. In addition to discussing societal and personal difficulties, it imparts cultural and communal values. Africans view storytelling as an “enter-educational art,” and poet cantors masterfully integrate the two on funeral grounds (p. 23).

Phyfferoen (2005) agrees that the Sisaala distinguishes between two different forms of funerals. The Sisaala have a unique method of experiencing the time between this world and the next when a small child passes away. The Sisaala, like the Dagomba, the Mamprusi, and the Nanumba, consider the death of a young infant who has not yet had their naming ceremony to be a terrible omen and to be connected with the spirits. The tendana is supposed to offer a sacrifice at the family altar or in the market square during such a celebration in order to lift the spirits of the community. The Sisaala refer to such funerals as "cold" funerals. The women performed the chingcheng dance at such a "cold" burial. In the words of Phyfferoen, (2005) on the other hand, an older person's funeral is 'warm'. The mournful music played at such funerals is known as gangyie music. The gourd drum and the xylophone play in unison with the hiila. The songs typically discuss the deceased's life activities, especially their romantic relationships.

The topic of death has surprisingly gained popularity in the second half of the 20th century. Prior to it, it may come as a surprise that serious scientific and, to a lesser extent, philosophical musings mostly avoided the topic. Because it was outside the scope of a doctor's care, it was ignored in biological studies and largely disregarded in clinical practice. But today, research on death is a major problem across all of these fields and many more, Pallis, (2022).

Nketia's work provides valuable insights into Sisaala culture, Bayira performance an African traditional performance genre, serving as a foundation for future research (Nketia, 1965). He sees death as a transition to ancestor hood. Death is not an end but a transformation and continuity of life.

As Wittgenstein (2020) famously puts it that death is not an experience in life. Death is the irreversible loss of functioning of the organism as a whole (Becker, 1975; Bernat, Culver, and Gert, 1981). Proponents of this approach emphasize that death is a biological occurrence common to all organisms. Although individual cells and organs live and die, organisms are the only entities that literally do so without being parts of larger biological systems.

Dancy and Davis (2016) assert that death is a “universal, natural, persistent, inescapable, unavoidable, and undeniable fact of life.” When death occurs, there is usually an impact on the family and friends of the decease. The magnitude often depends on whether death was expected or unexpected. Even the dying person goes through periods of fear, anger, and grief, once the inevitability of death becomes apparent. It is thought that the unborn leaves his or her ancestor's home when conceived by a mother (alive). The unborn then joins the living and stays there until the end is near. A person's spirit lives on after death and returns to their home world, the ancestral realm. The only one of the three that is visibly concrete (physical), and where man will spend his final home, is the realm of the living. The more spiritually advanced the ancestral planet, the better humanity will turn out. Because of this, the Yoruba people consider the

material world to be nothing more than a market and a resting place for visitors., *Aiye loja, run ni ile* means *life is a market*, heaven is home Tobalase, (2017).

As Taluah (2013) contends, the ceremonies that usher the deceased into the afterlife include funeral dirges and war songs. They are ways of communicating with the dead and serving as a reminder for them to think of their surviving relatives in the world of their ancestors. The texts primarily represent the beliefs, values, concepts, and other social negotiations that characterize the Kasena way of life. Despite the significant roles dirges and war songs play among the Kasena and despite the obvious signs of their novel technique and dramatic expressiveness, such as the use of parallelism and repetition through verbal and nonverbal expressions made evident during the performance of the texts and their deployment of elaborate metaphors, symbols, and images.

2.7 Research Works Conducted on Bayira Performance

Numerous scholars have investigated Sisaala Bayira Performance, enriching our understanding of this rich cultural tradition. Their research has documented Bayira's history, cultural significance and performance practices. It analyzed Bayira's music, dance and theatrical elements. They have also explored Bayira's therapeutic and educational potential. Nketia-Gyimah (2014) argues that the study contributes to the understanding of traditional Ghanaian music and dance, shedding light on Bayira's unique characteristics and cultural importance. Nkeria-Gyimah further claims that Bayira is a traditional drama of the Sisaala people in northern Ghana. The study explores Bayira's musical and cultural relevance. Bayira performances occur during funerals, festivals and ceremonies. It involves community participation and audience interaction. Nketia (1965) introduces Bayira as a traditional performance art of the Sisaala people in northern Ghana, emphasizing its cultural significance and uniqueness. Adwedoba (2005) provides valuable insights into Bayira and Sisaala culture, contributing to the field of African studies and performance art. He further argues that Bayira performance art combines

music, dance, poetry and storytelling. However, such scholarly works are not enough hence created a knowledge gap, which the current researcher sought to bridge.

Bayira is a traditional performance style of the Sisaala people in the Upper West Region of Ghana. The performance incorporates expressive facial and body gestures. Each gesture holds symbolic meaning and adds depth to the performance. Bayira is typically performed in groups, with performers forming patterns and moving in synchronism. Folk performance is an aspect of human behaviour, a non-verbal system of communication in which society itself is reflected. Performance, apart from motion, also covers the areas surrounding it: the environment where it occurs and develops the relationships between the performers themselves and between the performers and spectators, the objects used during the performance and even the performers' costumes, the body is the instrument of performance. It is the structure performing the movement that, ultimately, conveys the artist's communicative message. The latter is a key element of what turns a movement into a performance (Downing, Jiang, Shuman, & Kanwisher, 2001).

Bayira performance is one of the most dynamic and popular art forms of performance among the Sisaala people. Many are the functional values attached to the performance, not just among the preservers of the performance as a culture but within the Ghanaian communities in general. In the first place, Bayira performance functions as an expression of social organization. Bayira performance, more than anything expresses the life of the community for example, with the sound from the drum, many of these people gather as they recognize the sound of the rhythm. The performance is performed at various functions as both an entertainment and a ritual performance, thus; coronation ceremonials, festivals and feasts, burial rites, and ceremonial events of all sorts etc. Bayira performance generally marks key elements of communal life. It represents and reinforces the communal life of the people. The performance usually begins with the male performers and even in some cases; the performance is performed only by male

performers. Because of the nature of this performance, although the basic rhythm remains, the formation of the performance and the number of the performers required for the performance to take place is totally insignificant as the decision should be met with the requirement of the situation or the moment.

Narwana (2019) argues that myth and literature are mutually dependent. He further argued that myths constitute an integral element of literature. Given that the author believes myths offer a repository of multifaceted tales for the fictional world making of literature. It simply means that myth is a conduit where literature is transmitted through tales with creativity. The Sisaala oral artist occasionally creates myths in an attempt to correct children who are deviant in society. So, in an attempt to bring up well-behaved children in the Sisaala culture and tradition, oral artists create scary tales with spiritual and supernatural connotations that would prevent children from overstaying deep into the night. In addition to oral storytelling, myths can raise a person's cognitive level. The ability to tell an appealing tale and have an imaginative mind is essential skills for creating a myth. As part of the Sisaala expressive culture and their oral traditions, Bayira performers employ myths in the form of tales during funeral dirge performances to convey the Sisaala worldview of life. To help the audience feel and appreciate the meaning of a story in a dirge, a skilled performer uses techniques like imagery and metaphor during a performance.

Nnyagu (2017, p.151) views a folktale to be a brief, but highly instructive imaginative story with a cast primarily made up of animals, birds, and people. Folktale characters frequently feature animals and birds that speak and act like people, which is impossible in fiction. Even though Angmor and Nnyagu Uche believe folktales are hypothetical and deductive, they feel folktales contain a lot of moral lessons, therefore at the end; one should be able to say what he or she has learnt from the narrative. Folktales are employed in the African environment to teach basic moral lessons to the younger generation since they focus on encouraging virtues and

opposing immorality, which is one of their main weaknesses. The oral artist's imagination and cognitive abilities, as well as literary and aesthetic ability, are essential when recounting a folktale.

Nnyagu (2020, p.42) adds that folktales are often recounted for entertainment as well as instructional value. The narrative of a folktale is not meant to be taken seriously because it lacks historical accuracy. The objective of telling it to youngsters is to help them develop and adopt respectable lifestyles. In the narration of folktales characters that are considered wicked or foolish are made to suffer as a result of their wickedness or foolishness to discourage the audience from immoral conduct. Folktale narration is an integral part of the Sisaala expressive culture, where moral values are transmitted either to teach children or creatively adopted and utilized in Bayira performance within the funeral setting.

Balogun (1996) argues that what distinguishes poetry from the other two major genres is the emphasis it places on the imaginative use of language... it is the common practice of the poet to use words figuratively and hence the proliferation of figures of speech, collectively called imagery, in poetry (p.349-350).

A well understood metaphor in one culture may have an entirely different meaning in another culture. For example, the figurative meaning of different colours varies from one language group to another Okere, (2013).

Abdul-Rahaman (2014) views the structure of a literary piece as the arrangement and order of the various parts of the text. The composition of any literary piece is made up of linguistic structures that are used to express the aesthetic features of the text to meet the need of audience.

Repetition is a stylistic aspect that is often used in most African dirges. It is a device that can be found in Western poetry and prose. In the words of Agyekum, in his Introduction to Literature, he explains that repetition as a device in oral literature can be used to achieve the

fullness of an effect, to sustain audience attention and interest, to mark off segments in oral performance, and as a formulaic device (Agyekum, 2007, p.43).

According to Sanka (2010) repetition may consist of sounds, particular syllables and words, phrases, stanzas, metrical patterns, ideas, allusions and shapes. Thus, refrain, assonance, rhyme, internal rhyme, alliteration and onomatopoeia are frequent in repetition (referenced Cuddon, 1998).

Parallelism is another stylistic technique that abounds in oral literature and can therefore be identified in most African dirges. It is a device in which the bard brings together, in a balanced manner, ideas and images that may seem independent of each other. Parallelism can be obtained in lexical, structural, and semantic forms. It can serve as an effective unifying factor in dirges when it comes to their meaning and structure. Cuddon puts it that “parallelism is common in poetry of the oral tradition.” (Cuddon, 1998, p.637) In the following lines taken from a Bakweri dirge, semantic parallelism has been used in the second and fourth lines of the dirge.

<p>L.S: wonya gbami, mba Na mnd e liya n“ewoka, e liya n“eyol wonya gbami, mba na mnd e liya n“eyel, n“ewoka eha ne ya (Mutia, 2003,pp.396-397)</p>	<p>L.S: O my brethren, I am gone Take care of my home, live in peace My family members, I am gone Live in peace, take care of yourself Don’t weep for me</p>
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Commenting on the effectiveness of the parallelism that has been used in this dirge, Mutia explains that: In this example, the order of words in the second line “e liya n“ewoka, e liya n“eyol” is reversed in the fourth line “e liya n“eyel, n“ewoka.” Although the central idea in the dirge is “taking care of the home” (in Line 2) it is substituted with another idea of “taking care of yourself” in Line 4, thereby creating a balance in music and rhythm. (Mutia, 2003,p.397 referenced Sanka, (2010).

In the words of Armstrong (2022) metaphor, in relating the words of Baldick, occurs when “one thing, idea, or action is referred to by a word or expression normally denoting another thing, idea, or action, so as to suggest some common quality shared by the two” (p.153). Stated

differently, metaphor is a figure of speech in which an entity is applied to an entirely different one without the use of such words as "like" and "as". For example, in "Tumu dii Obiri", there is this metaphoric line excerpt:

In the view of Armstrong (2022) euphemism has been noted by the English critic Cuddon as "the substitution of a mild and pleasant expression for a harsh and blunt one" (p. 292). Specifically, rather than directly say someone has died – a situation which may lead to disastrous conclusions, the people say s/he has laa dii; that is, s/he has gazed at the sky. Symbolism is a process of using a sign or symbol to represent something. A symbol, as Abrams and Harpham tell us, "It is applied only to a word or phrase that signifies an object or event which in its turn signifies something, or suggests a range of reference, beyond it.

A symbol can be universal, local or private. In most cases, each culture has its own associations for an object or event which exists in several places Armstrong (2022).

Okpewho (1992, p.71) contends that repetition is without a doubt one of the features of oral literature. It is an instrument that not only beautifies or makes something more attractive when used orally but also fulfills some useful functions in the overall arrangement of the oral performance.

Geoffrey Leech concurs with Okpewho's (1992) claim that repetition is an important literary device in oral literature, which is reinforced by the finding that when people discuss critical issues that directly affect them, they frequently speak passionately. According to Leech, "continually hammering at the same problem in the same way and using the same words is a real technique for relieving inner emotions of grief or pleasure," and the Sisaala Bayira Performance.

Aghiator (2014, p.3) believes funeral songs encompass all songs for burials. They could be melancholy songs, songs for the deceased, praise songs with ideas exposing the excellent things the deceased accomplished when he was living, or a song someone can sing to make him

happy. Some of the tracks are contemplative in nature. They are typically philosophical songs based on proverbs, poetic pictures, witty sayings, and the use of allusion.

Armstrong (2022) one of the core elements of oral literature is repetition. It fulfills practical functions in the overall arrangement of the oral performance in addition to adding a touch of beauty or attractiveness. In other words, it is a device that not only enhances the beauty or attractiveness of a piece of oral expression but also has aesthetic value. There are essentially two types of singing structures: songs that are performed by soloists, either accompanied or unaccompanied, and songs that are sung by a leader singing the song in its entirety before being promptly repeated by a chorus. Bayira songs are characterized by their brevity or economy of words, which are condensed into a terse language to avoid monotony and boredom. The phrases chosen to compose the Bayira songs tend to be such that they allow for different pronunciations because of the varied Sisaali dialects.

Inferring from the above views, repetition can be explained as the process of using the same word or words repeatedly for a particular effect in oral performance. Saanchi, (1992) in his work asserts that "repetition may take the form of repetition of words in the same line, repetition of words in separate lines, repetition of an entire line or part of an entire line within one stanza, and even the virtual repetition of whole stanzas throughout the performance.

Ohwovori (2009) argues that a proverb is a literary representation of knowledge that provides the speaker with a platform for projecting and achieving a number of socially desirable aims. The proverb is also a tool for cultural transmission, and its study can provide a detailed picture of a people's way of life, philosophy, life critique, moral truths, and social ideals.

2.8 Chapter Summary

Chapter two focused on reviewing the existing body of literature and theoretical perspectives relevant to the study. It examined key scholarly works on African oral literature,

performance theory, and the intersection between textuality and performance. The review established the intellectual context within which the study on the Sisaala Bayira performance is situated.

The chapter began by exploring African oral literature as a vital medium of cultural expression and social knowledge. It highlighted how oral traditions—through songs, chants, and performance—encode moral values, history, and communal identity. Scholars such as Nketia (1965), Finnegan (1970), and Okpewho (1992) were discussed for their contributions to the understanding of African oral art as both literary and performative. Attention was then given to the concept of performance as theorized by Richard Schechner and others, emphasizing that performance is not merely an artistic act but a social and cultural process.

The chapter discussed how performance theory provides a useful framework for interpreting Bayira as a dynamic act involving audience participation, rhythm, and ritual significance. The review also examined the textual interpretation of oral performance, arguing that oral performances like Bayira can be studied as texts that convey meaning through words, gestures, rhythm, and symbolism. This section linked oral literature to literary criticism, demonstrating how textual analysis can be applied to traditional performances without stripping them of their performative essence.

Furthermore, the chapter discussed relevant studies on Ghanaian and West African traditional performances, highlighting how cultural forms such as drumming, dance, and storytelling functions as living texts that communicate communal philosophy and aesthetics.

Finally, the theoretical framework guiding the study was presented. Drawing from performance theory and textual hermeneutics, the framework positioned the Bayira performance

as both an artistic and communicative act that can be interpreted for its aesthetic, moral, and cultural meanings.

In summary, chapter two established the scholarly and theoretical foundation for the research. It bridged the gap between textual, literary and performance analysis, providing the intellectual lens through which the Sisaala Bayira performance is examined in subsequent chapters.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter looked at the methodology of the research. It presented the procedures employed by the researcher in collecting data for the study. These procedures consist of the research approach, research design, sampling technique, population of the study, data collection procedure, research instruments, and data analytical procedure.

3.2 The Research Approach and Design

This study adopts the ethnographic design because it provides a systematic framework for understanding the Sisaala Bayira performance within its cultural and social contexts. As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) explain, ethnography involves the study of people and their cultures through observation, participation, and interpretation, allowing the researcher to view social phenomena from an insider's perspective. This approach is particularly appropriate for a textual interpretation of the Sisaala Bayira performance, which is deeply rooted in the community's oral traditions and cultural expressions. Ethnography, being qualitative in nature, enables the researcher to gather rich, detailed, and authentic data in natural settings, as emphasized by Worthen and Sanders (1987). It also aligns with Amedahe and Gyimah's (2015) view that research design provides an overall plan for addressing research questions and objectives. Thus, the ethnographic method facilitates the collection, translation, and interpretation of oral performances, making them accessible as literary texts while preserving their cultural essence. It is therefore the most suitable approach for exploring and analyzing the aesthetic, social, and literary dimensions of the Sisaala Bayira performance.

3.3 Population and Sampling Frame

3.3.1 Population

The population of the study was the Sisaala people in the Sisaala Traditional area. The population comprises seven (7) clans to be considered in the Sisaala traditional area: these were Pasaala, Tumulo, Kpatolie, Gelbagla, Gbieni, Buwaali and Bosillu. Population in this study consisted of all the actors involved in the research process. The population included this category of people specifically elders, men and professionals who had knowledge on Bayira performances in the Sisaala East, and West districts of the Upper West Region of Ghana.

3.3.2 Target Population

The study targeted only seven (7) clans to be covered. These were Pasaala, Tumulo, Kpatolie, Gelbagla, Gbieni, Buwaali and Bosillu, which comprises seven (7) research partners. These are all Sisaala clans within the Sisaala East, and West districts which performed funeral events where Bayira Performances were carried out. Nevertheless, the actual number of clans sampled was ultimately reduced to six, owing to religious constraints that prohibited or limited the performance of the Bayira among some groups. From these six participating clans, the study documented a total of twenty-eight (28) Bayira performances, which formed the core dataset for the analysis.

3.3.3 Sample size

Staller (2021, p. 900), argues that sample sizes are influenced by discipline, methodology, topic, and population. This study is a qualitative inquiry, hence, was not open to too large sample size. More significantly, finding the experts and/or research partners with in-depth knowledge of the Sisaala traditions was very challenging because only a few people within the indigenous Sisaala community showed interest in matters connected to indigenous culture and traditions. As a result, the researcher purposively selected and interviewed only six (6)

research partners, who gave the researcher the necessary information needed for the analysis of the study. The sample size falls within the sample range suggested by Adler and Adler (2012, pp. 8-10) who recommended that the researcher should “orientate towards a small sample size (6-12 persons or whatever many they find) when accessibility to persons from research population is limited.” Also, the total Bayira data covered were twenty-eight (28) performances; however, a total of twenty-four (24) were considered as the final data size for the study. The selected Bayira Performances met the thematic criteria for inclusion. For obvious reasons, the researcher used the purposive sampling approach as part of the data collection procedure. The purposive sampling approach was employed in the selection of samples for data collection purposes. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling in which samples are picked by looking for persons or situations that are likely to give a better grasp of a certain study subject (Sarantakos, 2005). Purposive sampling determined the caliber of persons to interview.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

The data for the study comprised both primary and secondary sources. The study tends to focus on social processes, where the established relationship between the researcher and the research partners is valued, rather than primarily or exclusively on outcomes.

The primary data was collected through observation and interviews. Observation was employed in the collection of the primary data, where the researcher was, therefore, occupied with collecting, translating and analyzing Bayira songs to explore the literary elements used to communicate ideas to enrich meaning and make the songs poetic. The aim is to tease-out the literary qualities of the songs such that the work could serve as resource material for students, and critics of oral literature.

The primary data was collected from the Sisaala traditional area, in the Upper West Region. The researcher collected this data by interviewing one person from each of the six clans; Pasaali, Tumuluŋ, Kpatolie, Gelbagle, Gbieni, and Buwaali. The choice of the one person from

different clans was to ensure evenly distribution of interviewees to enable the research reflect little variations that may occur as a result of different dialectal codes or accents. Some of these interviewees comprised community elders, professionals in cultural performances and women.

This method required observational recordings of the processes of the performance, because the information gathered was critical to the main analysis of this research. The secondary data was however collected from library materials, which includes published and unpublished works that are related to the study and were analyzed.

Qualitative inquiry involves employing multiple data gathering methods, especially interviews, observation and an inductive approach to collect data, extract its concepts from the mass of particular detail which constitutes the data base. Among the common traits are observable behaviours that are exhibited among the people in their performances; the oral tradition of the people studied. Ethnographic approach was chosen because the study investigated traditional performance of a people where the researcher observed and recorded Bayira songs during funerals as part of the oral tradition of the Sisaala Traditional Area in the Upper West Region of Ghana.

As Blomberg et al. (2009) argue that one of the most significant instruments for an ethnographer is the interview. Interviews, according to these scholars, “can situate research design and observations. They are vital in understanding member’s perspective.

According to DeWalt (2002), participant observation is a method of data collection in which researchers gather information in a relatively unstructured manner within naturalistic settings. Through this approach, ethnographers observe and/or engage in both the ordinary and extraordinary activities of the people being studied. Participant-observation is further explained as when the ethnographer actually engages in almost everything that other people are doing as a means of trying to learn the cultural rules for behaviour. Using the participant observation

method availed the researcher the opportunity of going beyond conducting the research on the peripheral but also indulged in teaching the various performance movements, choreographic patterns and the process of technical design from the indigenous performances, so as, to facilitate proper documentation of the dance and aesthetic elements inherent in the dance.

3.5 Research Instruments

The researcher employed the ethnographic qualitative technique of data collection which involves the use of observation, interviews, field notes, and recordings (audio-visual). These research instruments are explained in the subsections below:

3.5.1 Interviews

Interviewing is a way to collect data as well as to gain knowledge from individuals. Kvale (1996) regards interviews as an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. He sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situations of research data. The key benefit of interview is its flexibility (Bell, 1999). The use of the interview in research makes a move away from seeing human subjects as simply something the researcher can manipulate Cohen et al. (1995) The purpose of interviewing people, according to Fraenkel and Wallen, (1996) is to get a wind of what is in their minds.

Semi-structured interview discussions were employed to tap very crucial information for this study. The interviews were recorded on phone, transcribed and translated for the analysis. Basically, these interviews focused on the socio-cultural dynamics of the Sisaala Bayira performance in terms of origin, aesthetic features and the socio-cultural relevance of Bayira performance. As part of the researcher's insider-inquiry approach, the snowball sampling approaches were employed for the interviews in tapping information from the six (6) research partners. Initially, the researcher established acquaintance with the first research partner who

then assisted the researcher to discover other research partners who have in-depth knowledge about the Bayira and funeral traditions. This authenticated the authenticity, validity and reliability of the information obtained for this study.

The researcher coded the interview, as well as, the Bayira data. The code, BPIR representing (Bayira Performance Interview Response), was used for the interview data whereas the Bayira songs were simply numbered serially (without any recourse to the order of collection). As the needed data was gathered for this study, the researcher adopted a criterion for data processing and analytical processes. The raw Bayira performances and interview recordings were transcribed and translated by the researcher, who is a credible native Sisaali speaker, with the assistance of two Sisaali literacy experts. They were then schematized and analyzed using Peter Newmark's (1988) translation theory and grounded by Tedlock's (1972) Ethnopoetics Theory and Schechner's (2020) Performance Theory.

3.5.2 Observations

One of the underlying bases of these theories is the researcher's involvement in the study phenomenon through observation. Thus, the researcher needs to observe and participate in a meaningful engagement with the group being studied to provide a shared interpretation of the study phenomenon. This way, the researcher would be able to obtain first-hand information and experience about the phenomenon being studied.

Also, as part of the methods of data collection, the tools that were employed in the field trip to gather data were phones, recorders (audio and visuals). These tools were used as complements to each other with the aim of compensating for scantiness and gaps. This depicts the idea of triangulation of data collection instruments, as means of enhancing the validity and reliability of data that were gathered for the study.

In this endeavour, the researcher who is also an indigenous Sisaali speaker penetrated into the socio-cultural life of the study communities and had personal interactions with members

of these communities. During Bayira performances, the researcher took keen interest to observe the mode of organization and the nature of the entire Bayra performances. With regard to the observation technique, the researcher took the role of an observer-participant. This is a situation where researcher simply observed the activity without actually playing an active part of the activity. The researcher coded the interviews as well as the Bayira data. The code, BSN representing (Bayira Song Number), was used for the interview data whereas the performances were simply numbered serially (without any recourse to the order of collection) using the code, Bayira Song No. 1, 2, 3, 4 in order to distinguish each BS Number.

3.6 Analytical Procedures Adopted

The analysis of the data required multiple processes. The Bayira songs were first transcribed, and translated from Sisaali into English using communicative, communicative adaptation, and semantic translation techniques developed by Newmark in his (1988) book, *A Textbook of Translation*. The communicative translation aims to accurately capture the original context in a translation that is both easily understandable and acceptable to the target audience (Newmark, 1988, p. 41). The 'freest' kind of translation is adaptation translation as argued by (Newmark, 1988, p. 46). It is mostly utilized for plays (comedies) and poetry. Themes, characters, and narratives are typically maintained when using the adaptation approach. The aesthetic worth of the text is more fully considered in semantic translation. Accuracy and economy are the two major goals of translation, and semantic and communicative translations meet these goals. The researcher did the translation with the help of two experts, a former retired regional drama and culture coordinator as indicated earlier and the current regional drama and culture coordinator who are both well versed in the Sisaali language.

To make the translated Bayira songs useful to English-speaking audiences, they were coded, numbered, and presented in lines before inserting the translated English version. The data was analyzed in accordance with the research's objectives under the direction of the theory that

served as the study's theoretical foundation. Literary elements found in the lines were quoted when it was required to bolster the study. The researcher therefore adopted the qualitative research approach in analyzing the work.

This view, therefore, emphasizes the importance of the voice of the researcher and gaining firsthand information regarding the live experiences of the research on a particular subject. It tends to focus on social processes, where the established relationship between the researcher and the research partners is valued, rather than primarily or exclusively on outcomes.

The data analysis permits the researcher to 'manipulate' the data obtained in the course of the study so that the assessment and evaluation of findings will arrive at some reliable, reasonable, and relevant conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). As regards the nature of data that was collected for the study, descriptive analysis was adopted. Data from the field was edited and checked for non-responses and mistakes to ensure accuracy and uniformity from the various methods employed in the data collection process. This is a process of manipulating, integrating, transforming, and highlighting the data while they are being presented (Sarantakos, 2005).

3.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter covers the methodology of the research by way of presenting the procedures adopted by the researcher in collecting data for the study. These procedures consist of the research design, approach, sampling technique, data collection procedure, research instruments and data analysis, the setting, and ethical considerations. The data for the study comprised both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected through participant observation and interviews. The participant observation method was employed in the collection of the primary data.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed the methodology adopted for the study. As mentioned in previous chapter, the data gathered was transcribed and translated into English and presented in verse form before it was analyzed. This chapter begins the analysis of data. Analysis was done taking into consideration the objectives of the study that focused on the historical and cultural context of Bayira performances. This brings out the recurrent themes that underpin the discussions. The aesthetic features inherent in various aspects of Bayira performances and their literary significance were extracted from the performances and costume. These songs form part of the sources by which the people entertain themselves, remember their dead, and shower praises on their chiefs and elders of their communities.

The *Sisaala Bayira performance* tradition embodies the intricate interplay between music, text, and cultural philosophy. As revealed from the data, the *musical text* is central to *Bayira*, serving as both an artistic and cultural medium through which social values, moral lessons, and communal emotions are expressed. Guided by the theoretical insights of Richard Schechner (2020) and Dennis Tedlock (1972), this analysis explores how the textual structures of *Bayira* songs function as performative acts that encode and transmit cultural meanings.

4.2 The Structure of Bayira Performance

The structure of any literary work is the general organization of the piece as a literary piece. This encompasses the formation of the performance genre. Structure in general refers to how a literary work is organized in terms of storyline, stanza divisions, parts, symbolism, and other characteristics (Agyekum, 2013, p. 222). Agyekum states that structure is the general planned

framework or outline of a piece of literary work that is, the logical divisions of a literary piece of work. Agyekum's definition of structure is applicable to the Sisaala Bayira.

The opening formula of Bayira Performance typically follows a structured pattern, which may vary depending on the specific Sisaala community and context. A designated caller summons the community to gather for the Bayira Performance. The lead drummer plays a distinctive rhythmic pattern, signaling the start of the performance. The lead singer performs an invocational song, evoking the ancestral spirits and seeking their blessings.

The performers, adorned in traditional regalia, move in a hemispherical formation. The lead performer chants an introductory phrase, setting the tone for the performance. After the opening formula, the Bayira Performance transitions into the main segments, which include community participation through call-and-response interactions which is normally, repeated a number of times. This portrays the cultural heritage of the Sisaala people. The real structure looks like this:

The real performance is preceded by a Pre-Performance whereby cleansing rituals are carried out to usher in the performers and the performance space. Ancestral invocations are made calling upon the ancestors and spirits for guidance and protection.

The performance itself begins with the entry of the performers into the arena followed by the introduction of themes. These set the tone for the performance. Storytelling through music and dance is enacted. Instrumental performances are carried out with drums, flutes. Jingles, rattles, etc. After all these activities, post-performance rituals are also carried out. This is the stage at which performers express gratitude to the ancestors and spirits. They seek blessing for the community and perform rituals marking the end of the performance. The Bayira Performance structure embodies the Sisaala people's cultural values, traditions and spiritual practices. It connects the audience to their cultural roots.

This section looks at the musical text of Bayira Performance. The musical text plays a significant role in Sisaala Bayira Performance, serving several functions. The musical texts convey stories, legends, myths and historical events, preserving cultural heritage. Also, some songs address social issues, provide guidance and offer critiques. Some Bayira music texts evoke emotions, creating connection between performers and audience. Other musical texts reinforce Sisaala cultural values, traditions and customs. Some musical texts invoke spirits, ancestors or deities. As such, culture is preserved, community bonding is enacted, education is explored and spiritual connection is fully cemented.

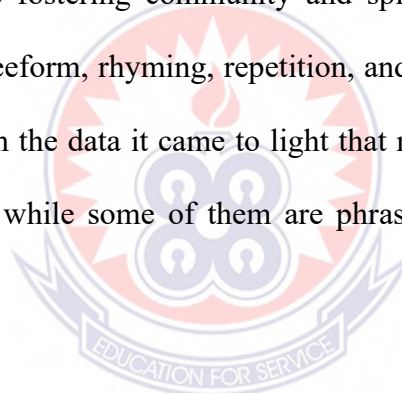
Language forms an integral part of Sisaala Bayira Performance. It conveys cultural narratives, values and emotions while fostering community and spiritual connections. Language sets context and tone of the performance, by telling stories, myths, themes and interaction between performers. It is through language that rich metaphors, symbols, idioms, allegories and imagery are expended.

Costuming is one aspects of Bayira that reflects the tradition, values and social status of the people. The adornment and patterns convey messages, myths and legends. The vibrant colours and intricate designs create an engaging visual experience. Costume helps distinguish characters, roles and occupation of individuals. The colourful costumes symbolize the richness of Sisaala culture. Poda's (2018) work examines the semiotics of costume in Sisaala Bayira Performance by looking at how costumes convey cultural meanings and identity. Dapila (2020) analyses the coordination of language, music, dance and costume to create a rich cultural experience. He identifies various semiotic resources (eg, gestures, facial expressions, props) used to convey cultural narratives. Dapila further argues that Bayira Performances reinforce Sisaala cultural identity and highlights the significance of the performance context. Dapila (2020) employs multimodal analysis to examine the interplay between performance, language and culture in

Sisaala Bayira. Kpikpi (2017) explores the interconnectedness of language, costume and performance in Sisaala Bayira, a traditional performance art form of the Sisaala people in Ghana.

The *Sisaala Bayira* performance tradition embodies the intricate interplay between music, text, and cultural philosophy. As revealed from the data, the *musical text* is central to *Bayira*, serving as both an artistic and cultural medium through which social values, moral lessons, and communal emotions are expressed. Guided by the theoretical insights of Richard Schechner (2020) and Dennis Tedlock (1972), this analysis explores how the textual structures of *Bayira* songs function as performative acts that encode and transmit cultural meanings.

In summary, the musical text is integral to Sisaala Bayira, conveying cultural narratives, values and emotions while fostering community and spiritual connections. Bayira songs are structured in the form of freeform, rhyming, repetition, and layout of the songs and the sentence structure of the songs. From the data it came to light that most songs are presented in sentences such as; simple sentences, while some of them are phrases. For example, the following B.S No.27 and 28 illustrate that:



B.S No.28.

Wujaara jaara janfieme naa	those who look for trouble will suffer it,
Wujaara jaara janfieme naa yee	Those who look for trouble will suffer it, oh!
La aa wujaara bie ri yie	We are indeed the children of the troublemakers
Wujaara jaara janfieme naa	Those who look for trouble will suffer it,
Wujaara jaara janfieme naa yee	Those who look for trouble will suffer it, oh!
La aa wujaara bie ri yie	We are indeed the children of the troublemakers
Wujaara jaara janfieme naa	Those who look for trouble will suffer it,
Wujaara jaara janfieme naa yee	Those who look for trouble will suffer it, oh!
La aa wujaara bie ri yie	We are indeed the children of the trouble makers

B.S No.27

Source Text:

Kuoro banqchaglawia yie
Kuoro banqchaglawia yie

Translation

A chief shoulders responsibilities
A chief shoulders responsibilities

Kuoro baŋchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baŋchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baŋchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities

The structural patterns of the *Bayira* songs are characterized by freeform composition, rhyme, and repetition. These stylistic devices contribute not only to the aesthetic richness of the performance but also to its communicative effectiveness. Repetition, in particular, is a dominant element that serves both mnemonic and participatory purposes. It enables performers and audience members to internalize the moral and emotional essence of the song, ensuring the continuity of oral traditions. The freeform structure further reflects the improvisational nature of *Bayira* performance, which allows singers to modify or extend verses to suit the mood of the event or the responsiveness of the audience.

According to Schechner (2020) performance is not a fixed text but a “*restored behavior*”—a process where cultural expressions are continuously re-enacted and reinvented. Within this context, *Bayira* performance becomes a living tradition, where each rendition reaffirms collective memory and social identity through flexible textual patterns.

4.2.1 Syntactic Patterns and Linguistic Simplicity

The linguistic analysis of the *Bayira* songs reveals that they largely consist of simple sentences and compound sentences, with occasional use of phrases. This syntactic simplicity facilitates comprehension and communal participation during performance. The following examples illustrate this structure: B.S Nos.7 and 28:

Source Text	Translation
Kpeiwie kaŋsiato Zara naa kpeiwie kaŋsiato liŋliŋ yie	The tiger has frowned, and the scavengers became very angry about the presence of the tiger

Kpeiwie kaŋsiato
Zara naa kpeiwie kaŋsiato liŋliŋ yie

The tiger has frowned, and
the scavengers became very angry
about the presence of the tiger

Kpeiwie kaŋsiato
Zara naa kpeiwie kaŋsiato liŋliŋ yie

The tiger has frowned, and
the scavengers became very angry
about the presence of the tiger

B.S No. 28

Source Text

Translation

Wujaara jaara jaŋfieme naa

Those who look for trouble will suffer it

Wujaara jaara jaŋfieme naa yee

Those who look for trouble will suffer it, oh!

La aa wujaara bie ri yie

We are indeed the children of the troublemakers

In B.S No. 28, the recurring line “*Wujaara jaara jaŋfieme naa*” (“Those who look for trouble will suffer it”) acts as the central refrain and thematic anchor. The repetition of this phrase reinforces the moral warning against provocation or mischief, emphasizing the Sisaala community’s value on peace and social harmony. However, the line “*La aa wujaara bie ri yie*” (“We are indeed the children of the troublemakers”) introduces a tone of irony and self-recognition. This duality reflects both an acknowledgment of inherited boldness and a subtle acceptance of social identity shaped by ancestral reputation. Such layering of meanings exemplifies Schechner’s (2020) argument that performance is a “*twice-behaved behavior*”, where actions and expressions simultaneously convey literal and symbolic interpretations. The performance of this song thus becomes a moral dialogue—cautioning against trouble while celebrating communal resilience and identity.

B.S No. 27

Source Text

Translation

Kuoro baŋchaglawia yie

A chief shoulders responsibilities

Kuoro baŋchaglawia yie

A chief shoulders responsibilities

Kuoro baŋchaglawia yie

A chief shoulders responsibilities

Kuoro baŋchaglawia yie

A chief shoulders responsibilities

The syntactic economy of these songs mirrors the oral tradition's emphasis on directness and rhythm. In performance, such brevity allows the message to resonate clearly while aligning with the musical tempo and audience response. As Tedlock (1972) notes, oral texts derive much of their power from their *performative simplicity*, where rhythm, tone, and repetition imbue short utterances with layered meanings.

B.S No. 27 revolves around the single repeated line “*Kuoro bançhaglawia yie*” (“A chief shoulders responsibilities”). The repetition transforms a simple declarative statement into a chant-like moral declaration. Through performance, this line evolves from mere description to moral instruction, emphasizing the weight and continuity of leadership responsibility. In Sisaala cultural thought, a chief is not only a political leader but also a moral custodian and spiritual intermediary.

The song's unchanging repetition mirrors the perpetual nature of a leader's duty and accountability. In Tedlock's (1972) ethnopoetic framework, repetition and rhythm are not mere stylistic choices but structural mechanisms that amplify meaning and emotional engagement. Therefore, the song functions as a moral reminder of the burdens and expectations placed on leadership within the Sisaala sociocultural context.

4.2.2 Cultural and Performative Dimensions

Both songs demonstrate that *Bayira* is more than a musical genre—it is a performative act of social reflection and collective reaffirmation. The communal chanting, rhythmic drumming, and participatory singing transform the audience into active co-performers, blurring the line between performer and listener. This aligns with Schechner's (2020) notion of the *performance process* as a site of shared experience and identity negotiation.

Through textual repetition and musical rhythm, the songs communicate moral truths and reinforce cultural ethics. The text operates simultaneously as a cultural archive and as a dynamic performance script—one that allows each generation to reinterpret and re-experience the wisdom of the past in the context of the present.

4.2.3 Summary

In conclusion, the textual analysis of B.S No. 27 and 28 reveals that *Sisaala Bayira* songs are meticulously structured to embody both artistic creativity and cultural philosophy. The simplicity of sentence forms, coupled with the use of repetition and rhythm, enables performers to communicate moral lessons effectively while maintaining audience engagement. Within the lens of performance theory, these songs represent living texts—performed, reinterpreted, and perpetuated across generations. The *Bayira* musical text thus stands as a bridge between aesthetics and ethics, serving as a medium through which the Sisaala people express identity, emotion, and communal wisdom.

4.3 The Historical and Cultural Contexts of the Sisaala Bayira Performance

The Sisaala Bayira is a traditional performance art deeply embedded in the cultural fabric of the Sisaala people of Ghana's Upper West Region. It constitutes an integral aspect of their social organization, identity, and worldview. As Nketia (1965) notes, Bayira performances typically occur during significant communal events such as funerals, harvest festivals, and other ritual occasions. Beyond their aesthetic value, these performances embody moral instruction, social cohesion, and spiritual awareness. Through its integration of song, dance, and dramatic enactment, Bayira becomes a living archive that transmits the community's oral history, ethical codes, and collective memory. It expresses the Sisaala people's worldview, values, and their intricate relationship with the environment, thereby functioning as both a performative and historical repository.

The introductory paragraph effectively situates *Bayira* as a cultural institution rather than a mere performance. By referencing Nketia (1965) it grounds the discussion in the authoritative tradition of African musicology and oral performance studies. The description of *Bayira* as a “living archive” is especially powerful—it captures the idea that performance functions as cultural memory, a concept central to both orature and performance theory.

The paragraph’s emphasis on moral instruction, social cohesion, and spirituality underscores the multifunctional nature of African performance traditions, aligning with scholars like Finnegan (1970) and Barber (2003) who emphasize the social and didactic dimensions of oral art. The link between performance and worldview is also conceptually sound—it acknowledges how performance enacts the community’s cosmology and value system.

4.3.1 The Theme of Cultural Identity

The Sisaala *Bayira* performance serves as a vital expression of cultural identity, encapsulating the beliefs, social values, and artistic ingenuity of the Sisaala people. It functions as a medium through which communal heritage and traditions are transmitted across generations. The performance narratives often revolve around myths, ancestral stories, and social institutions, reflecting the people’s understanding of continuity and belonging. For instance, *Bayira Song* (B.S) No. 6 states:

Source Text	Translation
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition
Oye huu oye huu!	Alas! Alas!
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition
Oye huu oye huu!	Alas! Alas!

This performance underscores the sacredness and hereditary nature of chieftaincy within the Sisaala community. It conveys that cultural heritage is not a commodity to be bought or sold

but an inheritance that carries immense social and moral weight. Through this expression, the Bayira affirms the community's collective identity and unity while reinforcing the notion of leadership as a spiritual and ancestral trust. The chieftaincy institution, therefore, becomes a symbol of cultural continuity and moral responsibility.

As Finnegan (1970) observes, oral performances such as the Bayira are instrumental in safeguarding cultural heritage. They provide a framework for intergenerational communication through which norms, myths, and historical consciousness are preserved. The expression “Kuoro aa naabarekiriye” (“Chieftaincy is a tradition”) illustrates how the Bayira enacts cultural pedagogy—teaching and reinforcing the values of heritage, unity, and belonging. Through such performances, cultural identity is not only expressed but also continually recreated in response to changing social realities.

This subsection succeeds in illustrating how Bayira operates as a vehicle of cultural identity and transmission. The inclusion of a primary text—the *Bayira Song (BS) No. 6*

Source Text

Translation

Kuoro aa naabarekiriye
Oye huu oye huu!
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye
Oye huu oye huu!

Chieftaincy is a tradition
Alas! Alas!
Chieftaincy is a tradition
Alas! Alas!

Thus, adds ethnographic authenticity and analytic depth. Transliteration and translation are well handled, and the commentary effectively interprets the song as a symbolic articulation of the sacredness of chieftaincy and ancestral continuity.

The interpretation that “cultural heritage is not a commodity but an inheritance” resonates with African philosophical notions of communalism and ancestral legitimacy. The text aptly aligns this with Finnegan's (1970) assertion on the role of oral performances in safeguarding

heritage. The paragraph also reflects postcolonial sensitivity—recognizing performance as a counter-hegemonic archive of indigenous epistemologies.

4.3.2 The Theme of Exhibition and Actualization

The Sisaala Bayira performance can also be interpreted through the theoretical lenses of Tedlock's and Schechner's Performance Theories, which foreground the historical and cultural embeddedness of performance as a social act. Both theorists emphasize the dynamic interaction between performers, audience, and cultural context in shaping meaning.

Tedlock's Performance Theory situates performance within its socio-historical framework, highlights how meaning emerges through the interplay between performer and audience. In the context of Bayira, this interaction creates a communal space in which the audience participates actively—singing, clapping, and emotionally engaging with the unfolding narrative. The performance thus becomes a co-created event that affirms shared cultural values and re-enacts collective history.

Schechner's (2020) conception of performance as liminal—that is, as a threshold between the ordinary and the transformative—provides a further interpretive dimension. In Bayira, participants experience a sense of renewal and transformation as they connect with ancestral spirits and reaffirm their cultural belonging. The performance thus transcends mere entertainment; it becomes a ritual of cultural and psychological re-actualization that sustains the moral and spiritual vitality of the Sisaala people.

The agrarian lifestyle of the Sisaala community further enriches the interpretive texture of the Bayira. Tedlock (1972) emphasizes that performances are not isolated acts but deeply rooted in the everyday practices and belief systems of the people. The Sisaala's agricultural life—its rhythms, cycles, and rituals—profoundly informs Bayira's aesthetic forms, movement

patterns, and symbolic expressions. The integration of farming gestures, mimetic dance, and musical instruments associated with agrarian activities situates the performance within the ecological realities of the community. This relationship between agrarian life and performance is vividly illustrated in Bayira Song (B.S) No. 19:

Source Text	Translation
Naajia Dintie para diasi dɔmɔ yee! Tittina gariwoni pindo Naajia Dintie para diasi dɔmɔ yee! Tittina gariwoni pindo	Naajia Dintie's great farming has roused enemies The great farmer has gone to sleep Naajia Dintie's great farming has roused enemies The great farmer has gone to sleep

The song commemorates a deceased farmer renowned for his generosity and diligence. It honors his agrarian achievements while lamenting his death, thereby blending eulogy with agricultural symbolism. The Bayira performance of this piece reconnects the audience with the agrarian ethos that defines their communal identity. It affirms the Sisaala worldview, where farming is not merely economic labor but a sacred duty that sustains both life and morality.

Through the application of Tedlock's and Schechner's theoretical frameworks, the Bayira emerges as a performative embodiment of the Sisaala's lived experiences—historical, spiritual, and ecological. The performance thus functions as a site of exhibition and actualization: a space where culture is displayed, reinterpreted, and regenerated. It simultaneously preserves tradition and accommodates transformation, reflecting the dynamism of Sisaala culture in its continuous negotiation between past and present.

This section demonstrates strong theoretical integration, weaving together Tedlock's and Schechner's frameworks. The exposition accurately reflects Tedlock's concern with dialogic performance and co-creation of meaning, and Schechner's focus on liminality and

transformation. The argument that Bayira is a “co-created event” involving performer and audience is central to performance studies and well applied here.

The discussion of Bayira as both ritual and renewal captures its dual nature—aesthetic and spiritual—and reveals the depth of its social relevance. The theoretical application is neither forced nor superficial; it organically connects with the ethnographic realities of the Sisaala people.

The connection between Bayira and the agrarian lifestyle is another strong analytical move. It situates performance in ecological context, illustrating how agricultural motifs and gestures shape performance aesthetics. The inclusion of *Bayira Song (B.S) No. 19* as a eulogy for a farmer provides an emotionally resonant and culturally grounded example. This reinforces the idea that Sisaala performance art embodies eco-poetics—a fusion of art, labor, and spirituality.

As in B.S No. 19 below:

Source Text	Translation
Naajia Dintie para diasi dɔmɔ yee!	Naajia Dintie’s great farming has roused enemies
Tittina gariwoni pindo	The great farmer has gone to sleep
Naajia Dintie para diasi dɔmɔ yee!	Naajia Dintie’s great farming has roused enemies
Tittina gariwoni pindo	The great farmer has gone to sleep

This section explores the tension between tradition and modernity as reflected in the Sisaala Bayira performance. Mudimbe (1988) profoundly discusses this tension within the African context, asserting that colonialism disrupted traditional African social structures and imposed Western values that often conflicted with indigenous systems. Modernization, while promoting progress and rationality, simultaneously threatens the preservation of traditional cultural identity, creating a conflict between communal and individualistic worldviews. However, African traditions are not static; they are fluid and adaptable to new realities. The Bayira performance exemplifies this adaptability in B.S. No. 13.

Source Text	Translation
Katakata kalaa yie!	Idiophonic expression of disgust
Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,	That we should discard our tradition and have what
Katakata kalaa yie!	Idiophonic expression of disgust
Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,	That we should discard our tradition and have what
Katakata kalaa yie!	Idiophonic expression of disgust
Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,	That we should discard our tradition and have what

The performers lament the growing neglect of tradition through the line “Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,” translated as “That we should discard our tradition and have what?” This rhetorical question expresses disgust and disbelief (reinforced by the idiophonic expression, “Katakata kalaa yie!”) at the thought of abandoning ancestral customs. It symbolically challenges modernity’s erosion of traditional values, echoing Mudimbe’s assertion of colonial disruption. The performance thus becomes a protest medium—a resistance against cultural alienation and an affirmation of the Sisaala people’s identity.

African funeral performances, such as Bayira, are more than rituals; they are social platforms for transmitting moral and cultural values. Within these performances, community ideals such as solidarity, reciprocity, and collective responsibility are reinforced. The Bayira chants critique the community’s inclination toward Western lifestyles, urging a return to indigenous roots. This message aligns with Gyekye’s (2003) notion of African communalism, which emphasizes mutual aid, solidarity, and moral responsibility among individuals.

Beyond its thematic message, the Bayira performance employs appellation—the act of giving titles or names—to reflect and sustain the Sisaala worldview. Finnegan (1970, p. 143) observes that appellations are vital in oral traditions as they preserve clan histories, commemorate heroic acts, and reinforce collective memory.

B.S. No. 6

Source Text	Translation
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition

B.S. No. 13

Katakata kalaa yie!	Idiophonic expression of disgust
Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,	That we should discard our tradition and have what
Katakata kalaa yie!	Idiophonic expression of disgust
Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,	That we should discard our tradition and have what
Katakata kalaa yie!	Idiophonic expression of disgust
Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,	That we should discard our tradition and have what

In B.S. Nos. 6 and 13, the repeated line “Kuoro aa naabarekiriye” (“Chieftaincy is a tradition”) encapsulates reverence for indigenous authority structures. Through this refrain, the performers celebrate continuity and social order while subtly reminding the audience of their cultural obligations.

Theoretical insights from Tedlock’s and Schechner’s performance theories provide deeper interpretation. Tedlock’s framework emphasizes the embodied nature of performance—how meaning is conveyed through gestures, voice, rhythm, and costume. In the Bayira context, appellations are not merely recited; they are performed with symbolic actions that reinforce cultural meaning. Schechner’s theory complements this by situating performance within its social and political context, focusing on power dynamics, identity, and communal negotiation. Thus, appellations in Bayira are artistic and political—affirming lineage, authority, and collective belonging within Sisaala society. As in B.S. No. 2:

Source Text	Translation
Naanɓiri Naanɓiri yie!	Brotherhood, brotherhood!
Naanɓiri ma aa lurire!	Brotherhood is a medicine

Naanbiri Naanbiri yie!	Brotherhood, brotherhood!
Naanbiri ma aa lurire!	Brotherhood is a medicine
Naanbiri Naanbiri yie!	Brotherhood, brotherhood!
Naanbiri ma aa lurire!	Brotherhood is a medicine

The excerpt “Naanbiri Naanbiri yie! Naanbiri ma aa lurire!” meaning “Brotherhood, brotherhood! Brotherhood is a medicine”) underscores communal unity. The metaphor of “medicine” implies that social harmony heals divisions, affirming Gyekye’s idea that the individual is inseparable from the community. Similarly, B.S. No. 5 uses war imagery—“Bayuoro kalabilia, Laheme faachol nyngel fieme yie” (“All the warriors are not out yet, else our arrows would have been in red flames”)—to evoke courage and spiritual cleansing. Here, “arrows” and “flames” symbolize purification and bravery, suggesting that traditional warfare imagery functions as both a cultural and moral metaphor.

Storytelling elements in Bayira also serve as vehicles of social correction. As Yankah and Peek (2004) explain, African oral narratives often use animal imagery to reflect human behavior. “Naɓbugo silula ubi, Ugaasu naɓbine yie” (“When the powerful man gives birth to a son, he feeds him with human flesh first”), the imagery is stark and symbolic.. As in B.S. No. 21,

Source Text	Translation
Naɓbugo silula ubi, Ugaasu naɓbine yie	When the powerful man gives birth to a son, he feeds him with human flesh first
Naɓbugo silula ubi, Ugaasu naɓbine yie	When the powerful man gives birth to a son, he feeds him with human flesh first
Naɓbugo silula ubi, Ugaasu naɓbine yie	When the powerful man gives birth to a son, he feeds him with human flesh first

It satirizes oppressive leadership and moral decay, warning the community against abuses of power. Likewise, in B.S. No. 7, “Kpeiwie kaɓsiato, Zara naa kpeiwie kaɓsiato liɓliɓ yie” (“The tiger has frowned, and the scavengers became angry”), animal imagery mirrors human conflict and social hostility, highlighting selfishness and the breakdown of communal empathy.

B.S. No. 7:

Source Text	Translation
Kpeiwie kaṅsiato Zara naa kpeiwie kaṅsiato liṅliṅ yie	The tiger has frowned, and the scavengers became very angry about the presence of the tiger
Kpeiwie kaṅsiato Zara naa kpeiwie kaṅsiato liṅliṅ yie	The tiger has frowned, and the scavengers became very angry about the presence of the tiger
Kpeiwie kaṅsiato Zara naa kpeiwie kaṅsiato liṅliṅ yie	The tiger has frowned, and the scavengers became very angry about the presence of the tiger

These songs are more than entertainment; they are moral texts, encoded with satire and wisdom. They serve to admonish, instruct, and heal the moral fabric of the community. Through layered metaphors and performance artistry, Bayira maintains its relevance in a rapidly modernizing society.

Finally, the sense of insecurity reflected in B.S. No. 23 “Fawuliwibie maachie saṅsina, Dakane banjeihari a dake rina” — “The coward’s son should one day offend us and see, we will take him behind the walls and teach him a lesson”.

B.S No. 23:

Source Text	Translation
Fawuliwibie maachie saṅsina, Dakane banjeihari a dake rina Fawuliwibie maachie saṅsina, Dakane banjeihari a dake rina Fawuliwibie maachie saṅsina, Dakane banjeihari a dake rina	The coward’s son should one day offend us and see, we will take him behind the walls and teach him a lesson The coward’s son should one day offend us and see, we will take him behind the walls and teach him a lesson The coward’s son should one day offend us and see, we will take him behind the walls and teach him a lesson

This reveals the psychological power of oral performance. The imagery of punishment and cannibalism evokes fear, reinforcing social control and community cohesion. Such expressions, though harsh, serve as traditional tools for moral enforcement.

In summary, the Bayira performance embodies the dialectic between tradition and modernity. While modernization threatens to dilute indigenous values, the performance reasserts the vitality of tradition as a living, evolving force. Through its songs, symbols, and performative artistry, Bayira mediates the conflict between the old and the new, ensuring that the Sisaala identity remains resilient amidst change.

4.4 The Aesthetic Features Embedded in Sisaala Bayira Songs

The Sisaala Bayira performance as a cultural and oral art form embodies aesthetic qualities that reflect the social values, historical experiences, and creative sensibilities of the Sisaala people. The performance is not only a form of entertainment but also an artistic vehicle that conveys emotional, moral, and philosophical messages through song, dance, and ritual performance. This section explores the aesthetic features embedded in Bayira songs, focusing on imagery and symbolism, repetition and parallelism, tone and mood, rhythm and musicality, language and diction, as well as performance and audience interaction. Each of these elements contributes to the richness and depth of the Sisaala Bayira performance as an expressive cultural art form.

4.4.1 Imagery and Symbolism

Imagery and symbolism form a central pillar in the Sisaala Bayira performance aesthetics. Through visual and verbal symbols, the Sisaala people express values such as courage, leadership, and communal harmony. Finnegan (1970, p.145) asserts that African oral poetry employs images that capture the live realities of its people. In Bayira performances, metaphoric language translates social commentary into vivid experiences. For instance, in B.S

No. 5, the line 'Bayuoro kalabilia, Laheme faachol nyingel fieme yie' ('All the warriors are not out yet; else our arrows would have been in red flames') uses imagery of war and flame to symbolize strength and resilience. The extract below explicates that:

B.S No.5

Source Text	Translation
Bayuoro kalabilia	All the warriors are not out yet
Laheme faachol nyingel fieme yie	else our arrows would have been in red flames
Bayuoro kalabilia	All the warriors are not out yet
Laheme faachol nyingel fieme yie	else our arrows would have been in red flames
Bayuoro kalabilia	All the warriors are not out yet
Laheme faachol nyingel fieme yie	else our arrows would have been in red flames

The image of the burning arrow signifies both bravery and purification—a cleansing of the community's moral space.

4.4.2 Repetition and Parallelism

Repetition and parallelism are dominant stylistic features in Bayira songs. Finnegan (1970) and Nketia (1965) note that repetition serves as both an aesthetic and mnemonic device in oral performance, reinforcing the communal message and facilitating audience participation. For instance, in B.S No. 2,

Source Text	Translation
Naaḅbiri Naaḅbiri yie!	Brotherhood! Brotherhood!
Naaḅbiri ma aa lurire!	Brotherhood is medicine!
Naaḅbiri Naaḅbiri yie!	Brotherhood! Brotherhood!
Naaḅbiri ma aa lurire!	Brotherhood is medicine!
Naaḅbiri Naaḅbiri yie!	Brotherhood! Brotherhood!
Naaḅbiri ma aa lurire!	Brotherhood is medicine!

The repetition represents the moral lesson of unity and interdependence among the Sisaala. The recurrence of lines invites the audience to chant along, turning the performance into

a participatory act of communal solidarity. Parallelism, seen in structural repetitions, also reflects the Sisaala's rhythmic sense of balance and harmony.

4.4.3 Tone and Mood

The tone and mood in Bayira performances vary according to the social occasion—mourning, celebration, or initiation. Tedlock (1972) observes that performance tone reflects not just emotion but also ritual atmosphere.

In B.S No. 6.

Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition

The sentence *Kuoro aa naabarekiriye* meaning *Chieftaincy is a tradition* conveys reverence and solemnity, establishing a tone of dignity and continuity. Conversely, in B.S No. 13, 'Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie' ('That we should discard our tradition and have what?'), the tone shifts to indignation, revealing the community's resistance to modern encroachments. Such tonal shifts mark the Sisaala Bayira as a living art that negotiates emotion and ideology.

4.4.4 Rhythm and Musicality

Rhythm and musicality form the core of the Bayira's performative aesthetics and are fundamental to understanding its expressive power. From a performance theory perspective, Schechner (2020) posits that rhythm functions as a key connective tissue between performers and audiences, transforming performance from an individual act into a collective event. In the context of the Sisaala Bayira, rhythm becomes the heartbeat of communal expression—a binding force that synchronizes emotion, movement, and meaning within the performance space.

The dynamic interplay between the drumbeats, handclaps, and the characteristic call-and-response structure reflects what Tedlock (1972) refers to as the “dialogic” nature of oral performance, where meaning emerges through active participation. This rhythmic reciprocity produces what Schechner calls “restored behavior”—a repeated, culturally encoded action that gains new significance each time it is performed. In the Bayira, rhythm thus transcends sound; it becomes a ritualized expression of collective memory and identity.

Nketia (1965) further observes that in Ghanaian traditional performances, rhythm is not simply a musical accompaniment but a vehicle of meaning and emotional depth. The drumming patterns of Bayira mirror the thematic and emotional contours of the lyrics, amplifying their expressive intensity. The rhythmic pulses guide dancers and singers alike, ensuring a seamless coordination between physical movement and poetic cadence.

A striking example of this rhythmic interplay occurs in the repetitive refrain “*Oye huun oye huun!*” (“Alas! Alas!”) from Bayira Song No. 6, performed with a cyclical structure that heightens emotional resonance and group empathy.

Source Text	Translation
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition
Oye huun oye huun!	Alas! Alas!
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition
Oye huun oye huun!	Alas! Alas!
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye	Chieftaincy is a tradition
Oye huun oye huun!	Alas! Alas!

This repetition, when coupled with the hypnotic rhythm of the drums, creates a pulsating musical texture that both anchors and propels the performance. The communal chorus of lament (“*Oye huun!*”) functions as a cathartic channel through which shared sorrow and reflection are expressed. In Schechner’s (2020) terms, this moment marks the transformation of performance into ritual—where aesthetic experience becomes a social and spiritual encounter.

The rhythm of Bayira, therefore, is not merely an auditory or kinetic element; it embodies the spiritual and emotional pulse of the community. It collapses the distance between performer and audience, making everyone part of the unfolding narrative. In this sense, the musicality of Bayira enacts the performance theory principle that “all performance is twice-behaved behavior”—recreated, reinterpreted, and re-experienced in ways that renew cultural memory and reinforce collective identity.

4.4.5 Language, Diction, and Proverbs

Language and diction occupy a central place in the artistry of Bayira, revealing the intellectual and moral fabric of Sisaala society. In the framework of oral literature, Finnegan (1970, p.153) identifies proverbial speech as a vital medium through which communities preserve and transmit collective wisdom. The Bayira performance exemplifies this tradition through its rich use of metaphors, proverbs, idiophones, and allusive expressions that embed cultural philosophy within poetic form.

The performance language of Bayira is not only descriptive but also evocative—it appeals simultaneously to the senses, intellect, and emotions. Idiophonic expressions such as “*Katakata kalaa yie!*”—an exclamation that conveys disgust or moral revulsion—function as sonic markers of emotion. In performance theory terms, such idiophones serve as “embodied utterances” (Schechner, 2020), where language extends beyond verbal meaning to become an act of performance in itself. The utterance, combined with gesture and rhythm, transforms the performer’s voice into a vehicle of emotional intensity and cultural commentary.

Equally significant is the use of metaphorical diction that infuses Bayira songs with layers of moral and philosophical insight. A notable example appears in Bayira Song No. 21:

Source Text	Translation
Nanbugo silula ubi, Ugaasu nanbine yie'	When the powerful man gives birth to a son, He feeds him with human flesh first
Nanbugo silula ubi, Ugaasu nanbine yie'	When the powerful man gives birth to a son, He feeds him with human flesh first
Nanbugo silula ubi, Ugaasu nanbine yie'	When the powerful man gives birth to a son, He feeds him with human flesh first

The refrain “*Nanbugo silula ubi, Ugaasu nanbine yie*” (“When the powerful man gives birth to a son, he feeds him with human flesh first”) serves as a powerful metaphor that encodes ideas of power, moral inheritance, and social responsibility. This imagery, while metaphorical, captures the notion that authority must be nurtured through moral discipline, experiential wisdom, and resilience. The “feeding” of human flesh symbolically represents the initiation of the young into the moral and existential struggles that define leadership and strength within the community.

Viewed through the lens of performance theory, this metaphor operates performatively—it not only communicates meaning but enacts a form of moral education. The recitation of such lines before an audience transforms Bayira into a pedagogical space where communal values are dramatized and reinforced. This aligns with Finnegan’s (1970) assertion that oral performance serves both aesthetic and didactic functions, shaping ethical consciousness through artistic expression.

In this regard, Bayira’s language is not static text but living performance—a manifestation of what Tedlock (1972) calls the “voice of the performer,” where interpretation and delivery merge to produce cultural knowledge. The diction, tone, and rhythm combine to create what Schechner (2020) describes as “behavior restored,” as each performance reanimates ancestral wisdom within a contemporary social setting.

Ultimately, the linguistic richness of Bayira demonstrates how art and morality coexist in oral literature. Proverbs, idiophones, and metaphors function as vehicles of communal philosophy, embedding moral instruction within aesthetic experience. Thus, Bayira operates as both a poetic and ethical system—an indigenous mode of literary performance that embodies the Sisaala worldview, preserves cultural memory, and perpetuates moral reflection through sound, rhythm, and language.

4.4.6 Rhythm, Language, and Performance as Cultural Expression

The synthesis of rhythm, language, and performance in the Sisaala Bayira provides a profound insight into how traditional African art forms encapsulate both aesthetic and social functions. These three elements—when harmoniously intertwined—transform the Bayira from a simple act of entertainment into a deeply symbolic mode of communication and cultural continuity. Through the fusion of sound, movement, and words, the Bayira becomes a living text that narrates the history, beliefs, and emotions of the Sisaala people.

At its core, rhythm gives life and direction to the performance. It acts as the pulse through which communal energy flows, coordinating bodily movements, speech, and emotion. As Schechner (2020) asserts, rhythm in performance operates as a connective force, creating shared experience and fostering unity among participants. In the Bayira, rhythmic drumming and call-and-response patterns embody this philosophy. The pulsating beats not only synchronize the movements of dancers but also evoke collective emotion, reinforcing the sense of belonging that underpins Sisaala communal life. Each drumbeat becomes an extension of memory—echoing ancestral rhythms that have endured through generations.

Language, on the other hand, provides the Bayira with its intellectual and moral substance. The poetic diction, rich in proverbs, metaphors, and idiophones, transforms

performance into a repository of indigenous wisdom. Finnegan (1970) describes proverbial speech in African oral traditions as both a stylistic device and a moral compass. In the Bayira, language functions as a mirror of communal consciousness, offering lessons on leadership, morality, and human relationships. For instance, expressions like B.S No.21

Source Text	Translaton
Nanbugosilulaubi, Ugaasunaᅇbineyie, Nanbugosilulaubi, Ugaasunaᅇbineyie, Nanbugosilulaubi, Ugaasunaᅇbineyie,	When the powerful man gives birth to a son he feeds him with human flesh first. When the powerful man gives birth to a son he feeds him with human flesh first. When the powerful man gives birth to a son he feeds him with human flesh first.

The except “*Nanbugo silula ubi, Ugaasu nanbine yie*” (“When the powerful man gives birth to a son, he feeds him with human flesh first”) transcends into the literal meaning; they metaphorically instruct the audience on the values of discipline, responsibility, and endurance. Such utterances ensure that the Bayira remains both educational and reflective, teaching moral values through aesthetic form.

When viewed through the lens of Performance Theory, as advanced by Tedlock (1972) and Schechner (2020), Bayira emerges as a dynamic space where performance becomes both art and pedagogy. Schechner’s concept of “*restored behavior*”—the idea that performance reenacts and reinterprets culturally embedded actions—resonates strongly within the Bayira tradition. Each performance is not a mere repetition of the past but an active re-engagement with it. The performers reinterpret ancestral narratives, adjusting their tone, tempo, and expression to reflect current realities. In doing so, they renew cultural memory and sustain communal identity. The audience, in turn, participates actively through rhythmic responses, gestures, and emotional involvement, transforming the event into a shared act of meaning-making.

Similarly, the Bayira aligns with Finnegan's (1970) conceptualization of oral literature as a living, performative art form. It bridges the gap between spoken word and enacted movement, between the poetic and the musical. In Bayira performances, the boundaries between literature, music, and drama dissolve, creating a holistic artistic expression. This convergence reflects the African worldview that art is not compartmentalized but integrative—an embodiment of community life, spirituality, and philosophy. The interplay of rhythm and language thus becomes both a cultural act and a literary performance, reinforcing the inseparability of artistic beauty and moral purpose in African traditions.

On the other hand, Bayira's performative structure serves a critical social function. It acts as a communal forum for expressing grief, celebrating leadership, or addressing moral transgressions. The rhythmic lamentations in refrains like "*Oye huun oye huun!*" ("Alas! Alas!") Express not only sorrow but also collective empathy. They enable the community to process emotional experiences through artistic ritual, converting pain into shared catharsis. This resonates with Schechner's idea that performance often oscillates between ritual and theater, blurring the line between aesthetic pleasure and spiritual renewal.

Through this synthesis, the Bayira demonstrates how traditional African performances embody both artistic creativity and social pedagogy. Rhythm enlivens the performance, language deepens its meaning, and the act of performance transforms it into a participatory cultural discourse. Each performance thus becomes an event of *becoming*—a recreation of identity, morality, and memory.

In essence, the Sisaala Bayira Performance operates simultaneously as a literary, performative, and cultural phenomenon. It is literary because it uses poetic language and metaphor to convey meaning; performative because it relies on embodiment, rhythm, and audience interaction; and cultural because it sustains communal identity and values. The

synthesis of these elements confirms that Bayira is not just a traditional performance but a sophisticated artistic system—one that encapsulates the intellectual, emotional, and moral life of the Sisaala people.

By integrating rhythm, diction, and performance, the Sisaala Bayira continues to serve as an enduring expression of Sisaala cultural consciousness. It stands as evidence that African oral traditions are living forms of literature—capable of critique, creativity, and renewal. Through its dynamic artistry, the Bayira reminds us that culture is not static but performed, reimagined, and transmitted through the power of the human voice, the rhythm of the drum, and the collective heartbeat of the community.

4.4.7 The Theme of Social Relevance

The Bayira performance is socially grounded, functioning as an avenue for the expression of communal values, moral correction, and social commentary. As Gyekye (2003, p. 67) notes, African societies are deeply communal, where social harmony and reciprocity are core virtues. Bayira songs often carry moral undertones that address social cohesion and interpersonal conduct. For example, in B.S No. 2:

Source Text:	Translation
NaaḅiriNaaḅiriyie!	Brotherhood, brotherhood!
Naaḅirimaaalure!	Brotherhood is medicine.
NaaḅiriNaaḅiriyie!	Brotherhood, brotherhood!
Naaḅirimaaalure!	Brotherhood is medicine.
NaaḅiriNaaḅiriyie!	Brotherhood, brotherhood!
Naaḅirimaaalure!	Brotherhood is medicine.

The refrain celebrates unity and empathy among the Sisaala people. The metaphor of ‘brotherhood as medicine’ highlights the healing power of solidarity and communal interdependence.

4.4.8 The Theme of Artistic Relevance

Bayira performances embody aesthetic richness through their use of poetry, music, costume, and gesture. According to Schechner (2020, p. 44), performance embodies art as a ‘restored behavior,’ where aesthetic forms become channels for cultural reflection. Tedlock (1972, p. 31) similarly stresses that performance aesthetics reflect not only artistic creativity but also ritual functionality. For example, B.S No. 5 states:

SourceText:	Translation
Bayuoro kalabilia	All the warriors are not out yet
Lahemefaacholnyingelfiemeyie	Else our arrows would have been in red flames.
Bayuoro kalabilia	All the warriors are not out yet
Lahemefaacholnyingelfiemeyie	Else our arrows would have been in red flames.
Bayuoro kalabilia	All the warriors are not out yet
Lahemefaacholnyingelfiemeyie	Else our arrows would have been in red flames.

The song uses martial imagery and repetition to evoke courage and readiness. The aesthetic quality lies not only in the poetic rhythm but also in its dramatic presentation during communal gatherings.

4.4.9 War, Heroism, and the Politics of Voice

Bayira performances also provide a platform for expressing themes of heroism and valor. The Sisaala community uses the songs to celebrate the bravery of individuals and collective resistance against adversity. B.S No. 21 captures this through the metaphor of the powerful man:

Source Text:	Translation
Nanbugo silula ubi,	When the powerful man gives birth to a son
Ugaasu nanbine yie,	he feeds him with human flesh first.
Nanbugo silula ubi,	When the powerful man gives birth to a son
Ugaasu nanbine yie,	he feeds him with human flesh first.
Nanbugo silula ubi,	When the powerful man gives birth to a son
Ugaasu nanbine yie,	he feeds him with human flesh first.

The hyperbolic metaphor symbolizes the transmission of strength, resilience, and fearlessness across generations. According to Finnegan (1970, p. 148), such figurative expressions reflect communal aspirations and heroic ideals.

4.4.10 Ritual, Continuity, and the Celebration of Life

The Bayira performance operates within ritual frameworks that celebrate life and continuity even in death. As observed by Nketia (1965, p. 55), African performances intertwine ritual and artistry, reflecting beliefs about immortality and communal regeneration. In B.S No. 13, the text warns against abandoning tradition:

Source Text:

Translation

Katakata kalaa yie!	Idiophonic expression of disgust
Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,	That we should discard our tradition and have what
Katakata kalaa yie!	Idiophonic expression of disgust
Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,	That we should discard our tradition and have what
Katakata kalaa yie!	Idiophonic expression of disgust
Basi la joŋ la kulata aŋkeŋ be yie,	That we should discard our tradition and have what

The rhetorical question underscores the importance of maintaining cultural continuity amidst modern influences. It affirms that Bayira acts as a moral compass and ritual medium for cultural endurance.

In sum, a critical reading of Bayira performances reveals their literary and performative depth. Through narrative, imagery, and symbolism, they transcend mere entertainment and assume intellectual and philosophical roles. Tedlock's and Schechner's performance theories illuminate the dialogic space between performer and audience, where meaning is co-created. As Yankah and Peek (2004, p. 112) emphasize, such oral performances are not static texts but evolving discourses that encode collective wisdom and critique. Therefore, Bayira is both a

literary and performative tradition that synthesizes art, culture, and philosophy into one living expression.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter analyzed the data obtained from field observations, recordings, and interviews conducted among Bayira performers and community members in the Sisaala area. The analysis focused on three thematic areas derived from the study's objectives: the historical and cultural contexts of the Sisaala Bayira performance, the aesthetic features embedded in Bayira performances, and the literary significance of Bayira within Sisaala oral traditions.

This chapter presents discussion of the findings, draws comparisons with previous scholarship—particularly Nketia's (1965) seminal study—and outlines pedagogical implications and recommendations for cultural and educational development.

5.2 Summary of the Entire Study

The study investigated a textual interpretation of Sisaala Bayira and is grounded on three main objectives which sought to explore the historical and cultural contexts of Sisaala Bayira performances, analyse the aesthetic features and to assess the literary significance of Bayira performances in the context of Sisaala traditions. The general purpose of the research was to do a textual interpretation of the Sisaala Bayira performance. The study adopted the ethnographic tradition in qualitative studies. Literally, it is revealed that the Sisaala Bayira is the summation of Sisaala tradition and all funerary rites revolve around the Bayira. The theories that backed the study were Tedlock's and Schechner's Performance Theories. The key areas investigated were the historical and cultural contexts of Sisaala Bayira performance, the exploration of aesthetic features embedded in the Sisaala Bayira performances, and assessment of the literary significance in the Bayira performance. The instruments used to gather data for the study were

observation, recording and interview (unstructured interview). The data was transcribed following the International Phonetic Transcription (IPT) guide and the translation done using Newmark's communicative, adaptation and semantic methods. The data was coded and numbered before it was analyzed according to the objectives of the research. Bayira performers applied both the aesthetic features and their literary significance to communicate messages to sympathizers and bereaved family members during Bayira performance. The skills Sisaala Bayira performers employed during performance included paralinguistic features and extensive use of figurative language.

5.3 Evaluation of Research Findings

A). The historical and cultural contexts of Sisaala Bayira performance

The study revealed both the historical and cultural backgrounds of the Sisaala Bayira performance. It explored the origins, traditions and relevance of the performance within the Sisaala community. It was revealed that the performance of Bayira is rooted in history of the Sisaala people. The historical context of Bayira and the traditional beliefs shaped the themes and narratives of the performance. The songs as well served as vehicle for recording history for continuity to express and portray their cultural identity. The performance as cultural expression of the Sisaala people, reflect their beliefs, social cohesion and artistic abilities. It incorporates traditional music, performance and storytelling techniques that are specific to the Sisaala culture. It also serves as a medium to demonstrate their unique cultural identity and heritage. Traditionally, tales were forms of entertainment told after the day's hard work, but Bayira performers defied that traditional rule of storytelling for leisure to telling tales during trial moments such as funerals. It was observed that tales were told in Bayira during funerals of elderly deceased. Thematic concerns commonly addressed in tales included admonition (warning signs) and criticism of societal misdeeds (satire). Sympathizers and bereaved families were warned of acts considered inimical and had repellent effect to their lives and the lives of

others. The findings revealed that Bayira performance fosters a sense of togetherness and solidarity among members of the community.

The songs also reflect the tradition, culture and the way of life of the people in the community as they connect the audience to agricultural heritage of the people. It was unearthed that there was a nexus between kinship and ancestorship in every indigenous home of the Sisaala people. The findings revealed that the costume and props enhance the visual appeal and aesthetic value of the performance, creating a more engaging and immersive experience for the audience. The vibrant colours, intricate designs and unique elements of the costumes and props captivate the viewers and the overall ambience of the performance.

Also, the costumes and props play a crucial role in conveying the story or theme of the performance. They provide visual cues and symbolism that help the audience understand the plot, characters and cultural context of the performance. The specific attire worn by the performers often carry cultural significance and contribute to the authenticity of the performance. The songs also served as recommendations for praise poetry by frowning on laziness while encouraging hard work which makes them to always strive hard for themselves and for their communities. Bayira songs also aid in the development of intellect which people use to compose songs for themselves and others to have retentive memory. As such, Bayira songs are a source of entertainment to the teeming youth. A thorough understanding of Bayira allows for effective cultural exchange. It facilitates communication and collaboration between fostering mutual respect, understanding diverse cultural expressions.

B). Analysis of Aesthetic Features Associated with Bayira performances

The study explored the various elements present in Sisaala Bayira performance. The findings showed great deployment of aesthetic features in Bayira song text with the most commonly and strongly applied devices being repetition, metaphor, irony, symbolism and

personification, parallelism, hyperbole, imagery and rhetorical questions. Bayira singers used rhetorical questions in instances where they wanted sympathizers and bereaved family members to reflect on their message. Repetition on the other hand was used to lay emphasis on messages contained in the musical text to create rhythm. Apostrophe was one of the devices employed by Bayira performers to address death directly on stage. Such Bayira performances showed the tension prevailing in the atmosphere and the sadness that greeted every sympathizer and bereaved family member. The findings underscored the literary significance of appellations as vehicles for recording history. It was such situations that warranted Bayira performers to pour out their anger and questioned why death did what it did to the deceased and the family. Metaphorical representations emphasizes the dominance and authority of the Sisaala people such as *katifiema (red ants)*, *lajuubua (whenever we colonize)* and *la aa (we are)*. The findings also extracted parallelisms as it aids oral artists to compose, organize their thoughts to enable them perform well. It creates a sense of of balance and harmony in the song text it enhances memory of the performers and audience as well. There were hyperbols used which emphasizes a person's attitude towards a subject by conveying their feelings and intensions. Apostrophe triggered bitter emotional reaction among bereaved family members and sympathizers as they mourned uncontrollably upon its application.

Also, euphemism was a device that occurred prominently in the text. From the findings, it was observed that Bayira singers adopted terms like *Kachuugbege(featherless eagle)*, *tuukpa(has taken away)*, *Aḡwonbi(the lion's son)* within the Bayira discourse to describe death as wishful event and avoided the harsh, horrible and glooming terms that put fear and made sympathizers melancholic. Euphemistic expressions such as *Jawia kuoro nii maakeli yie(the mouth of jawia kuoro is glued)* soothed the pains of grieving family members and calmed tensions of funeral environments. In addition to euphemism, hyperbole was a device identified from the findings. Bayira singers deliberately exaggerated certain descriptions in the Bayira text that caught the

attention of sympathizers. The hyperbolic expressions like ...*para diasi dɔmɔ*... (...*great farming has roused enemies*), *Tiɲtina gariwoni pindo* (*the great farmer has gone to sleep*) heightened tension and caused sympathizers and bereaved family members to intensify mourning. Bayira performers adopted that phrase as lyrical phrase that suggested conclusion to the proceedings of the funeral rite. Other equally important device from the findings were sound devices that played significant impact in Bayira performance. Commonly identified sound devices were alliteration and onomatopoeia as in, *Dintie...diasi dɔmɔ* (*Dintie...great farming...enemies*). These provided rhythm and beauty in the dirges performed.

(C). *Assessment of the literary significance of Bayira performance in context*

In examining the literary significance of Bayira performance in context, the researcher noted that Bayira performers employed several aesthetic features that are of great literary significance. The findings revealed significant deployment of aesthetic features such as *Tiɲtina gariwoni pindo* (*the great farmer has gone to sleep*), *kɛɲvaha suorota* (*release the dog*) during Bayira performance. Every Bayira performance recorded had aesthetic features that made up the Sisaala Bayira performance, signifying that they were important in the performance. It was noticed that brotherhood represents unity, strength and solidarity as it serves as a panacea to their predicaments. Tedlock's Theory helps us understand the use of tone in Bayira performers' movements as it creates a rich, nuanced performance. It came out that the tone of the Bayira songs was distinctively different from the tone of ordinary songs because it was particularly mournful, sorrowful in a way that made it stand out from tones emanating from luxury and physical or bodily pain, For instance, tone influenced the rhythm of Bayira performance. The literary aesthetics of the Bayira tone influenced the mood of sympathizers to either intensify their mourning or not. Also, images of various kinds appeared in Bayira performance as features. There were visual and concrete images that touched the senses of sympathizers and left indelible memories with them.

Moreover, symbols appeared predominantly as Bayira performers used that technique to externalize their feelings with ideas that could be associated in the natural environment. It was also observed that the symbols used projected realism and avoided abstract description. Sympathizers associated ideas Bayira singers expressed with objects and things in the environment that helped consolidate their understanding of Bayira song texts. Added to symbols was metaphorical representation that Bayira performers made during performance.

The indirect comparisons enabled sympathizers and bereaved families to associate themselves to elements found within their immediate environment. That encouraged sympathizers and the general public to appreciate messages of Bayira performers. Proverbs occurred predominantly as has often happened in many texts of African oral tradition. As a strong feature of oral literature, the proverbs used enriched the language of the Bayira songs. Also, of prime notice in the Bayira performances was humour. Bayira performers injected humour occasionally to ease the sorrow of mourners and eased tension that mounted in the atmosphere. Notably, the humour came in many forms and as said by Onu & Eze (2018) sometimes performers deliberately sing off tune or march out of the beat and rhythm of the music. At other times too, some performers made obscene gestures while performing, thereby moving the audience to laughter. Principally, comedy is normally associated with the Bayira performance.

The findings explicate that Sisaala Bayira performers employed a lot of creative skills during Bayira performance and it was realized that a successful Bayira performance comprised both verbal and non-verbal utterances and the non-verbal component also known as paralinguistic features were extensively employed, where significant aspect of that was body language. It included gestures, facial expressions, nodding the head that all made significant contribution to the verbal messages. This finding supports the findings of Onu and Eze (2018) who noted that it is important to note that when funeral song is rendered, the words, facial

expressions of the performers, vocal expressiveness and other paralinguistic strategies all add to the impression it creates. In all forms of performances, the performers exploited linguistic, tonal, musical and visual resources at their disposal to realize the aim of the performances. As such, words, images and other verbal and non-verbal ingredients such as gestures are deliberately chosen in their composition and performance (Poghyar-Kuutiero, 1997, p. 67). Adding to body language was the kind of dressing some Bayira performers wore that contributed a lot to the non-verbal message of the performance. The dress code of the performers portrayed sadness while others communicated daring messages and warning to mourners and sympathizers especially other performers who might want to prove their worth and potency of their spiritual prowess. Undoubtedly, body language as a symbolic feature was important in the performance just as verbal expression in oral poetry. Apart from the non-verbal skills employed, it was realized that there was effective application of figurative and metaphorical expressions during Bayira performances. The language of Bayira performance is different from everyday language. The language as argued by Yomoa, (2009, p.152) is familiar, yet its familiarity rests on the fact that a characteristic rendition of the language identifies it as the register of performance for that matter, Bayira. The rousing cries or calls, *kachugbege tuukpa arwonbi (the featherless eagle has taken the lion's son away)* is recognized as a signal of lamentation for the dead and nobody cries that when there was no death. One other feature of the praise poems is the elevated language usually employed in them. Praise poems are couched in lofty language embellished with proverbs, metaphors, exaggerations, symbolisms and other figurative forms.

(D) Pedagogical Implication of the Findings

Aesthetic elements are the particular items that enable us to understand how theatrical devices enrich the narrative and the thematic implications that can be derived from them. Symbolic aspects of literature for teaching and learning help people's cognitive development. It took a lot of thought to apply components to Bayira performances. Those who sympathize would

need to consider the element's use in a larger context. They also provide insight into the personalities' dispositions. Performers of Sisaala Bayira use specific body language to convey to us the competence level of people who work in this field. In this light, when attempting to teach kids theater in the classroom, we must establish a parallel between how oral text is rendered in context, which is similar to written drama, where characters play distinct roles leading to the unfolding of events in the plot. A lament performance involves a partnership between the lead singer, the supporting singer, and the sympathizers who comprise the audience and deliver an accompanying choral reaction to the performance.

According to Tedlock's Theory, audience and performers must work together to create a successful performance. The Theory argues that performances are dynamic interactions between artists and audiences that are influenced by the environment in which they take place, as opposed to merely being planned events. The Bayira dance performance is a dialogue in which the audience's sympathizers, the lead Bayira dance performer, and the supporting Bayira performance each have distinct responsibilities to carry out during the performance. This kind of cooperation creates the conditions for a successful Bayira performance. The Bayira performance structure is comparable to that of any theatrical text's plot. It is made up of multiple events with many intricate scenarios, just like the storyline of a written piece. It has a beginning and a specific progression leading to the climax that every Bayira performer must follow throughout the performance. As part of the social compact in this discourse, the sympathizers who are part of the performance want the Bayira performer to perform songs to their satisfaction.

The context of teaching and learning focuses on comprehension of literary elements, the use of symbols and imagery, and the word choices made by the Bayira performer during performances. Stories are used by Bayira performers to instill moral principles in their supporters. Positive behaviour is encouraged and negative behaviour is denounced, allowing

young people to model acceptable behavior for the community. The vocal message conveyed in the Bayira is supported by the non-verbal cues and the historically significant movements.

The outfit and demeanor of the Bayira performers provide additional insight into the Sisaala tradition. The costumes used by Bayira performers are crucial aspects of their artistic expression since they help convey the mood, tone, and message of their performances. The outfits are meticulously chosen to reflect the deceased's rank, age, gender, and personality, as well as the relationship that existed between the Bayira performers. During the fieldwork, the researcher noticed that some Bayira performers wore different types of clothing. Some wore smocks, while others wore regular shirts with African wax prints. Smocks worn by Bayira performers had varying patterns on them. Certain smock designs featured traditional-meaning feathers and amulets as embellishments. Costumes help commemorate the memories and individuality of the departed family member while also creating a visual difference between the living and the dead.

In conclusion, the garments worn by Bayira performers enhance the artistic, expressive, and symbolic elements of their performances. The content and intent of the Bayira performance, as well as the personality and ideals of the Bayira performances, were all conveyed through the clothing. The utilization of aesthetic features ingrained in the Bayira dance performances were impactful insights.

5.4 Conclusion

The research examined the historical, cultural, aesthetic and literary significance in the Bayira performances in this study. The study's overarching goal was to examine a textual interpretation of Bayira performances. The aesthetic elements, according to the researcher, are unique traits that inform us how dramatic talents contribute quality to the story and thematic development that may be taken from the story. Symbolic aspects also inform us about the

demeanour of characters and how Bayira performance utilize particular demeanours that assist sympathizers in understanding how the skill is rendered by people who appreciate Bayira songs. Tone, voice modulation (intonation), and rhythm are all symbolic aspects of Bayira dance performance. There were empathetic tones, bold tones, virtuosic tones, satirical tones, and so on, according to the researchers.

These tones gave a variety of emotional depth and expression to the performances. Changes in pitch, loudness, and vocal inflections portray diverse moods, such as melancholy, grief, or reverence. Voice modulation (pitch) elicited emotional responses from mourners and altered the overall tone of the burial. The researchers discovered that a low, flat, and melancholy voice modulation (pitch) drove sympathizers into an uncontrollable state of mourning, influencing the general mood of sympathizers. A charged, high voice modulation (pitch), on the other hand, exhibited the characteristics of little ache and grief.

Thus, in funeral performances marked by high voice modulation, allies displayed joyous feelings with minimal pity. They are endowed with a profusion of verbal talents that ease the suffering of grieving relatives. There were both male and female Bayira performers, but the male singers were more likely to be spotted performing on funeral grounds. They honoured the deceased for their accomplishments in life as well as the contributions they had made to society. The researcher also noticed that there were other uses for the Bayira performance than mourning the deceased. Critiques of society's misdeeds were also made with it. In addition, Bayira singers utilized their music to caution grieving relatives and supporters from engaging in dubious deeds in the community. In order to successfully convey the message verbally, the vocabulary and techniques used by the Bayira performance were crucial. Performance is a type of social action that has the ability to change social reality, according to performance-centred theory. Individuals are able to generate new social meaning through certain acts or statements.

Histrionic movements and facial expressions were used by Bayira performers to enhance their spoken words.

The entire performance process was enhanced by these nonverbal cues. Performer's dismal outfits are among the nonverbal cues. Character quality in African theater was demonstrated via the outfit. Certain Bayira singers' attire during funeral ceremonies demonstrated their spiritual prowess. Some Bayira performers defied supporters by wearing costumes with talisman designs, while others dared others by wearing their hats and pulling the tail in a cardinal direction.

There were several literary elements contained in the Bayira dance performance. The Bayira employs devices such as repetition, hyperbole, euphemism, and metaphorical depiction. There was also sound equipment discovered in the cave. Some of them are alliteration and onomatopoeia. These tactics increased the Bayira songs' lyrical quality and aided in conveying its meaning. The gadgets established a lovely rhythm that adds to the literary aesthetics of the novel.

5.5 Recommendations

The study recommends that Sisaala Bayira performances be systematically documented through audio and video recordings, as well as transcription of their lyrical content. This is essential for preserving the oral and performative dimensions of the art form, which risk extinction due to modernization and the passing of elder performers. Educational and cultural institutions, such as the Centre for National Culture and the Institute of African Studies, should collaborate with community elders to establish local and digital archives for this purpose.

It is also recommended that Bayira texts be translated into English and other local languages while maintaining fidelity to their metaphoric, poetic, and cultural meanings. Annotated transcriptions and translations will serve as valuable academic resources for

researchers and learners, ensuring that the philosophical and moral teachings embedded in the songs are accessible to a wider audience.

Schools within the Sisaala communities should incorporate aspects of Bayira into the curriculum, especially in music, literature, and cultural studies. Integrating traditional songs and performances into classroom instruction would promote linguistic and cultural literacy among pupils while nurturing appreciation for indigenous art forms. This can be achieved through co-curricular cultural clubs and heritage education programs.

Mentorship programs should be established where master performers train younger apprentices to sustain the performance tradition. Such intergenerational collaboration will ensure that performance techniques, compositional structures, and ritual protocols are effectively passed on. Local assemblies and NGOs focused on cultural preservation could sponsor these mentorship schemes.

Scholars from diverse fields such as linguistics, ethnomusicology, performance studies, and anthropology should collaborate in future research on Bayira. Such interdisciplinary approaches will provide deeper insights into its linguistic structure, musical patterns, symbolic meanings, and sociocultural functions. Universities should therefore support joint research projects and publications focusing on indigenous Sisaala expressive forms.

All documented materials including recordings, transcripts, and analyses, should be digitized and stored in secure online repositories to enhance accessibility and preservation.

This will allow both scholars and community members to access the materials for research, education, and cultural promotion while safeguarding them from loss or damage. Researchers and cultural promoters should engage chiefs, custodians, and performers to obtain consent before recording or publishing any ritual aspect of the performance. Given that certain

elements of the Bayira performance are ritualistic and sacred, ethical guidelines should be observed in their documentation and public dissemination.

Finally, it is recommended that the Ghanaian government, through the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture, recognize Bayira as an important component of Ghana's intangible cultural heritage. Policy recognition will ensure that Bayira performers and cultural custodians receive institutional support, funding, and legal protection. This will also contribute to national efforts toward cultural sustainability and diversity.



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APPENDIX
THEMATIC ARRANGEMENT OF SISAALA BAYIRA PERFORMANCES

Source Language (Sisaali)

Translation

Historical awareness

Song No. 1

La aa katifiema yie
La aa katifiema yie
Laajuubua nuu brabe juu

We are the red ants,
we are the red ants,
wherever we colonize nobody dare come
around.

La aa katifiema yie
La aa katifiema yie
Laajuubua nuu brabe juu

We are the red ants,
we are the red ants,
wherever we colonize nobody dare come
around.

La aa katifiema yie
La aa katifiema yie
Laajuubua nuu brabe juu

We are the red ants,
we are the red ants,
wherever we colonize nobody dare come
around.

Song No. 5

Bayuoro kalabilia
Laheme faachol nyingel fieme yie
flames

All the warriors are not out yet
Otherwise our arrows would have been in red

Bayuoro kalabilia
Laheme faachol nyingel fieme yie

All the warriors are not out yet
Otherwise our arrows would have been
in red flames

Bayuoro kalabilia
Laheme faachol nyingel fieme yie

All the warriors are not out yet
Otherwise our arrows would have been
in red flames

Bayuoro kalabilia
Laheme faachol nyingel fieme yie

All the warriors are not out yet
Otherwise our arrows would have been
in red flames

Bayuoro kalabilia
Laheme faachol nyingel fieme yie

All the warriors are not out yet
Otherwise our arrows would have been
in red flames

Personal growth

Song No. 2

Naanbiri Naanbiri yee!
Naanbiri ma aa lurire
Naanbiri Naanbiri yee!
Naanbiri ma aa lurire
Naanbiri Naanbiri yee!
Naanbiri ma aa lurire
Naanbiri Naanbiri yee!

Brotherhood brother hood!
Brotherhood is a medicine
Brotherhood brother hood!
Brotherhood is a medicine!
Brotherhood brother hood
Brotherhood is a medicine
Brotherhood brother hood

Naaḥbiri ma aa lurire
Naaḥbiri Naaḥbiri yee!
Naaḥbiri ma aa lurire

Brotherhood is a medicine
Brotherhood brother hood
Brotherhood is a medicine

Song No. 25

Kpeiwie kaḥsiato kpeiwie kaḥsiato
Zara naa kpeiwie kaḥsiato liḥliḥ yie
Kpeiwie kaḥsiato kpeiwie kaḥsiato
Zara naa kpeiwie kaḥsiato liḥliḥ yie
Kpeiwie kaḥsiato kpeiwie kaḥsiato
Zara naa kpeiwie kaḥsiato liḥliḥ yie
Kpeiwie kaḥsiato kpeiwie kaḥsiato
Zara naa kpeiwie kaḥsiato liḥliḥ yie
Kpeiwie kaḥsiato kpeiwie kaḥsiato
Zara naa kpeiwie kaḥsiato liḥliḥ yie

The tiger has frowned, The tiger has
frowned
the scavengers became very angry about
the presence of the tiger
The tiger has frowned, The tiger has
frowned
the scavengers became very angry about
the presence of the tiger
The tiger has frowned, The tiger has
frowned
the scavengers became very angry about
the presence of the tiger
The tiger has frowned, The tiger has
frowned
the scavengers became very angry about
the presence of the tiger
The tiger has frowned, The tiger has
frowned
the scavengers became very angry about
the presence of the tiger

Ancestral reverence

Song No. 3

Saḥguri aa duoḥ baana yie
Udoḥ gidigidi kibebinia?
Saḥguri aa duoḥ baḥḥ yie
Udoḥ gidigidi kibebinia?
Saḥguri aa duoḥ baḥḥ yie
Udoḥ gidigidi kibebinia?
Saḥguri aa duoḥ baḥḥ yie
Udoḥ gidigidi kibebinia?
Saḥguri aa duoḥ baḥḥ yie
Udoḥ gidigidi kibebinia?

Saḥguri made rain angry alas!
It thundered 'gidigidi' who didn't hear?
Saḥguri made rain angry alas!
It thundered 'gidigidi' who didn't hear?
Saḥguri made rain angry alas!
It thundered 'gidigidi' who didn't hear?
Saḥguri made rain angry alas!
It thundered 'gidigidi' who didn't hear?
Saḥguri made rain angry alas!
It thundered 'gidigidi' who didn't hear?

Cultural preservation

Song No.6

Kuoro aa naabarekiriye
Oye huu oye huuḥ!
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye
Oye huuḥ oye huuḥ!
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye
Oye huu oye huuḥ !

Chieftaincy is a tradition
Alas! Alas!
Chieftaincy is a tradition
Alas! Alas!
Chieftaincy is a tradition
Alas! Alas!

Kuoro aa naabarekiriye
Oye huuṅ oye huuṅ!
Kuoro aa naabarekiriye
Oye huu oye huuṅ!

Chieftaincy is a tradion
Alas! Alas!
Chieftaincy is a tradition
Alas! Alas!

Song No. 13

Kata kata kalaa yie,
Basi la joṅ la kulata aṅkan bene
Kata kata kalaa yie,
Basi la joṅ la kulata aṅkan bene
Kata kata kalaa yie,
Basi la joṅ la kulata aṅkan bene
Kata kata kalaa yie,
Basi la joṅ la kulata aṅkan bene
Kata kata kalaa yie,
Basi la joṅ la kulata aṅkan bene
Kata kata kalaa yie,
Basi la joṅ la kulata aṅkan bene

That we should discard our tradition
and have what?
That we should discard our tradition
and have what?
That we should discard our tradition
and have what?
That we should discard our tradition
and have what?
That we should discard our tradition
and have what?
That we should discard our tradition
and have what?
That we should discard our tradition
and have what?

Song No. 14

Lanuasa yie lanuasaa nuuma
Kakelwie lanuasa
Lanuasa yie lanuasaa nuuma
Kakelwie lanuasa
Lanuasa yie lanuasaa nuuma
Kakelwie lanuasa
Lanuasa yie lanuasaa nuuma
Kakelwie lanuasa
Lanuasa yie lanuasaa nuuma
Kakelwie lanuasa

If even we hurt (step on) any one at all.
It is a straw we stepped on.
If even we hurt (step on) any one at all.
It is a straw we stepped on.
If even we hurt (step on) any one at all.
It is a straw we stepped on.
If even we hurt (step on) any one at all.
It is a straw we stepped on.
If even we hurt (step on) any one at all.
It is a straw we stepped on.

Cultural resilience

Song No. 10

Mobie paa aṅkapa Sisaala bie
Paa aṅkapa Sisaala bie
Mobie paa aṅkapa Sisaal abie
Paa aṅkapa Sisaala bie
Mobie paa aṅkapa Sisaal abie
Paa aṅkapa Sisaala bie
Mobie paa aṅkapa Sisaal abie
Paa aṅkapa Sisaala bie
Mobie paa aṅkapa Sisaal abie
Paa aṅkapa Sisaala bie

Money should go away and leave us alone
Go away and leave us alone
Money should go away and leave us alone
Go away and leave us alone
Money should go away and leave us alone
Go away and leave us alone
Money should go away and leave us alone
Go away and leave us alone
Money should go away and leave us alone
Go away and leave us alone

Song No. 17

Kachuugbege tuukpa Aṅwonbi
Aṅwonbi hiinihe tua yee!

The featherless eagle has taken away the
lions's son and the lion is grieving inside

Kachuugbege tuukpa Aṅwonbi Aṅwonbi hiinihe tua yee!	The featherless eagle has taken away the lion's son and the lion is grieving inside
Kachuugbege tuukpa Aṅwonbi Aṅwonbi hiinihe tua yee!	The featherless eagle has taken away the lion's son and the lion is grieving inside
Kachuugbege tuukpa Aṅwonbi Aṅwonbi hiinihe tua yee!	The featherless eagle has taken away the lion's son and the lion is grieving inside
Kachuugbege tuukpa Aṅwonbi Aṅwonbi hiinihe tua yee!	The featherless eagle has taken away the lion's son and the lion is grieving inside

Song No. 12

Saṅviara aapupui bachuritaa	Those who taboo the porcupine are like the thorny grass
Bachuritaa uvia aṅ nyuu yie	You uproot them and they sprout again
Saṅviara aapupui bachuritaa	Those who taboo the porcupine are like the thorny grass
Bachuritaa uvia aṅ nyuu yie	You uproot them and they sprout again
Saṅviara aapupui bachuritaa	Those who taboo the porcupine are like the thorny grass
Bachuritaa uvia aṅ nyuu yie	You uproot them and they sprout again
Saṅviara aapupui bachuritaa	Those who taboo the porcupine are like the thorny grass
Bachuritaa uvia aṅ nyuu yie	You uproot them and they sprout again
Saṅviara aapupui bachuritaa	Those who taboo the porcupine are like the thorny grass
Bachuritaa uvia aṅ nyuu yie	You uproot them and they sprout again

Song No. 18

Naawei yie disaawa bijime pindo yie	Alas! the famous clan's man is asleep (death)
Naawei yei disaawa bijime pindo yie	Alas! the famous clan's man is asleep (death)
Naawei yei disaawa bijime pindo yie	Alas! the famous clan's man is asleep (death)
Naawei yei disaawa bijime pindo yie	Alas! the famous clan's man is asleep (death)
Naawei yei disaawa bijime pindo yie	Alas! the famous clan's man is asleep (death)

Community unity

Song No 4

Lakpeiye tuubuo tuo makiye	The hero that is gone underground that we can no longer see
Lakpeiye naasing la tu to	We want to find out the whereabouts of the hero
Lakpeiye tuubuo tuo makiye	The hero that is gone underground that we can no longer see
Lakpeiye naasing la tu to	We want to find out the whereabouts of the hero
Lakpeiye tuubuo tuo makiye	The hero that is gone underground that we can no longer see
Lakpeiye naasing la tu to	We want to find out the whereabouts of the hero
Lakpeiye tuubuo tuo makiye	The hero that is gone underground that we can no longer see
Lakpeiye naasing la tu to	We want to find out the whereabouts of the hero
Lakpeiye tuubuo tuo makiye	The hero that is gone underground that we can no longer see
Lakpeiye naasing la tu to	We want to find out the whereabouts of the hero

Cultural education

Song No. 24

Mana jawie nia bimaala juupe yie	When you see people living in a small village,
Kpaŋ kpaŋ mani sijuu	don't take them as ordinary people to be underestimated
Mana jawie nia bimaala juupe yie	When you see people living in a small village,
Kpaŋ kpaŋ mani sijuu	don't take them as ordinary people to be underestimated.
Mana jawie nia bimaala juupe yie	When you see people living in a small village,
Kpaŋ kpaŋ mani sijuu	don't take them as ordinary people to be underestimated.
Mana jawie nia bimaala juupe yie	When you see people living in a small village,
Kpaŋ kpaŋ mani sijuu	don't take them as ordinary people to be underestimated

Song No. 11

Kpeiyelbie bakpaa abeituabiina kumu	The tiger is taken away with heavy thoughts
Kpeiyelbie bakpaa abeituabiina kumu	The tiger is taken away with heavy thoughts
Kpeiyelbie bakpaa abeituabiina kumu	The tiger is taken away with heavy thoughts
Kpeiyelbie bakpaa abeituabiina kumu	The tiger is taken away with heavy thoughts
Kpeiyelbie bakpaa abeituabiina kumu	The tiger is taken away with heavy thoughts

Emotional expression

Song No. 7

Kpeiwie naaŋ boro bamumuŋ yie	The tiger's leg is broken and they are laughing
Kpeiwie naaŋ bira taasia baayiyeli yie	But when the tiger's leg was mended then they began crying.
Kpeiwie naaŋ boro bamumuŋ yie	The tiger's leg is broken and they are laughing
Kpeiwie naaŋ bira taasia baayiyeli yie	But when the tiger's leg was mended then they began crying.
Kpeiwie naaŋ boro bamumuŋ yie	The tiger's leg is broken and they are laughing
Kpeiwie naaŋ bira taasia baayiyeli yie	But when the tiger's leg was mended then they began crying.
Kpeiwie naaŋ boro bamumuŋ yie	The tiger's leg is broken and they are laughing
Kpeiwie naaŋ bira taasia baayiyeli yie	But when the tiger's leg was mended then they began crying.
Kpeiwie naaŋ boro bamumuŋ yie	The tiger's leg is broken and they are laughing
Kpeiwie naaŋ bira taasia baayiyeli yie	But when the tiger's leg was mended then they began crying.

Song No. 9

Saŋwara yie kaanumanuma	Saŋwara had everything in abundance
Saŋwara fajanbiradi kaanumanuma	But for death, she would have enjoyed much more.
Saŋwara yie kaanumanuma	Saŋwara had everything in abundance
Saŋwara fajanbiradi kaanumanuma	But for death, she would have enjoyed much more.
Saŋwara yie kaanumanuma	Saŋwara had everything in abundance
Saŋwara fajanbiradi kaanumanuma	But for death, she would have enjoyed much more.
Saŋwara yie kaanumanuma	Saŋwara had everything in abundance
Saŋwara fajanbiradi kaanumanuma	But for death, she would have enjoyed much more.
Saŋwara yie kaanumanuma	Saŋwara had everything in abundance

Saŋwara fajanbiradi kaanumanuma

But for death, she would have enjoyed much more.

Song No. 8

Haŋtolibie jolime Nnaayie din jolimo

If a woman disrespects my mother, I will disrespect her

Haŋtolibie jolime Nnaayie din jolimo

If a woman disrespects my mother, I will disrespect her

Aŋkaa du hiaka Nnaayie dinma hiako

But if she pampers my mother, I will pamper her too”

Haŋtolibie jolime Nnaayie din jolimo

If a woman disrespects my mother, I will disrespect her

Haŋtolibie jolime Nnaayie din jolimo

If a woman disrespects my mother, I will disrespect her

du hiaka Nnaayie dinma hiako

But if she pampers my mother, I will pamper her too”

Aŋkaa

Haŋtolibie jolime Nnaayie din jolimo

If a woman disrespects my mother, I will disrespect her

Haŋtolibie jolime Nnaayie din jolimo

If a woman disrespects my mother, I will disrespect her

du hiaka Nnaayie dinma hiako

But if she pampers my mother, I will pamper her too”

Aŋkaa

Song No.15

Sanwara keŋvaha suorota la naa kpeiye

Sanwara should release the dogs to fight the enemy

Sanwara keŋvaha suorota la naa kpeiye

Sanwara should release the dogs to fight the enemy

Sanwara keŋvaha suorota la naa kpeiye

Sanwara should release the dogs to fight the enemy

Sanwara keŋvaha suorota la naa kpeiye

Sanwara should release the dogs to fight the enemy

Sanwara keŋvaha suorota la naa kpeiye

Sanwara should release the dogs to fight the enemy

Song No.16

Aakpiena nobere choo

The nobles are hated by everybody

Aŋni faachoo aŋwonbi

No one likes the brave man’s son

kyei huu kyei huu!

Ululation ululation!

Aakpiena nobere choo

The nobles are hated by everybody

Aŋni faachoo aŋwonbi

No one likes the brave man’s son

kyei huu kyei huu!

Ululation ululation

Aakpiena nobere choo

The nobles are hated by everybody

Aŋni faachoo aŋwonbi

No one likes the brave man’s son

kyei huu kyei huu!

Ululation ululation!

Aakpiena nobere choo

The nobles are hated by everybody

Aŋni faachoo aŋwonbi

No one likes the brave man’s son

kyei huu kyei huu!

Ululation ululation!

Aakpiena nobere choo
Aṅni faachoo aṅwonbi
kyei huu kyei huu!

Community unity

The nobles are hated by everybody
No one likes the brave man's son
Ululation ululation!

Song No. 19

Naajia Dintie para diasi dɔmɔ yie

Tiṅtina gariwoni pindo
Naajia Dintie para diasi dɔmɔ yie

Tiṅtina gariwoni pindo
Naajia Dintie para diasi dɔmɔ yie

Tiṅtina gariwoni pindo
Naajia Dintie para diasi dɔmɔ yie

Tiṅtina gariwoni pindo
Naajia Dintie para diasi dɔmɔ yie

Tiṅtina gariwoni pindo

Naajia Dintie's great farming has roused
enemies

The great farmer has gone to sleep
Naajia Dintie's great farming has roused
enemies

The great farmer has gone to sleep
Naajia Dintie's great farming has roused
enemies

The great farmer has gone to sleep
Naajia Dintie's great farming has roused
enemies

The great farmer has gone to sleep
Naajia Dintie's great farming has roused
enemies

The great farmer has gone to sleep

Song No. 20

Saṅviara badiree yie
Bahayɛ baṅ baṅ baki che alei
Saṅviara badiree yie
Bahayɛ baṅ baṅ baki che alei
Saṅviara badiree yie
Bahayɛ baṅ baṅ baki che alei
Saṅviara badiree yie
Bahayɛ baṅ baṅ baki che alei
Saṅviara badiree yie
Bahayɛ baṅ baṅ baki che alei

the people who taboo the porcupine
when there is trouble, they look for us
the people who taboo the porcupine
when there is trouble, they look for us
the people who taboo the porcupine
when there is trouble, they look for us
the people who taboo the porcupine
when there is trouble, they look for us
the people who taboo the porcupine
when there is trouble, they look for us
the people who taboo the porcupine
when there is trouble, they look for us

Song No.21

Naṅbugo silula ubi
ugaasu naṅbine yie,
Naṅbugo silula ubi
ugaasu naṅbine yie,
Naṅbugo silula ubi
ugaasu naṅbine yie,
Naṅbugo silula ubi
ugaasu naṅbine yie,
Naṅbugo silula ubi
ugaasu naṅbine yie,
Naṅbugo silula ubi
ugaasu naṅbine yie,

When the powerful man gives birth to a son,
he feeds it first with human flesh (naṅbine).
When the powerful man gives birth to a son,
he feeds it first with human flesh (naṅbine).
When the powerful man gives birth to a son,
he feeds it first with human flesh (naṅbine).
When the powerful man gives birth to a son,
he feeds it first with human flesh (naṅbine).
When the powerful man gives birth to a son,
he feeds it first with human flesh (naṅbine).
When the powerful man gives birth to a son,
he feeds it first with human flesh (naṅbine).
When the powerful man gives birth to a son,
he feeds it first with human flesh (naṅbine).

Song No. 23

Fawuliwibie maachie saṅsina	The coward's son should one day attempt us and see,
Dakanɛ banjeihari a dake rina	we will take him behind the walls and teach him a lesson
Fawuliwibi maachie saṅsina	The coward's son should one day attempt us and see,
Dakanɛ banjeihari a dake rina	we will take him behind the walls and teach him a lesson
Fawuliwibi maachie saṅsina	The coward's son should one day attempt us and see,
Dakanɛ banjeihari a dake rina	we will take him behind the walls and teach him a lesson
Fawuliwibi maachie saṅsina	The coward's son should one day attempt us and see,
Dakanɛ banjeihari a dake rina	we will take him behind the walls and teach him a lesson
Fawuliwibi maachie saṅsina	The coward's son should one day attempt us and see,
Dakanɛ banjeihari a dake rina	we will take him behind the walls and teach him a lesson

Community support

Song No. 26

Jawia kuoro nii maakeli yie	The mouth of Jawia kuoro is glued
Ani je sie wula laara	Who will protect us again
Jawia kuoro nii maakeli yie	The mouth of Jawia kuoro is glued
Ani je sie wula laara	Who will protect us again
Jawia kuoro nii maakeli yie	The mouth of Jawia kuoro is glued
Ani je sie wula laara	Who will protect us again
Jawia kuoro nii maakeli yie	The mouth of Jawia kuoro is glued
Ani je sie wula laara	Who will protect us again
Jawia kuoro nii maakeli yie	The mouth of Jawia kuoro is glued
Ani je sie wula laara	Who will protect us again

Song No. 27

Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities
Kuoro baṅchaglawia yie	A chief shoulders responsibilities

Social justice

Song No. 28

Wujaara jaara janɔfieme naa
Wujaara jaara janɔfieme naa yee

La aa wujaara bie ri yie

Wujaara jaara janɔfieme naa
Wujaara jaara janɔfieme naa yee

La aa wujaara bie ri yie

Wujaara jaara janɔfieme naa
Wujaara jaara janɔfieme naa yee

La aa wujaara bie ri yie

Those who look for trouble will suffer it,
Those who look for trouble will suffer it,
oh!

We are indeed the children of the trouble
makers

Those who look for trouble will suffer it,
Those who look for trouble will suffer it,
oh!

We are indeed the children of the trouble
makers

Those who look for trouble will suffer it,
Those who look for trouble will suffer it,
oh!

We are indeed the children of the trouble
makers





Fig.1A: Displays an interview session of the researcher in the right with one of the research partners.



Fig. 1B: Shows the Researcher in the right with one of the Sisaala Bayira performers during a funeral at Walembelle.



Fig.1C: Shows a display of Sisaala Bayira Performers during a Funeral at Walembelle.



Fig.1D: Displays a Representational Corpse during the Funeral of a Female Deceased at Gwollu.



Fig1E: Shows an artistic display of Bayira Performers in full costume regalia



Fig1F: Shows display of Bayira costume during a celebration of a festival at Tumu



Fig1G: A Display of Bayira Performers during a Festival Celebration



Fig1H: A Ritual Display of Bayira Performers





