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**EWE CHILDREN'S MUSIC FROM GHANA, WEST AFRICA,
IN THE CLASSROOM**

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Music

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Idit Kubitsky

May 1998

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ABSTRACT

EWI CHILDREN'S MUSIC FROM GHANA, WEST AFRICA IN THE CLASSROOM

by

Idit Kubitsky

This thesis deals with children's music of the Ewe people of southeastern Ghana and how it can be taught in Western cultures. It examines the need for and the realization of, multicultural approach to music education. It also discusses similarities between the Orff Schulwerk and traditional West African approaches to music education.

Part two of the work includes background information about the Ewe people and children's music, which is documented in audio and video recordings and transcribed in Western notation. The research includes children's songs and drumming and dance pieces that were compiled during two periods of field work in the village of Kopeyia, Ghana.

The final section suggests and demonstrates some possible methods of teaching Ewe music using the Orff Schulwerk approach to students in grades one through six.

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In this long learning journey I had many teachers who reopened my eyes and heart to the wide world of music. My Orff Schulwerk teachers Doug Goodkin, Rick Layton, Mary Shamrock and Vicki Solomon helped me find my creativity and taught me the art of working with children's music. C. K. Ladzekpo and royal hartigan, my teachers and mentors opened for me the doors to the rich world of West African music and dance.

In my two trips to Ghana I made many friends who shared with me their lives, culture and music. I am especialy full of gratitude to all the people of Kopeyia for their warm hospitality. The children in the village contributed to this research by sharing their songs and dances, demonstrating their games and playing the drums with me. Special thanks to my teachers in Kopeyia Emmanuel Agbeli, Agbeko Sodzedo, Edward Tekpah and to the late master drummer Godwin Agbeli.

Many thanks to Zila Medini for her help with the music notation, to Diane Blech, Anna Davidson and my daughters Nitzan and Netta for editing this paper. Special thanks to all the Christa McAullife Elementary School community for letting me share my passion and love to West African music and children's music.

Most of all I wish to thank my husband, Shai and my daughters Nitzan and Netta for their trust, encouragement and support all the way through and for allowing me to follow my dream.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

“When the creator created the universe, he created the drummer.”¹

“In the beginning was the drum.”²

These sayings come from two different parts of the world, each expressing the idea that drums and drumming are primal and elemental to our lives. The first is a Ghanaian saying, while the second is a quote of the ethnomusicologist Curt Sachs, and is used by Carl Orff as a basic idea from which he developed an approach to elementary music education known today as Orff Schulwerk.

The Orff Schulwerk is an elemental approach to children’s music education. It is based on the idea that music making by children resembles music making in primal (as pre-industrial) cultures.³ This resemblance is described by Brigitte Warner, “The music is rhythm- and movement-oriented. It is not a separate artform, but rather combines the elements of speech and drama, ...It is not abstract but functional in its relationship to life’s experiences. It is not usually premeditated or composed. It is transmitted orally and

¹ royal hartigan, *West African Rhythms for Drumset* (Manhattan: Manhattan Music Inc., 1995), 22.

² Carl Orff, *The Schulwerk* (New York: Schott Music Corp., 1976), 17.

³ Brigitte Warner, *Orff-Schulwerk: Applications for the Classroom* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991), 8.

therefore liable to change. It is, for the most part, “ensemble music” in the sense that everyone participates.”⁴

In my work as an Orff music educator, I often search for material that has these qualities. I also seek a deeper understanding of the ultimate and ‘*elemental*’ aspects of human expression that are so essential to the Schulwerk.

The Webster’s New World Dictionary gives three definitions to the word *elemental*:⁵

1. “of or like natural forces; characteristic of the physical universe”,
2. “of first principles, fundamental.”
3. “basic and powerful, primal.”

Each definition describes one aspect of the Orff Schulwerk. The third definition requires clarification since the word ‘primal’ can have a negative connotation. I would like to refer to the Webster’s Dictionary’s definition of ‘primal’: “as first in time; original.”⁶ This definition reflects my intention in using this word. In this light, the third definition of the word ‘elemental’, also fits the description of the Schulwerk as an approach that “puts us in touch with our musical beginnings and roots (that) most of us lost contact with long ago.”⁷

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Webster’s New World Dictionary, 3rd College edition., s.v. “elemental”.

⁶ Ibid. s.v. “primal”.

⁷ Warner, 10.

In the words of Carl Orff himself: "Elemental music is never music alone but forms a unity with movement, dance and speech. It is music that one makes oneself, in which one takes part not as a listener but as a participant. It is.....near to the earth, natural, physical, within the range of everyone to learn it and to experience it."⁸

In search of a better understanding of the Orff Schulwerk as an elemental approach I have decided to study and research the music of a different culture. I searched for a culture that has ancient qualities, where drums and rhythms are in the center of music making, a culture with an oral tradition, where learning is acquired through participation in stories, internalizing action by remembering rather than studying and memorizing. I sought a culture where time is perceived as circular rather than linear, where individuality is always in the context of the community, and where music is concrete and expresses life rather than the abstract.⁹ I chose to study and research the indigenous music of West African coastal rainforest cultures.

The music of West Africa is rich and varied, including many "distinct yet related traditions which overlap in certain aspects."¹⁰ While encompassing a multiplicity of people, each with their own music and art, the only way to cover such a wide area would be through generalization. However, James T. Koetting criticizes this method of research saying,

⁸ Gertrud Orff, *The Orff Music Therapy; Active Furthering of the Development of the Child* (London: Schott & Co., 1974), 12.

⁹ Doug Goodkin, "Orality; Literacy and Electronics," working paper, Orff Schulwerk workshop, San-Francisco, California 1996.

¹⁰ J. H. Kwabena Nketia, *The Music of Africa* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1974), 4.

Any attempt to make generalizations about music in Sub-Saharan Africa is dangerous and is bound to be unsatisfying. Too many different ethnic groups having different social, political and musical systems live in this vast area.¹¹

Koetting adds that even among the West Africans themselves, people from one village do not always understand the music of another village. A. M. Jones stresses the same point and emphasizes that only intensive and limited research would lead to a real understanding of the music.¹² With this in mind I have decided to focus on the culture of one group. I chose to study the music of the Ewe people of Southeastern Ghana.

I first encountered the music of the Ewe people in my West African Drumming class at San Jose State University. I was captured by the rhythms, songs, dances and the unity they convey. I was eager to learn more about the culture and to explore some of the children's songs and music. I wanted to focus on the musical sub-culture of children: their songs, games, stories, drumming, dancing and the way they learn them.

Unfortunately, I have found that there is a dearth of comprehensive material written or recorded about West African children's music and especially that of the Ewe people. Most research and published materials in this subject area are very academic with an ethnomusicological emphasis, and most are inappropriate and often inaccessible to teachers in the classroom.¹³ On the other hand, much of the published material that is

¹¹ James T. Koetting, "Africa/Ghana" in *World of Music; An Introduction to the Music of the World's People* (New York: Schirmer, 1992), 68.

¹² A. M. Jones, *Studies in African Music*, vol. 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 10.

¹³ The 2 volumes of A. M. Jones's *Studies in African Music* are a wonderful example.

accessible to teachers gives very little or no information about the cultural and social context of the music.¹⁴ I believe that this kind of information is crucial for the understanding of the music. In my research I found only two books that are both accessible and give sufficient and accurate information about the culture, but both are lacking in other areas.¹⁵

As part of my research I traveled to Ghana twice and stayed with the Ewe people of Kopeyia for an overall period of seven weeks. Kopeyia is a village in the Volta Region of Southeastern Ghana. My trips consisted of direct fieldwork with local children and master artists. I have learned traditional songs, dances and drumming through practical training, observations and performances. I was able to document the music using notation transcription and audio and video recordings.

The children taught me their songs and games. I watched them dance and drum, participated in their games, dances and drumming and observed their way of learning and making music. Working closely with some of their teachers in the local school, I learned

¹⁴ Such sources are:

Lyne Jessup, *Afro Ensemble: A beginning Book* (Ft. Worth, Texas: Harris Music Pub., 1975).

Roberta McLaughlin, *Folk Songs of Africa*. (Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing).

Rosine Klein & Stacia Robbins, *African Folksongs: Children's song from Ghana - Teacher Guide with Lyrics*. (New York: Spoken Arts Inc., 1986).

¹⁵ These two books are:

Abraham K. Adzinyah, D. Maraire and J. Cook Tucker, *Let Your Voices Be heard! Songs from Ghana and Zimbabwe* (Danbury, Connecticut: World Music Press, 1986). Although this book includes detailed cultural information as well as notes on performing practice and translation for each piece, since it covers two cultures, it includes only a few songs and games and chooses to omit drumming pieces and stories from Ghana.

Komla Amoaku, *Orff-Schulwerk in the African Tradition, African Songs and Rhythms for Children* (London: Schott, 1971). Although this is a great source for music from different people of Ghana it is lacking detailed background information about most pieces. The songs include translations but are missing explanations about their meaning and performance practice.

Also, these two sources do not include any stories from Ghana, which are an integral part of the culture and usually performed with songs and music.

some stories and riddles. I also took drumming and dance lessons from the village's master drummers: Godwin Kwasi Agbeli, Emmanuel Agbeli and Agbeko Sodzedo. My brief stays in Ghana enabled me to research and gather songs, games, music, dances and some ideas of how to use these materials. The next stage of my research has been to implement these materials and ideas in my teaching. I have used most of the music, dances, songs and games with several grade levels using the Orff Schulwerk approach. These documented materials will form my MA thesis.

This paper contains three parts. The first part treats theoretical aspects of my research. Following this first introductory chapter, chapter two deals with the questions of teaching music using a multi-cultural approach and the issue of teaching African music in our culture. Chapter three focuses on the connection between the Orff Schulwerk and West African music, since I believe that Orff Schulwerk approaches teaching music in a similar way to the Ewe culture.

The second part of the thesis focuses on the music, dance and culture of the Ewe people, especially that of the children. Background information regarding West African music and the lifeways of the Ewe people is treated in chapter four. A compilation of game songs, story songs and general songs from my research is found in chapter five, followed in chapter six, by descriptions and transcriptions of drumming and dance pieces.

Each of the songs in chapter five is presented in its original language, along with a transliteration, a translation and detailed information about the deeper meaning when

applicable. When possible, I have included information about the origin, function, and ways of performing the music.

The third and last part of the thesis, chapter seven, concludes the work. It describes and summarizes my own experience teaching Ewe music using the Orff Schulwerk approach to third, fifth and sixth graders. Through this chapter I share some ideas on how these pieces can be taught in the music classroom.

Given the limitations of opportunities for field research and the scope of this MA thesis, I created as detailed an understanding as possible of Ewe children's musical culture, yet this is only a partial picture. This research is an introduction to the subject, since it encompasses what I saw and learned in one village of the Ewe people in a very limited amount of time. It would take many years of research and fieldwork to study the culture in detail and to attain a deep understanding of it. Therefore, I think of this work as the first chapter of a lifelong learning experience, one that has just begun.

There are limitations to the scope of this research as well. The village of Kopeyia, my residence, has been exposed to some Western influence, since a number of students and ethnomusicologists go there for research. This fact surely affects the people's ways of life and what they choose to share with outsiders.

Another limitation is that this paper deals with an aural tradition. By putting something aurally transmitted onto paper, we change it and lose its vitality. "It is important to note that.....transcriptions present the songs as "frozen" at one point in time, in one particular configuration of parts, and with one specific melodic and rhythmic

form.”¹⁶ We therefore need to remember that time signatures and bar lines in the transcriptions, with their built-in western bias regarding singular beat series and starting point are only an organizational aid, and do not represent the African way of perceiving music.

An even bigger challenge has been transcribing the dances. How can words describe a movement that incorporates the whole body, when different parts of the body (as with the different instruments of the drum orchestra) are doing different things? One possibility would have been to use the Laban notation to transcribe the dance movements. I chose not to use this way of notation since one of the goals of this paper is to make the dance and music accessible for music teachers and the use of Laban notation will be accessible only to specialists who have learned this detailed and complex way of describing movement. I chose to include a detailed description of each of the dance movements in words as well as drawings or diagrams that represents certain dance movements.

During the research process, I realized that something was missing with only written representations. In order to address this problem I chose to incorporate audio and video tapes that include the songs, music and dances by people in the village. I have included all performances of each piece, in order to create as full a picture as possible of the music and dance. My intention is to convey not only the music, dance and culture of the children in Eweland, but also their spirit, for I believe there is much we can learn. This

¹⁶ Abraham K. Adzinyah, D. Maraire and J. Cook Tucker, *Let Your Voices Be heard! Songs from Ghana and Zimbabwe* (Danbury, Connecticut: World Music Press, 1986), ix.

paper opens only a small window into another culture, a beginning which will expand with time and allow people of all ages to become acquainted with another culture from which we can learn many important lessons. The present work can also stimulate further research in this area of scholarship, as resource for both academic and participatory learning.

CHAPTER 2

A Multicultural Approach to Music Education

Multi-culturalism invites each person to create their own identity from a variety of choices from diverse cultural sources. It allows for *participation* in specific cultural experiences from which something new can grow.... Multi-culturalism is pervasive in American culture, whose roots lie in the coming together of diverse European cultures, followed by diverse African and Asian cultures.¹

Multi-cultural is a current buzzword in educational circles and one of the dominant agendas in schools and communities today. With increasing contact among different cultures through technology, travel and immigration, the importance of teaching with a multicultural approach to education has increased. The first intention of such an approach is "to tour the marvelous garden of diverse celebrations and delight in the different fragrances, colors and textures. At the same time that we appreciate the variety, we want to remember that they all grow in the same soil, watered by the same rain and warmed by the same light."²

Agness Curry, in her dissertation, define multicultural education

¹ Doug Goodkin, "The Multicultural Curriculum," in *Reflections on Orff Schulwerk: A Collection of Articles*, working paper, San Francisco, California, 1996: 60.

² Ibid., 56.

Multicultural education is the transferring of our recognition of our cultural pluralistic society into our educational system in such fashion that the system, appropriately and in a rightful way includes all racial, ethnic and cultural groups.

She adds that a multicultural approach to education assumes that ethnic diversity enriches people's life, increases the ways in which people perceive and solve problems and helps people become more fulfilled as humans.³ The following chapter will present the musical and extramusical reasons for using a multicultural curriculum, its benefits and how it can be done successfully.

Global Village, Multicultural Society

In this age of technology, distances between continents have shrunk and our world has become a global village. In this community, different cultures exist in proximity and interact with each other on various levels. One way of meeting changing demographics is by learning the cultural expression of a variety of world traditions first hand. Such direct and intimate experience will yield a better understanding of our world, open us to cultural interplay, achieve consciousness of inter-cultural relations and expand our polymusicality.⁴

This is especially true in the United State, a country of immigrants, where the cultural roots lie in the coming together of more than one hundred different cultures. Acknowledging and learning the music of other cultures will help us get acquainted with

³ Agnes Beulah Curry, "An Evaluation of African and Afro-American Music in Selected Elementary Music Textbook Series and Recommendations for Supplemental Song Materials," (Ed.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 1983), 1-30.

⁴ Rebecca M. Herrold, *New Approaches to Elementary Classroom Music* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991), 162.

the music of our own people and of ourselves, another reason to include our rich cultural heritage in the classroom.

Moving towards a multicultural approach is not an easy task. In his article "The Age of Exploration," Doug Goodkin says that our aesthetic grasp of the planet's cultures resembles the ancient maps of the world in which the cartographer's country is placed dead center and drops quickly to the unknown world where illustrations and pictures of monsters appear.⁵ It is not surprising "the transition to a genuine multi-cultural outlook is a difficult one, requiring the overthrow...(of) centuries of training in the illusion of white European supremacy."⁶ In the past, Western music was the only musical system that was considered of value. "Today researchers assure us that the world has other highly sophisticated, but different musical traditions worthy of study."⁷

Not only are there many musical cultures and traditions for us to learn about, but also to learn from. The music of the world's peoples can help us relearn what we have long forgotten in our race to achieve material wealth, namely, our spirituality. In the process of worshipping money and possessions and seeking freedom to define who we are, we have lost a profound sense of belonging and connectedness. We often cut ourselves loose from our roots, family, environment, community, religion and ethnic identity. We forget our ceremonies and rituals which, according to Bill Moyers and Joseph

⁵ Goodkin, 45.

⁶ Ibid., 51.

⁷ Herrold, 162.

Campbell, are a primary need of the human being. "The absence of meaningful ritual has disastrous consequences for both the social fabric of the community, as evidenced by the widespread violence and crime in our present society, and the spiritual growth of the individual, as evidenced by widespread drug abuse and alcoholism."⁸ There are many cultures around the world that keep nourishing their people's spirits with rituals and ceremonies.

Multicultural Music Crosses Boundaries and Extends the Educational Horizon

"The origins of music may be lost in obscurity but, from its earliest beginnings, it seems to have played an essential part in social interaction.....Stravinsky ...affirms that 'the profound meaning of music and its essential aim...is to promote a communion, a union of man with his fellow man and with the Supreme Being.'"⁹

Music is a powerful means of communication that can affect both individuals and the community. Music can also help build a sense of community in the classroom and in society. "In a world sorely troubled by the lack of understanding between cultures, multicultural music (curriculum) can be the music teacher's contribution to promoting respect and understanding between cultures."¹⁰ By teaching music of different cultures we promote and improve intercultural understanding and thus world peace and understanding.

⁸ Goodkin, 43.

⁹ Anthony Storr, *Music and the Mind*. (New York: Ballantine Books, 1992), 17.

¹⁰ Doug Goodkin, *Mango Walk: Setting for Orff Instrumentarium*, working paper, San Francisco, California, 1986: vii.

It is said that, "By the year 2000, one out of three children attending American schools will be either black or Hispanic. In 53 major cities, the majority of students will be non-white."¹¹ Curry says that though the United States has a population representing diverse cultures, most educational institutions "have perpetuated a mono-cultural image."¹² Facing the reality of multicultural classes, teachers need to incorporate multicultural music programs.

By doing so, teachers acknowledge the rich heritage of their students, validate their background, and include these students, allowing them to come forth as experts and proudly share their heritage.¹³ Furthermore, children who cannot identify with the fostered image and culture often become alienated or experience poor self-images."¹⁴ A multicultural approach to music education can help these students feel pride for who they are and become a part of the community.

During my second year in the United State, I took my first Orff training. I felt insecure speaking in English. With everyone around me singing songs I had never heard and talking about nursery rhymes I did not know, I was having a hard time being a part of the group and feeling part of the culture. During one of the sessions our instructor introduced a folk dance from Israel, my homeland. She asked if I would be willing to

¹¹ Herold, 162.

¹² Curry, 1.

¹³ Goodkin, *Mango Walk*, vii.

¹⁴ Curry, 2.

demonstrate the steps to the group and I was filled with pride and led the dance. Suddenly I felt that I too had something to offer, something that was valued and appreciated, as I contributed to the community and by so doing became a part of it. This experience made me understand the importance of encouraging students to share their culture, since they feel affirmed in the specialness of their heritage, experience pride, and gain a sense of connection to their class and the school community.

The music of any culture reflects the social, aesthetic, religious, political and economic values of its people.¹⁵ The sharing of culture can therefore be a part of geography or history studies. It can support a unit of culture study in the classroom. Through music, dance, games, instrumental pieces and drama learning is enhanced: the students directly experience the culture rather than learning about it from a distance. This first hand learning process is personal and subjective as well as objective

Students also experience something new and unique. They become familiar with the unknown. From being 'outsiders' standing behind a door, they peek into a new world and examine it up close. "The understanding of various cultures helps to erase prejudice and feelings of ethnocentric superiority."¹⁶ The uneasiness about strangers and fear of the unknown, which are the seeds of hostility, dissipate, leaving space for understanding of and respect towards different values and ways of life. Curry believes that exposing students to multiculturalism teaches acceptance. She adds that if students will be exposed

¹⁵ Ibid, 44.

¹⁶ Otis S. Simmons, "Overcoming Cultural Racism," *Music Educators Journal* 58 (November 1971): 43, 45.

to “positive concepts of cultural differences, there may be less racial and ethnic discrimination and greater harmony throughout the world.”¹⁷

“All people have some kind of music, and thus, we can consider music as one of the few universal phenomena.”¹⁸ Through music children learn “to appreciate and value likenesses and differences in people.”¹⁹ By looking closely into music of different cultures, children can see their common elements.

Research shows that children from different backgrounds share a similar ‘child culture’ that includes musical games, identical methods of singing, teasing and playing. Through songs and music of other cultures students can discover that the very process of “spontaneous singing seems to be cross-cultural and universal.”²⁰ They learn to see the uniqueness of each tradition and discover similarities with their own. In a multicultural approach to music teaching children can find out that we are different yet share an underlying commonality.

Goodkin discusses the importance of celebrating different holidays at school, especially around the month of December. He says that when a child grows up with only one story, he tends to think in an absolute right / wrong manner. His story can be true only if the other stories are false. When he does not hear any stories about the other holidays he

¹⁷ Curry, 16.

¹⁸ Bruno Nettl, *Theory and Method in Ethnomusicology* (New York: The Free Press, 1964), 224

¹⁹ Curry, 50.

²⁰ Herrold, 4.

has been denied access to a rich resource of spiritual values. But when a child hears all the different stories he “learns to open up to the diversity of human possibility and learn the kind of deep respect essential to today’s world.”²¹ When we encourage students to taste other cultures without feeling threatened, we enrich their lives and ours and encourage divergent thinking. Curry agrees with this argument and adds: “It is believed that individuals who know the world only from their own cultural and ethnic perspective are denied important parts of the human experience and are culturally and ethnically deprived.”²²

This idea of developing divergent thinking in our students is important, especially in our culture, “that offers monochromatic and one-dimensional models, that repeatedly insists on either/or solutions for how to be in the world; (in such an environment) multicultural education offers multidimensional models for honoring and developing many of the inherent qualities of the psyche.”²³ Through multicultural education, we can free our students from the binary thinking prevalent in our society. We can help students discover that life is generally not about one version of reality; rather, there is more than one way to perceive things.

Another area of diversity is the discovery that some cultures honor expression of feelings while other choose to ignore them. Through music and dance from different

²¹ Goodkin, “The Multicultural Curriculum,” 44.

²² Curry, 31.

²³ Goodkin, “The Multicultural Curriculum,” 51.

cultures, students explore the vast possibilities of human expression and get in touch with un-lived or undeveloped parts of themselves. World music can open a door to experience the full spectrum of emotions, all of which are part of the human expression. By opening ourselves to other cultures, we open up to ourselves.²⁴

Since the musical materials of diverse traditions are based on different disciplines, a multicultural curriculum exposes children to different symbolic systems. They can learn to abstract different sensory concepts from the world, a process which contributes to intelligence. Howard Gardner lists seven kinds of human intelligences, music being the third one. His definition of intelligence has to do with adaptation to the environment, or in his own words: "the ability to solve problems or to fashion products, products that cannot be studied in five minutes....(and) are valued in at least one culture."²⁵

There are many extramusical benefits to incorporating multiculturalism in teaching, from making our world a better place by improving our communication, helping our students build their self-esteem, and developing their intelligence and encouraging non-binary thinking. Music seems to be the most appropriate subject to incorporate multiculturalism, since it is one of the only areas studied in school that requires nonbinary decision making.

²⁴ Ibid., 51-2.

²⁵ Howard Gardner, "The Nature of Intelligence" in *How We Think and Learn*, (Washington DC: The National Learning Center Capital Children's Museum, 1991), 42.

The Musical Benefits of A Multicultural Curriculum

One of the main goals in music education is to help children develop an aesthetic response to music. "The term is associated with that which enables a person to find a personal expression or create an individual interpretation in music."²⁶ The exposure to a wide variety of musical cultures, expands students' expressive possibilities and prepare them for aesthetic maturity.²⁷ World music helps children discover and construct new sounds in new ways, creating their own music. It increases their receptivness to new music, develops their musicality and respect for different kinds of music, and thus enhances their aesthetic response to music.

Each culture has a distinctive style that differs from all other cultures.²⁸ Music from around the world allows the music teacher to illustrate and reinforce specific musical concepts. Some cultures use a certain musical concept extensively while others do not. For example asymmetrical meters are rare in American folk music, while Greek and Bulgarian music use them extensively. By using only American folk music in the classroom students will miss the opportunity to experience and be exposed to valuable musical concepts and practices.

Curry says that music of different cultures serves to enrich the general music classes.²⁹ Introducing the same musical concept through music from different cultures

²⁶ Herrold, 1.

²⁷ Curry, 42.

²⁸ Ibid, 44.

²⁹ Ibid, 2.

enables students to learn different ways of using and manipulating the same material. They can then make the connection of what is common in music around the world and what is unique in each culture. They enrich and refine their sound palettes and learn broad possibilities for musical expression within each concept. For example, exposure to pentatonic melodies from different traditions allows students to experience multiple pentatonic tonalities instead of only one model. As for the teachers, when they open themselves to multicultural music they can find and choose from a wider variety of material when teaching a specific musical concept.

A multicultural approach to music education enhances the offerings of an elementary music program. Whether taught aurally or through notation, instrumental or vocal, for ensemble or solo, it can enrich the elementary curriculum. This is especially true for the Orff Schulwerk, since Carl Orff drew his inspiration in his choices of instruments and in his philosophy from many ancient cultures.³⁰

Goodkin mentions the fact that many teachers report difficulties in maintaining interest in learning music in the upper elementary grades. Students are more sophisticated and are less interested in singing simple melodies using sol-fa syllables. He suggests world music as a means to challenge and engage them. Older students will be challenged and get

³⁰ Avon Gillespie, "The Orff Schulwerk," in Lois Choksy et al., *Teaching Music in the Twentieth Century* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1986), 96.

excited with music such as Calypso, Brazilian Samba, Javanese Gamelan and African drumming.³¹

A multicultural music curriculum gives the music teacher many sources to choose from, enabling her to make interesting choices of material to bring to her students. However, when gathering material, teachers need to be careful. Goodkin states four things to be aware of when using multicultural materials: the material itself, its cultural context, the process through which it was created and the culture aesthetic.³²

The material alone will be meaningless outside the context in which it is traditionally presented. A story from Africa told by the village elders at night in the light of a full moon will look and sound different when reading it from a printed book with students sitting at their desks. A Native American harvest song, transcribed and taught using western notation, will not be the same as when it is performed in a harvest celebration. Graham Vulliamy and Ed Lee argue that in Western cultures there is a tendency to approach other forms of culture with preconception; they add that world music can be approached and enjoyed only by attempting to understand it in its traditional context and according to its own criteria.³³ The music teacher therefore needs to keep in mind how, when and where the material she chooses is performed.

³¹ Goodkin, *Mango Walk*, vi.

³² Goodkin, "The Multicultural Curriculum," 45.

³³ Graham Vulliamy and Ed Lee editors, *Pop, Rock and Ethnic Music in School* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 127.

Nketia emphasizes the importance of presenting the social and cultural context of music in order to benefit student. He says that by presenting the music in its context the “child develops not only musical responsiveness, understanding, and aesthetic sensitivity, but also a critical awareness of the complex of values in terms of which music is practiced.”³⁴

With respect to the process, the question that needs to be asked is how a work is created and how it is taught or passed on in the culture. A piece from an aural culture that is taught through written notation will not be the same piece. It is the teachers’ task to come as close as possible to an authentic experience of the original contexts of world music materials, as Koetting has stated, on their own terms.³⁵ The only way to do so is with attention and care.

It is essential to understand the function of the music in order to understand the music itself.³⁶ How does the culture view its music? What is the intention of the music? Is it a recreational or a ceremonial piece? Who performs this piece? Is it being performed to an audience or is there no separation between the audience and the performers? In order to preserve the meaning of the piece of world music, when brought into the classroom, all these questions need to be answered.

³⁴ J. H. Kwabena Nketia, “Music Education in Africa and the West: We Can Learn from Each Other,” *Music Educators Journal* 57 (November 1970):48.

³⁵ James T. Koetting, “Africa / Ghana,” in *Worlds of Music: An Introduction to the Music of the World's Peoples* 2nd edition, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1992), 67.

³⁶ Curry, 55.

“When viewed within the fourfold function of *material, context, process* and *aesthetic* the decision to shift to a multicultural expression can open our thinking in remarkable ways.”³⁷ This is the only way to have a learning experience that is authentic.

At times, the rhythm or other element of a piece may need to be simplified, but this needs to be done carefully and with integrity. The only way for the teacher to do it is to immerse herself in the culture she teaches, through listening to music from the culture, inviting people from the culture to share their knowledge and teach students, using authentic instruments whenever possible, and reading stories from the culture. It is crucial for the teacher to make her experience as well as that of her students as full and rounded, as close to the original, as possible.

³⁷ Goodkin, “The Multicultural Curriculum,” 45.

CHAPTER 3

Orff Schulwerk and West African Music Education

Parallels and similarities

Orff Schulwerk approach “seems...to be a reincarnation of a wide range of traditional values and practices in a contemporary European framework.”¹ This is not surprising since it is known that in search of the ‘elemental’ Carl Orff was inspired by the ancient and the modern, and by the creative process in ‘primal’ non-European cultures.

When I decided to introduce the music of West Africa to my students, the most obvious and natural way to do so was through the Orff Schulwerk approach. In doing so, I have closed a circle that started with my study of the Schulwerk approach to music education, continued with my research and came back at the end to the Schulwerk, this time using it to transmit the knowledge I acquired from another culture. This choice, to use the Schulwerk approach in teaching West African music was not a coincidence.

Through the circular path I took, I have discovered that African cultures and Orff Schulwerk have a lot in common; there is a close resemblance in philosophy and learning media between the two. In the words of Komla Amoaku, a Ghanaian music educator and musicologist, both Schulwerk and African culture seek,

the child’s holistic discovery of himself/herself and the use of this knowledge for the development and enhancement of creative skills.

¹ Doug Goodkin, “The Multicultural Curriculum,” in *Reflections on Orff Schulwerk: A Collection of Articles*, working paper, San Francisco, California, 1996: 56.

It is the collective sharing of skills through performance experiences, and the combination of music, dance, drama, oral literature and visual arts, as total artistic expression, that guide artistic growth among children in our societies.²

In other words, the African approach to learning and its underlying principles of music education are parallel to these of the Schulwerk. Leon J. New agrees with this statement: in his article he quotes Carl Orff to sum up the principles of both the Schulwerk and African music:

To be completely musical, a child should possess an ensemble of physical and spiritual resources and capacities, comprising, on the one hand, ear, voice and consciousness of sound, and on the other the whole body (bone, muscle, and nervous systems), and the consciousness of bodily rhythm.³

This chapter looks at the roots of the Schulwerk as a source of its resemblance to the African approach to music education. It discusses the development of the Schulwerk, how it came about, and why it has so many common traits with African music. It will then discuss the philosophical aspects they both share, the similar way they approach the learning process and the similarity in their pedagogy.

Looking at the Roots

In his work as a composer and musician Carl Orff (1895-1982) was interested in 'total theater', combining music, words and movement into a creation that makes the

² Komla Amoaku, "The Arts: Instruments of Change," *The Orff Echo*, 29 (spring 1997): 3, 11.

³ Leon J. New, "Progressive Western Methods and Traditional African Methods of Teaching Music - A Comparison," *The Australian Journal of Music Education*, (April 1981): 28, 48.

audience experience “a vital excitement” and “arouses spiritual emotion.”⁴ In his work he collaborated with dancers, and was influenced by the “New German Dance”

The initiators of these new dance styles were interested in a more elemental and organic form growing from the body’s natural movement, rather than contrived elements combined with separately conceived music.⁵

It is this idea of “organic” movement and search for a closer relationship between music and movement that fascinated Orff. In search of these qualities Orff was drawn to the ancient, the elemental and primal, the source of all beginnings. He looked into and examined ancient European and non-European cultures.

Embedded in his research of the ancient, Orff started a collaboration with dancers and musicians, integrating their ideas of organic and elemental music and movement. It was Curt Sachs who inspired Orff to start with drums and beat as the beginning of all, as the elemental, as Orff later describes in his autobiography:

Drum induces dance. Dance has the closest relationship to music... rhythm is life itself --(it) is active and produces effects, it is the unifying power of language, music and movement.⁶

Drums and rattles were the first instruments used by Orff, based on the model of African, Indonesian and other cultures. In these cultures, music, dance, drama and poetry are all connected and there is a close relationship between them. Orff had also found that in these cultures all forms of arts are vital and are part of the everyday life of the people.

⁴ Andreas Liess, *Carl Orff* translated by Adelheid and Herbert Parkin (New York: St Martin's Press, 1966), 38

⁵ Mary Shamrock, “Applications and Adaptations of Orff-Schulwerk in Japan, Taiwan and Thailand” (Ph.D. Diss., University of California LA, 1988), 2.

⁶ Carl Orff, *The Schulwerk* (New York: Schott Music Corp., 1976), 17.

Doug Goodkin has noted that “Orff both borrowed consciously and intuitively from these and other musical cultures.”⁷ He started with the use of drums and rattles, expanding it by adding the recorder (flute) and later on by developing a set of instruments based on the principles of the African balaphone (the Schulwerk xylophones) and the Indonesian Gamelan (the metalophones). These instruments, drums, rattles, flutes and xylophones exist in and are part of many African cultures to the present.

The roots of the Orff Schulwerk therefore lay in the philosophy and aesthetics of ancient cultures in both surface and deep structures. This fact sheds light on the close similarity in pedagogical, aesthetic and philosophical principles between the Schulwerk and African cultures. The following sections will discuss the philosophical and pedagogical parallelism.

Philosophy

Music is an expression of life and an integral part of it both in the eyes of African cultures and the Orff Schulwerk. “African music is not set apart from its social and cultural context,”⁸ says J. Chernoff, and most scholars agree with him. In Africa, music is integrated into cultural activities and, “There are very few important things which happen without music.”⁹ Along the same lines, the Schulwerk musical materials consist of the

⁷ Goodkin, 57.

⁸ John Miller Chernoff, *African Rhythm and African Sensibility: Aesthetics and Social Action in African Musical Idioms* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), 33.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

child's musical language, subjects and themes that are close to the child's life. It allows students to interact with their environment and, therefore, meets the developmental needs of children, who learn best through maximum physical and mental involvement.¹⁰ The Schulwerk's teacher looks for music and musical activities that are close to the child and deal with subjects meaningful to him and close to his daily life.

If music is really an integral part of life, then everyone must take part in it. "The community dimension is perhaps the essential aspect of African music,"¹¹ says Chernoff, and L. J. New adds that "it is music for participation!"¹² The Orff Schulwerk process and materials reflect the same need of communal music making. Avon Gillespie writes that the first goal in the Schulwerk's teacher's mind should be the community. He says: "In order for music to exist there must be an exchange and a contribution by individuals within a framework of form."¹³ This goal is achieved through activities that engage and include everyone in the group. These activities develop "a sense of community, of belonging to the group, of being a contributing member."¹⁴

In Africa everyone takes part in the music making process and there is no distinction between the performers and the audience or between professional and amateur:

¹⁰ Shamrock, 1.

¹¹ Ibid., 33.

¹² Leon J. New, 28, 45.

¹³ Avon Gillespie, "The Orff Schulwerk," in Lois Choksy et al., *Teaching Music in the Twentieth Century* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1986), 138.

¹⁴ Ibid.

“the spectators and performers formed an indivisible group in musical activities, whether...singing, drumming, or dancing.”¹⁵ One can infer therefore, that the focus is not on a perfect ‘clean’ performance of talented musicians but rather on the ‘*process*’ of music making and being a part of this process. In a similar way, the word ‘*process*’ is a key word in the Schulwerk and paramount to the understanding of the approach. Here too, the focus is on discovering and learning through exploration and experience of music, with performance as a result of this process.¹⁶

The participation of everyone in the process of music making, both in African cultures and in the Schulwerk, is based on the same belief. “The belief that everyone is musical is a prime tenet of the Schulwerk,”¹⁷ and Africans believe, “in the inherent musicality of all people.”¹⁸ Although people have varying degrees of musicality, both the Schulwerk and African cultures welcome each individual to take part in the music making process in her own way and at her own level. Clapping, singing, drumming, dancing, rocking are all different ways to be a part of the musical experience of the group. Each person can take part in the creative process, and can express herself freely within the supporting framework of the musical activity.

It is the framework of the musical activity that gives the participants the freedom and space to express themselves in music and dance. It can also create an illusion, “an

¹⁵ Asante Darkwa, “The New Musical Traditions in Ghana” (master’s thesis, Wesleyan University CT, 1977), 68.

¹⁶ Gillespie, 96.

¹⁷ Goodkin, 57.

¹⁸ Robert Kwami, “A West African Folktale in the Classroom,” *British Journal of Music Education*, 3 (1986):1, 16.

illusion....in which the musical experience appears to have taken place effortlessly and instantly.”¹⁹ This aspect of the Schulwerk, is parallel to a very important aesthetic of African music and culture, the ‘cool’ philosophy as described by Robert Farris Thompson.²⁰ Thompson talks about the fact that when dancing ‘hot’ with ecstasy the dancers are keeping a facial serenity, or what he calls ‘the cool mask’. To the observer it seems that the dancers or the musicians are doing it effortlessly even when they put their whole self into the dance and the music.

The Schulwerk also follows the model of African cultures in regard to the close relationship between music and movement. Dance and movement in Africa are an essential part of the people’s expression and of music; there are no separate words for dance and music. The term ‘*Agora*’ (*dance drama*) means drumming, singing and dancing as one. When describing the relationship of music and movement in the Schulwerk Gillespie writes: “Music became not just an addendum to movement, but a tool and motivating factor for the dancers. For them music and movement became one and the same.”²¹

It is important to consider one more similarity shared by the African approach to music and the Orff Schulwerk. It regards the way they both view music education and learning in general:

“In traditional Africa, education is not merely a process that terminates after completion of a period of study for a particular qualification, but involves an endless search for knowledge that is found through dance,

¹⁹ Ibid., 137.

²⁰ Robert Farris Thompson, “An Aesthetic of Cool: West African Dance,” *African Forum*, 2 (Fall 1966):2, 85-102.

²¹ Gillespie, 93.

music, poetry, drama, visual art and other forms of socio-cultural structures.”²²

Avon Gillespie describes the learning process of the Schulwerk in a similar way. “It is a never-ending experience; like all music, it involves lifelong learning.”²³ The teacher as well as the students are constantly walking in this spiral path of acquiring more experience and therefore more knowledge.

Pedagogy and the Learning Media

The similarity in teaching methods and pedagogy are what makes the Orff Schulwerk a perfect approach to teaching West African music in the Western classroom. Most West African cultures are aural and pre-literate cultures (with no written language). The history, genealogy, values and ways of life are passed down aurally from generation to generation, through music, poetry and dance. Robert Kwami believes that West African traditions have much to offer to formal methods of education in this respect.²⁴ The Orff Schulwerk adopts and emphasizes the aural learning process. Students are not expected to read music or rhythm but rather, to learn it through active experience and participation. The aural learning process involves different ‘disciplines’ and demands the active participation of all present.

²² Amoaku, “The Arts: Instruments of Change,” 11.

²³ Gillespie, 103.

²⁴ Robert Kwami, “A West African Folktale in the Classroom,” 5.

Developing a proficient reader - a child who can read and write music fluently - is not the main concern of the Schulwerk. Learning music is similar to the learning of any other language. A child is not expected to write and read before she can talk; therefore, in the Schulwerk a child is not expected to read and write music till she acquires the skills of 'talking' or expressing herself through music. The learning of music notation is only a tool or instrument to make it easier to remember what the child has created.

Some other characteristics of the aural learning process are that knowledge is acquired by actual doing and through direct experience, there is no formal teacher but someone to guide the student through a process of discovery, and the learning process involves imitation. In the following section I will look closely at some elements of the aural learning process and how they are applied both in the Schulwerk and in West African cultures.

Leon J. New lists the different aspects of resemblance between African music and the Orff Schulwerk. He states that "they are both concerned with the direct experience of music, without the too early intervention of theory..."²⁵ In Africa, traditionally, young people learn by listening, watching and doing. "They learn by participating in activities alongside their elders."²⁶ Learning is achieved through imitation in these aural traditions.

²⁵ Leon J. New, 48.

²⁶ Asante Darkwa, 16.

In a similar manner Orff Schulwerk learning is acquired by physically doing; by experiencing rather than 'learning about'.²⁷ The teacher leads the students in exploration and experimentation with space, sound, form, movement and instruments. Here too, the learning process involves imitation.

This direct experience of music without "the too early intervention of theory,"²⁸ is a unique one. Unlike the Western schooling system, education in Africa is informal and starts at birth. There is no formal teaching and no designated teacher. The child learns about life and culture by imitating the adults around him and through imitation and experimentation discovers the environment, culture and fabric of life.

Along the same lines, the Schulwerk teacher is thought to be a facilitator that guides and leads her students in a process of discovery. This is done by asking the students open-ended questions that encourage discovery. Giles pie describes the Orff teacher as a, "well-trained, knowledgeable teacher who has mastered the tools of music and then uses those tools to release the natural talent and musical powers of the child."²⁹ Even though we have a formal teacher in the Schulwerk (unlike Africa), the Schulwerk teacher has the same role as the adults or elders in West African traditional societies. Rather than explaining to the child, they have the duty to lead the him through a variety of ways to discover the information he needs.

²⁷ Giles pie, 103.

²⁸ Leon J. New, 48.

²⁹ Giles pie, 137.

Imitation begins learning in both the Orff Schulwerk and the West African approach and is considered one of the most ancient modes of learning. During my stay in Kopeyia (Ghana) I observed this phenomenon on different levels. Whenever the older children were singing and playing a complex clapping game, a group of two to three year olds would be standing next to them trying to do the same thing. On other occasions the adults had social gatherings with dancing and drumming. They would sit on benches in a circle, sing, drum and dance, while the children would gather outside the circle creating a circle of their own and imitate the adults' dance movement and singing. Even the drumming to a certain extent is learned through imitation in the village. Young children would sit around the drummers watching them and listening carefully to the rhythmic patterns they create and try to imitate them on anything they can hit, an old can, a stool, a box or sticks.

A similar process happens in the Schulwerk, where students start by imitating their teacher and their peers by clapping rhythmic patterns, singing songs or playing a simple ostinato on instruments. But imitation is only where the learning begins. Both in the Schulwerk and in Africa, "imitation is used to insure a role model for creativity."³⁰ In this process,

The role of the teacher is gradually lessened as children exhibit more and more independence and finally demonstrate the ability to solve their own problems and answer their own questions through the process.³¹

³⁰ Ibid., 97.

³¹ Ibid.

The journey that starts with imitation culminates in creation. The information that the child gathers through imitation is manipulated in new ways, resulting in something new - the child's self expression. This process is well demonstrated in the stages of participation in the drumming ensemble, which will be discussed later. It also can shed some light on the pedagogical process of moving from simple to complex both in the West African approach to music and in the Orff Schulwerk.

The process through which the Orff teacher leads her students is often described as a spiral, starting with the simple and then using it as a building block while increasing complexity. In the words of Avon Gilespie:

The elements of music are explored first in their simplest, almost crude forms. Gradually, through experience these elements are refined and elevated to more complex levels of exploration and experience.³²

The same process happens naturally in African societies where the child's musical ability is challenged constantly and used as a basis for growth. Children start their 'musical informal education' immediately after birth when their mother sings to them or dances while carrying the child on her back. Later on they participate, singing and playing play-songs which, according to A. M. Jones, include the characteristic African traits in a simpler form.³³ As the child grows she learns more and more complex types of music.

The same principle can be seen in the process of learning the drum music. Robert Kwami describes three stages of learning and playing. In the first stage, one will play the

³² Ibid., 137.

³³ A. M Jones, *Studies in African Music*, Vol. I , (London: Oxford University Press, 1959),16.

bell and rattles. These are the main time-keeping instruments that play a pattern that repeats continuously (a rhythmic ostinato). Upon mastering that part, the player can move on and practice playing the support drums. These drums usually have repetitive patterns, but they also play some dialogues in response to the lead drum. Here again only after mastering the support drum can the player move on to the next stage, playing the lead drum. In this third stage one is required to master all the parts and dialogues, and also to understand the relationship of all the parts.³⁴ On top of this, the lead drummer controls the performance. He plays a pre-composed part, but, on its highest level his playing will include variations and improvisation. Within this progressive journey from simple to complex we can see also the learning process from imitation to creation.

Looking again at the Orff Schulwerk pedagogy we can see that this principle of starting with the simple and moving to the more complex governs other pedagogical processes as well: moving from imitation to creation, from body sounds to musical instruments, from playing in unison to playing an ensemble of many parts, from experiencing a musical concept to the understanding of it and from the aural to the written. All these take the participant on a path that starts with the simple and moves toward the complex. By using such a process children experience success and become confident in their self expression.

How does the Schulwerk pedagogy envision the path that leads one from the body sound to instrument playing? In the Schulwerk, the body is considered as the first and

³⁴ Robert Kwami, "An Approach to the Use of West African Music in the Classroom Based on Age and Gender Classifications," *British Journal of Music Education*, 8 (1991):2,133-4.

most important instrument, and the voice is the second in importance. All learning starts with experience through the body, starting with a gesture (clap, snap, pat), expanding it to the use of voice and finally transferring the voice and the body sounds to instruments. This process is introduced systematically in accord with the child developmental stage. It is used especially in introducing rhythm but can apply as well to melody and movement or dance.

Kofi Agawu suggests a similar model to describe the rhythmic expression in West Africa (figure 3.1) His model contains five stages which are organically related.

Figure 3.1

The domain of rhythmic expression in West Africa

...gesture (stage 1) as the primordial rhythmic event, gesture being a physical manifestation of a more fundamental communicative urge. Stage 2 is made up of the spoken word....the spoken word is here conceptualized as an intensification of gesture, that is, as the result of the transformation of non-verbal into verbal communication. Language, in its active form, speech, generates vocal music (stage 3),...Finally, instrumental music elicits dance or stylized gesture (stage 5). At this point we have come full circle. Rhythmic expression may therefore

be conceptualized within the framework of a continuum or circle which originates in gesture and terminates in stylized gesture.³⁵

This presents a clear correspondance between African music and the Schulwerk.

In West Africa, the drums can 'talk' and convey messages, knowledge, and information through the drum language. But language is also used to teach and memorize drum rhythms. This way of using language is parallel to the use of speech in the Orff Schulwerk to teach rhythm and meter. In an aural approach to learning music, speech and language are crucial components, since they help anchor and code the knowledge, as well as remember rhythmic patterns.

Rhythm is approached through movement in West Africa. After birth, the child is carried on her mother's back and can experience the beat of the music through her mother's dance movements. Later on, when she can walk and sometimes even before she can walk, she will imitate her mother dancing and again will experience the different rhythmic patterns through movement. Likewise, the Schulwerk views movement as "the foundation on which all other learning rests."³⁶ The experience of rhythm and form starts from the body, from movement in space. It is kinesthetic experience that in turn leads to the understanding of musical concepts.

Many are the pedagogical principles shared by the Orff Schulwerk and the West African approach to music. African music educators that have been exposed to the principles of the Schulwerk recommend it as the best way to teach African music both in African and Western countries. Of all the contemporary trends in music education, Orff Schulwerk is perhaps the closest to (a) traditional African approach to music. The

³⁵ Kofi V. Agawu, "The Rhythmic Structure of West African Music," *Journal of Musicology*, 5(1987):3, 404.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 96.

essentials of Schulwerk which include speech, rhythm and movement come rather close to the traditional African concept of music making...³⁷

It is my belief, therefore, that it is most beneficial to introduce West African music in a Western setting through the Schulwerk.

³⁷ Komla W. Amoaku, "Parallelisms in a Traditional African System of Education and Orff Schulwerk," *African Music*, 6(1982):2, 1982.

CHAPTER 4

The Ewe People

Location and Geography

The Ewe people are spread over a wide geographic area which includes the southeastern region of Ghana, the southern part of Togo and Benin (formally Dahomey) and along the coast of Nigeria, where the Ewe normally trace their origin.¹ According to A. B. Ellis, Eweland lies between the Volta river on the west and the Benin river or delta of the Niger on the east.²

The inhabitants of Eweland show a sufficiently high degree of cultural uniformity, but they are not one coherent group. Many sub-groups or political units are included under the title Ewe people. Each of these politically independent sub-groups has its own state and capital town, its own dialect of Ewe and sometimes even its own religious cults and rituals.³ Ellis counts eighteen sub-groups in his treatment of Ewe speaking people in

¹ Daniel Kodzo Avorgbedor, "Modes of Musical Continuity Among the Anlo Ewe of Accra: A Study in Urban Ethnomusicology," (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1986), 107.

² A. B. Ellis, *The Ewe Speaking People of the Slave Coast of West Africa; Their Religion, Manners, Customs . Laws, Language etc.* (Chicago: Benin Press, 1965), 1.

³ Madeline Manoukian, *The Ewe-Speaking People of Togoland and the Gold Coast* (London: International African Institute, 1952), 11.

this area. Other accounts focus on the Ewe people of Ghana only,⁴ and mention only two or three main sub-groups.⁵ Although the different sub-groups remain in small independent political units, there is a high degree of cultural uniformity among them.

The Ewe people interact with other groups that live around them. Their neighbors are the Yoruba people and the people of Dahomey in the east, the Akan and Ga-Adangme people in the west. The interaction of these different groups has its influence on language, music and culture. Manoukian writes about groups of Yoruba people that live in the Ewe area, saying that they speak both Ewe and their own language. This is also true about the Ewe people who live at the edge of Eweland.⁶

Eweland is spread along the flat sandy coastline of West Africa. In the south it is a continuous lagoon system, the largest of which is Keta lagoon, while inland it is characterized by savanna grassland with some marshes and mangroves. Further north the land becomes hilly and red earth takes the place of the sand. Here the vegetation is thicker and taller.

There are two main seasons in this area - a dry season and a rainy season. The dry season starts around November and lasts till March. March to July and September to November are the two peaks of the rainy season.

⁴ Such as: E. Y. Eglewogbe, *Games and Songs as Education Media* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1975) and Alfred Kwashie Ladzekpo and Kobla Ladzekpo, "Anlo Ewe Music in Anyako, Volta Region, Ghana." In *Music of Many Cultures*, edited by Elizabeth May (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 216-231

⁵ Alfred Kwashie Ladzekpo and Kobla Ladzekpo, "Anlo Ewe Music in Anyako, Volta Region, Ghana." In *Music of Many Cultures*, edited by Elizabeth May (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 216-231.

⁶ Manoukian, 11.

History

According to some historians, the Ewe people had contact with other ethnic and linguistic groups long before the seventeenth century.⁷ What is known today as Eweland was not the original homeland of the Ewe people. There are many oral accounts concerning the origin of the Ewe people; in all of them three main places are mentioned: *Oyo* - western Nigeria today, *Ketu* - present day northern Benin, and *Notsie* - north of Lome, Togo's current capital.⁸

The migration from Ketu to Notsie happened sometime in the sixteenth century and was the result of the oppression the Ewe people experienced under the reign of King Agokoli II.⁹ Sometime in the seventeenth century they were forced by Agokoli to leave Notsie and they separated and migrated in different directions.¹⁰ In her account, Manoukian mentions the oppressive chief Agokoli, and tells us that the Ewe left Notsie in three different groups. The northern group, *Dziehe* moved west reaching the Togoland mountains which were closer to the Volta river. The central group, *Titina* turned south and settled in the hills near Ho south of Togoland mountains, and the southern group - *Anyiehe*, traveled south-west to the coastal lagoon area east of the mouth of the Volta

⁷ William Oscar Anku, "Procedures in African Drumming: A Study of Akan / Ewe Traditions and African Drumming in Pittsburgh," (Ph.D. Dissertation University of Pittsburgh, 1988), 18.

⁸ Alfred Kwashie Ladzekpo and Kobla Ladzekpo., 218.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ E. Y. Egblewogbe, *Games and Songs as Education Media* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1975), 14.

river.¹¹ This southern group established the state of Anlo and later divided into two sub-groups (centered around Keta and Anloga).¹² Manoukian also says that it seems that the indigenous people who were living in these areas at the time were absorbed by the Ewe people.¹³

The next two centuries were a period of war between the Ewe people and their neighbors. In 1874 the British got involved in these tribal wars and extended their rule in Eweland. Colonialism brought with it division of Eweland. In 1899, the land was divided between Britain and Germany and after World War I, the land was even further divided between the British and French.¹⁴ Today, as a result of this process, the Ewe people are spread across three different countries (Ghana, Togo and Benin).

Occupations

The occupations of the Ewe are closely related to the natural environment and to their needs. Each area has its own main occupation depending on what is available: farming on the savanna, fishing along the coastline and salt industry in the coastal lagoon area. Some people might also be weavers, traders, blacksmiths or partake in other tradable crafts.

¹¹ Manoukian, 11.

¹² Alfred Kwashie Ladzekpo and Kobla Ladzekpo, 218.

¹³ Manoukian, 12-3.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Manoukian says that most Ewe are farmers and survive with agriculture.¹⁵ Almost every family has its own land where crops are grown for daily use and trade. The main crops which are also the substance of the Ewe diet are maize, cassava and various kinds of yams. Other common crops are beans, okra, garden eggs, groundnuts, peppers and tomatoes. The family unit is the main working group. "A man and his household constitute the main working group though hired labor and co-operative systems of working also operate."¹⁶ Heavy and specialized work is done traditionally by men, but the women are the ones who visit the farm daily to gather food for the evening meal and to collect the crops. Most of the crops are for the family consumption. However, any surplus food is sold in the local markets or traded for other goods.¹⁷

Fishing using a line along streams and brooks is usually done for home consumption. Along the coast though, fishing is more specialized. Fishermen use nets and canoes or boats. Traditionally, the fishermen are organized in a 'fishing company' where the boat owner chooses his workers for the season. The men fish and the women are in charge of processing and marketing the fishes in the local markets, fresh or cured.¹⁸

"Collecting of salt deposits in the lagoon beds is a seasonal activity."¹⁹ This is an important industry done by men and women. The men dig flat-bottom pits and the women

¹⁵ Ibid., 16.

¹⁶ Eglewogbe, 14.

¹⁷ Ibid., 15.

¹⁸ Avorgbedor, 112.

¹⁹ Eglewogbe, 15.

collect the deposit salt in baskets. The salt is used for home consumption, in the fishing industry and for sale.

Weaving the traditional Kente cloth is another main occupation. Usually the narrow strips of cloth are woven by men manually on small wooden looms. According to Manoukian, the weaving and the dyeing of the cotton is done by men, but spinning the local cotton is a woman's job.²⁰ The woven strips are sewn together to create a full cloth or sewn into shirts. The finished product is consumed locally and sold in the markets. Nowadays, some of it is retailed by middlemen for international markets.²¹

Other activities are usually done by farmers or traders, as part-time occupations, and have to do with "elements of Ewe material culture."²² Drums and stool making, pottery, basketry, carpentry, general arts and crafts, roofs and sleeping-mat making from fibers of palms are some of these part-time occupations.

Trading is largely in the hands of women²³ and is done on two different scales. There are small markets, *agbonusi* that provide the daily exchanges and take place in every village. In bigger villages, some women have kiosks or small stores attached to their houses.²⁴ The big market, *asi*, is a major economic event which occurs every four days in

²⁰ Manoukian, 17-8.

²¹ Avorgbedor, 112.

²² Manoukian, 17-8.

²³ Alfred Kwashie Ladzekpo and Kobla Ladzekpo, 218.

²⁴ Ibid.

the nearby market towns.²⁵ The whole enterprise travels from one market town to another in four day cycles so that every area has its own market calendar. Women who are actively engaged in trade travel during most of the week from one market to another selling their goods and buying other things. "Market days are so important that certain social and private events, such as funerals and festivals, are not scheduled on such days"²⁶

Social Organization and Education

The Ewe social system is patrilineal with a patriarchal family system. Even though the Ewe society emphasizes leadership and succession through the male lineage, the matrilineal relations also play a large part in the kinship system.²⁷ The smallest social unit is the domestic group. The domestic group in its core is the elemental family, but since a great importance is given to the extended family it can also be considered as the core group. The head of the family is often responsible for his siblings and their children or his parents. He has the duty of taking care of them, which at times means having them as part of his household.

Families are grouped together into lineage, which are the next level of social unit.

"The lineage comprises all those persons, male and female, who are able to trace relationship by a series of acceptable genealogical steps through the male line to a known or putative male ancestor and theoretically to each other, the general genealogical depth being eight to ten generations."²⁸

²⁵ Manoukian, 19.

²⁶ Avorgbedor, 112.

²⁷ Ibid., 115.

²⁸ Egblewogbe, 19.

The lineage is named after its founding ancestor and usually the oldest male member is the head of the group. This role, according to Manoukian, succeeds from the oldest male to the next older male within one generation before descending to the next generation.²⁹ The lineage can be thought of as a corporate group which concerns itself with the welfare of its members and with the preservation of ancestral property and farmlands. The head of the lineage is the one who controls and administrates the 'family land' and the ancestral shrine. He also has the role of performing family rituals and arbitration in conflicts among the lineage members.

The next social unit is the clan, a corporate group of several lineages which completes the kinship system. Friendship and mutual help are some characteristics of the clan, so that each of the clan members is responsible for providing help to the other members. Here too, the oldest member is the head of the clan (usually the most senior of the lineage heads). Some clans have an ancestral shrine and perform special rituals as part of burial ceremonies for their members.³⁰

"Kinship plays an important role in the Ewe social organization."³¹ The extended family, lineage and the clan all support and encourage awareness of descent line and individual obligations toward members.³² It is the parent's responsibility to educate and

²⁹ Manoukian, 19.

³⁰ Avorgbedor, 115.

³¹ Eglewogbe, 20.

³² Avorgbedor, 115.

model appropriate behavior to their children, but all the adults in the lineage, clan and the village take part in this process. The African proverb that says 'It takes a village to raise a child' is not a cliché but rather a way of life among the Ewe people.

In the first two or three years of her life, a child belongs to the mother. She carries the child on her back at all times while working in the fields, trading in the market or cooking the family's dinner. Girls stay with their mothers and learn from them their place and role in society, while boys start to be more independent and take care of themselves between the ages of six and ten. As they get older they stay with males of their age and learn from their fathers.³³

The grandparents and uncles, especially on the mother's side, take part in educating and teaching the children in return for help with farming, fishing or trading.³⁴ Children are taught at an early age to respect their elders and address them in the right manner. They learn it in the same manner they learn everything else, by observing and imitating the adults. This way of traditional education is true for everything they learn.

Religion

Traditionally, the Ewe believe that every living creature and every object not made by human hands possesses a spirit or a shadow. They distinguish between the *kra*, the spirit residing in the living body and *srahman*, the spirit of a man after his death that

³³ Manoukian, 42.

³⁴ Ibid.

continues to be present as a shadow.³⁵ Their religious beliefs center around three different types of supernatural beings: *Mawu*, the high god or the creator, *Trowo*, the spirits or shades, and the ancestral spirits.

Mawu, the high god, is conceived as the wise creator and giver of all good things. He seems remote from mankind, but cares for them and therefore created the Trowo to act as intermediates between him and mankind.³⁶ The Trowo, or the lesser gods, dwell in trees, rivers, and hills, and are represented in concrete mounds and paraphernalia.³⁷ Different cults worship different Trowo and ancestral spirits.

There are many different cults among the Ewe people, each with its special ceremonies and rituals. Two of these cults, the *Afa* and the *Yewe*, are mentioned by the Ladzekpo brothers in their article. They also mention that as a result of missionaries and colonialism Christianity became part of the religion practiced by the Ewe.³⁸

Language

The Ewe language belongs to the Kwa languages (together with Ga-Adangme and Twi), and has different dialects.³⁹ Some of its important characteristics include

³⁵ Ellis, 15-9.

³⁶ Manoukian, 35.

³⁷ Avorgbedor, 116-7.

³⁸ Alfred Kwashie Ladzekpo and Kobla Ladzekpo, 218.

³⁹ In her account Ellis (p.229) counts five dialects while Manoukian (p.11) mentions nine different dialects and tells us that 'proper Ewe' is spoken by the Anlo people.

monosyllabic word stems, the use of seven different vowels and some sounds that do not exist in English,⁴⁰ and a tonal language that uses three different registers (high, middle and low).⁴¹ This last fact is the foundation of the close relationship between drumming and language among the Ewe people.

Music

As with many African cultures, music among the Ewe is an integral part of life and it is never separated from everyday events. Music is interdependent with language, socialization, dance, drama and other aspects of life.⁴² Even though music is related to language, it is important to note that while the Ewe are homogenous linguistically, they are not homogenous musically.⁴³

The music in northern Eweland is different than that of the south. While the melodies of the north are diatonic those of the south are more pentatonic. There are also many musical differences in style among people from different areas or even from different villages or towns. The same dance music can be performed in different styles depending on who plays it. But Kobla and Alfred Ladzekpo reassure us saying that,

⁴⁰ For a detailed list of these sounds see chapter 5 p. 56.

⁴¹ Manoukian, 11.

⁴² A. M. Jones, *Studies in African Music*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 9.

⁴³ Anku, 17.

People brought up in the tradition understand the music and know what to listen for. They know the intricacies that distinguish the work of different musicians and the broad features that distinguish the different kinds of music.⁴⁴

In order to be aware of the subtle elements that determine whether the music is a different piece or style of a familiar piece, one needs to grow up in the culture. Among the Ewe music is learned through participant observation. A. M. Jones tells us that the sense of the beat and the music is nurtured from an early age. Through songs and games children slowly develop a sense of rhythm and as they become older the complexity of the rhythm grows.⁴⁵

The exposure to more complex music does not end with adulthood. Through the dance clubs adults keep developing their musical sense. The dance clubs “function as a social outlet and form of entertainment, recreation and ceremonial activities.”⁴⁶ The dance clubs are organized in age groups, and the members of the club cultivate their own distinctive songs or music.

The music of the Ewe is rich and varied and includes a large repertoire of songs that can be performed either by themselves or as part of an instrumental ensemble. Such ensemble are dominated by idiophones and membranophones, and usually consist of iron bells, gourd rattles, and variously pitched drums whose multipart, multitimbral,

⁴⁴ Alfred Kwashie Ladzekpo and Kobla Ladzekpo, 221.

⁴⁵ Jones, 21.

⁴⁶ Alfred Kwashie Ladzekpo and Kobla Ladzekpo, 221.

polyrhythmic, and polytonal voices blend together to form a composite statement in the dance drama. Music is an integral part of life among the Ewe and accompanies the people from birth to death.

CHAPTER 5

Children's Songs from Kopeiya

A. M. Jones tells us that a good starting point in the study of West African music is children's songs.¹ This chapter is a compilation of nine songs, including game songs, story songs and just general songs that children in the village of Kopeiya sing and play. Jones says that songs are an integral part of the game and are closely related to children's lives. "The subject matter of the songs is typically African"; they comment on life as the children know it.²

Often the songs include proverbs, sayings and hidden meanings. This is because the songs, even though they are part of games, are also a means of education. They teach the children different lessons and point out the expectations from the children in regard to their moral behavior.

Usually the songs are structured as 'call and response' and might be accompanied by hand clapping that indicates "the time-backbone" of the song, as Jones calls it.³ The melodies can be either pentatonic or diatonic. Alfred and Kobla Ladzekpo write that the Northern Ewe music usually uses a diatonic scale, while in the south the Anlo use a

¹ A. M. Jones, *Studies in African Music*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 16.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

pentatonic scale in their songs. Play songs are usually sung in unison with no harmony, but dance songs are sung in polyphony. In the north the harmony is based on thirds, while the harmony of the Anlo Ewe is based on fourths.⁴

Differences in style and variation techniques are an integral part of an oral culture. In such cultures music and knowledge are passed from one person to another through the individual filters of perception. Since this paper deals with an aural tradition, it represents the music as it was taught to me while staying in Kopeyia. This fact raises some problems in regard to the songs and games.

The songs in this chapter are a full transcription, in western notation, from tapes recorded in the village. However, some songs were taught to me by more than one person, and each version was a little different from the other. C. K. Ladzekpo says that different people use different melodic and harmonic ornamentation while singing the same song. Following that line I have tried to find the common elements in each version and to create a melodic skeleton of each song as I understand it.

In some cases other versions of songs were found in written sources. To keep the integrity of the paper I chose to present each song as it was taught to me and to include all the information I had about it, with references to the different sources. In this way the authenticity of the music is captured as much as possible.

⁴ Alfred Kwashie and Kobla Ladzekpo, "Anlo Ewe Music in Anyako, Volta Region, Ghana" in *Music of Many Cultures*, ed. by Elizabeth May (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 219.

The music can be found on either the accompanying audio or video tapes, as indicated at the top of each example. Often, the transcriptions of the songs are not written in the original recorded key, but are transposed for purposes of comparison. Here again since we are dealing with an aural tradition there is no absolute key that the song should be sung in. Each time a song is being sung, by children or adults, it is in a different key according to the singing voice. Since the purpose of this study is to bring the music into the elementary classroom, and since the Ewe people, in general, sing in a very low range.⁵ I chose to present the songs in a key that will be within the singing range for young children.

In regard to this fact, master drummer Abraham Adzenyah says that when singing a song, we should not think about the pitch as absolute, but rather in our natural voice range and therefore create a richer harmonic texture.⁶ The above points are well demonstrated in the attached tapes. In these tapes I included more than one performance of a song, whenever possible.

Each song includes a western notation of the music, the words in Ewe, transliteration and translation. It also includes explanation in regards to the hidden meaning of the words when applicable, as well as notes about how the game is played or the song is sung. When a bell pattern or clapping can accompany the song it is written above the staff at the beginning of the song.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Abraham Adzenyah in a workshop at San Jose State University, March 1997.

The Ewe alphabet is similar to the English alphabet with some additional special characters. Some modifications were made in this paper to represent these special characters. In the guide provided below, the original character is provided in parentheses (in hand writing) next to the modified form. It includes also some information about how to pronounce certain sound combinations that do not exist in English:⁷

ɖ • ɖ : This sound is made with the tip of the tongue against the back of the hard palate, similar to “r” sound (voiced retroflex stop.)

ɸ • ɸ : Air passes through a narrow opening between the lips, as in blowing a candle (voiceless bilabial fricative).

ʒ • ʒ : This sound is produced like the sound ‘ye’ with the tongue touching the soft palate. Air passes through a narrow bridge formed by raising the back of the tongue towards the soft palate (voice velar fricative).

ɔ • ɔ : An open o, or ‘au’ as in *caught*.

ŋ • ŋ : A velar nasal, similar to English ‘ng’, as in *sing*.

ny : Pronounced as in French gn as in *igname*.

dz : ‘j’, as in *jump*.

ts : ‘ch’, as in *change*.

⁷Daniel Kodzo Avorgbedor, “Modes of Musical Continuity Among the Anlo Ewe of Accra: A Study in Urban Ethnomusicology,” (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1986), xii-xiii.

gb : Combination of the two sounds, with a soft G. Pronounced at the soft palate through a simultaneous closure of the lips and released simultaneously without aspiration. (voiced labiovelar stop).

kp: Combination of the two sounds, with a soft K. Pronounced at the soft palate through a simultaneous closure of the lips and released simultaneously without aspiration but voiceless.

Song 1

Afokpa vuvu Rock Passing Game Song

As taught by Kobla Afagbedzi, Yaotse Agbeli, Kowblavi Doga, Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah.

Audio tape no.1 / side A, no.1

L: A - fo - kpa vu - vu to - la, G: To ne ma - fle, ye yi, ye,

To ne ma - fle ye, yi, ye To ne ma - fle ma - no do - don.

L = Leader

X = Pass rock to the person on your right.

G = Group

O = Pick up rock.

~~~~~ = Makes circles on the ground with the rock.

Afokpa vuvu

Leader: AFOKPA VUVU TOLA

ah-fok-pa voo-voo tau-lah

Person who fixes shoes (*Afokpa* = shoe)

Group: TO NE MAFLE

to neh mah-fleh

Stop working so that I can purchase

YE, YI, YE,

Ye, yi, ye

ye, yi, ye

TO NE MAFLE

Stop working so that I can purchase

to neh mah-fleh

MANQ DODOM

So that I will be wearing them.

mah-nau dodom

Translation: This song is sung to the person who fixes shoes and translates as follows: Person who fixes shoes, stop your work, so that I can purchase some shoes and wear them.

Notes on the game: This game is played in a circle. Children are sitting on the ground with a small rock or pebble in front of them. While singing measures 1 and 2 of the song each participant makes circles on the ground with his rock. Starting on measure 3, each child picks up the rock in front of him on beat 1 of measures 3, 5 and 7, and passes the rock to the person on his right on beat 1 of measures 4, 6 and 8. Repeat the song over and over speeding up the tempo till one of the players can not keep up with the tempo of passing the rock, or till someone is getting confused.

Song 2

Kor, Kor, Kor, Kor Rock Passing Game Song

As taught by Kobla Afagbedzi, Yaotse Agbeli, Kowblavi Doga, Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah.

Audio tape no.1 / side A, no.2

L: Kor, kor, kor, kor me va dzo de gbe. G: E L: ma - ka do - wo - da, G: E L: Axo - lu siy - eo

G: E L: ma - no fia - gbo G: E L: fia - gbo vi man - ye G: E L: to - me - lo - lo

G: E to - me - lo - lo E to - me - lo - lo E to - me - lo - lo

1st X 2nd X O X O X O X
E L: kpe - de vi - wo mi tsi dzo G: gbe za za gbe - za - la - do
do accel.

L = Leader

G = Group

~~~~~ = Makes circles on the ground with the rock.

O = Pick up rock.

X = Pass rock to the person on your right.

Kor, Kor, Kor, Kor

Leader: KOR, KOR, KOR, KOR, ko, ko, ko, ko, ME VA DZO DE GBE mah-vah jodeh-ge	The sound of knocking on the door I have come to borrow fire,
Group: E, ME KE DO WO DA eh, mah-kah dao-dah	Ah (yes), who sent you.
Leader: E, AXOLU SIYEO eh, a-ho-loo shya-oh	Ah (yes), the women in the Axolu's household.
Group: E, MANQ FIAGBO eh, mah-nau fya-gbau	Ah, (yes), I shall stay by the chief,
Leader: E, FIAGBO VI MANYE eh fya-gbau vi manyeh E TOMELOLO	Ah (yes), I am with the chief Hey there's a crocodile
Group: E TOMELOLO (x3) eh tome-lolo E eh	Hey there's a crocodile
Leader: KPEDEVIWO MI TSI DZO kpe-de-viwo mi tshi djo	Little kids put out the fire
Group: GBE ZA ZA GBEZALADO gbeh zah zah gbeh-zah-lah-do	Words to accompany the action of game

Translation: Knock knock, I have come to borrow fire. / Who sent you? / The women in the Axalu household. / I shall stay by the chief / Yes, I am with the chief / crocodile in the river / Little kids put out the fire.

Explanation: This song is teaching children the right and polite way to ask for something. First you knock on the door and tell who sent you and what is the purpose of your visit. In our song, coming to borrow fire. Since the use of matches is something new and are not very common, when starting a fire (for cooking) people often borrow a burning charcoal from someone who has a fire going already. The next line of the song is an important statement. The chief, in Ewe culture, represents authority, respect and moral behavior. By saying "I shall stay by the chief" or "I am with the chief" the children are confirming that they will behave and follow the moral codes of society. The crocodile in the last part of the song represents danger and the children are being warned to "put out the fire," or beware of the danger in order to keep the moral behavior. C. K. Ladzekpo pointed out that this song might be a combination of two songs. He says that the last part of the song, about the crocodile, is taken from another Ewe play song that is sung and played by children in the lagoon. Ladzekpo says that the words "*Gbe za za gbezalado*" are words to accompany the action of splashing water while running away from danger (the crocodile). A version of this splashing play song appears in A. M. Jones book *Studies in African Music*.⁸ The similarities in the text and the melody between the song in A. M.

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⁸ Jones, *Studies in African Music*, vol. 1 p.18-9 and vol. 2 p.1.

Jones and the end of our song confirms Ladzekpo's observation as well as the fact that the way of passing the rocks changes in the last part of the song (see notes on the game).

Notes on the game: Sitting in a circle, each participant has a rock or pebble in her hand. While singing all the children are marking with their rocks circles on the ground. On the word "*E*" everyone passes the rock to the person on their right. In other words, the rock is passed to the right on the first beat of every other measure. On the last 5 measures of the song the game changes and the rock is being picked up on beat 2 of every measure (without marking circles on the ground), and passed to the right on beat 1 of every measure.

Song 3

Abo la le Dance Song

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side A, no.3

Underlined words = jump high and clap.

ABO LA LE DO LA ME

ah-bau lah leh do lah meh

ELE DO LEM

eh-leh dau lem

ABO LA LE DO LA ME

ah-bau lah leh do lah meh

MA TE NU ADZO KPO

mah the neyo adzo kpoh

ABO DZO KPO (x2)

ah-bau dzjo kpoh

Translation: According to Mr. Tekpah, *Abo* is a grasshopper in Ewe, *do* means hole and *adzo kpo* means jump. The song is about a grasshopper in a hole. The

grasshopper is sick and cannot jump out. The children encourage the grasshopper and say to him: 'jump grasshopper'.

C.K. Ladzekpo, however, explained the song differently. According to him, *Abɔ* means arm, and *do* means middle. In this case, the song says: if you put your hands on your waist (on your middle) you can not jump. So, let your arms jump and clap so that you can jump.

Explanation: C.K. Ladzekpo says that *Abɔ dzo kpo* means kindergarten. It is a term that describes the activities children are doing in kindergarten, jumping, singing playing and clapping which constitute the subject of the song. This is reinforced by what Mr. Tekpah said, that the children in kindergarten liked this song so much, that it became their song and the kindergarten's name was changed to *Abɔ dzo kpo*.

However, according to Tekpah, the song is about a grasshopper and it tells us how important it is to encourage someone who is in trouble or crisis. C. K. Ladzekpo says that *Abɔ* can also be some kind of an insect, though not a grasshopper. He suggests that since the melody is more diatonic it might be a song that came from the Northern Volta, where the dialect is different, and that might explain the different ways of understanding the song.

Notes on the game: Standing in a circle, all participants sing the song. On the words of the last line everyone jumps and on the word *kpo* they jump even higher and clap their hands.

Song 4

Amesi Wodzi Dance song

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side A, no.4

Hand clap

A - me-si wo-dzi Dzo-da, Du xe, du xe. A- Tra - la la la la la la la Tra-

- la la la la la la la, Tra - la la la la, Tra - la la la la, (Tra)

word = Substitute with other words (days of the week) from the list that follow.

The Days of the Week:

DZODA - Monday

djo-dah

BLADA - Tuesday

blah-dah

KUDA - Wednesday

koo-dah

YAWODA - Thursday

ya-oo-dah

FIDA - Friday

fee-dah

MEMLADA - Saturday

mehm-le-dah

KWASIDA - Sunday

kwah-shi-dah

Amesi Wodzi

AMESI WODZI (DZODA)*

ah-meh-shi wo-ji jo-da

DU XE, DU XE,

du geh, du geh

AMESI WODZI (DZODA)*

ah-meh-shi wo-ji (jo-da)*

DU XE, DU XE,

du geh, du geh

TRA LA-LA-LA-LA-LA-LA-LA (x2)

tra-la-la-la-la.....

TRA-LA-LA-LA-LA.

tra-la-la-la-la.

Those who were born on (Monday)

Dance, dance,

Those who were born on (Monday)

Dance, dance,

Tra la la....

Translation: Those who were born on (Monday)* Dance, dance.

Explanation: This song comes to teach children about the days of the week. Among the Ewe people, the day of the week on which one is born is very important. A child is given a name based on his birth day. A boy born on Thursday will be named Yao, a girl born on Saturday will be named Ami and so on. Each child knows their day of birth. C. K. Ladzekpo says that the day of birth is thought to influence the character of a child.

Even though this song seems to have a western influence melodically, it can be an effective way to introduce perception of time and dates in the Ewe culture. This song can demonstrate the concept of the week as an important unit of time in a culture that traditionally did not use a written calendar can be.

Notes on the game: All participants stand in a circle and sing the song. When singing a verse with the day of week on which you were born, you dance in place or in the center of the circle. All the other children join in dancing and clapping their hands while singing "Tra-la-la.." At the end of the verse you go to your place and kneel down.

Song 5

Tu Tu Gbovi Cradle song

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side A, no.5

Possible clap:

Tu, nu, Gbo - vi! nu, nu, gbo - vi! No-wo mele afea

me o, Da-wo mele afea me o, A-me-kae la fa via na A - o d e - d e

vin - ye bo-nu bo-nu kpoo. A-me-kae fo wo, Pau-lu - vi? Tu - a

ta mef - oe na wo, A - o dze - dze vin - ye bo-nu . bo-nu kpoo

Tu Tu Gbovi

TU TU GBOVI (x2)

too too gbau-vee

NOWO MELE AFEA ME O

nau-wo meh-lea-fia meo

DAWO MELE AFEA ME O

dah-wo meh-lea-fia meo

AMEKAE LA FA VIA NA

ah-meh-kea lah fah vya nah

AO DE DE VI NYE, BONU BONU KPOO

ah-oh dze-dze vi-nyeh bau-noo bau-noo kpoh

AMEKAE FO WO? (Wò) PAULUVI?

ah-me-kah foh woh? poh-loo-vi

TUATA MEFOE NA WO (Wò)

too-tah meh-fwe nah woh

AO DE DE VI NYE, BONU BONU KPOO

ah-oh dze-dze vi-nyeh bau-noo bau-noo kpoh

Stop crying my little goat

Your mother is not in the house

Your grandmother is not in the house

Whom are you crying for?

Keep calm my child

Who beat you ? Paul?

Spit in my palm so that I will beat
him back .

Keep calm my child

Translation: Stop crying my little goat (nickname for the child). Your mother and grandmother are not here, keep calm, no use for you to cry. Did someone beat you? If so, spit in my palm and I will spank them back. Do not cry my child.

Among the Ewe, as in many other cultures, spitting on someone is an insult and a way of hurting someone's feelings. The person who sings the song says 'spit in his palm' so that when she hits Paul back it will be not only painful but insulting as well.

Notes on the song: This is the most popular children's song among the Ewe and probably one of the oldest. It is sung throughout the whole Eweland and almost every child and adult knows this popular lullaby.

The version brought here is the one Mr. Tekpah, a teacher at the Kopeyia Bloomfield School, sings. The song also appears in Amoaku's *African Songs and Rhythms for Children: Orff Schulwerk In the African Tradition*⁹. Amoaku's version seems to be a little different and simpler from the one transcribed here and also includes optional hand clapping rhythms as accompaniment.

C.K. Ladzekpo says that the song is so popular that it is used by adults on different occasions. According to him it has been used in *Holo* (a verbal fight that is done through songs when there is a conflict between two people, two groups, or two communities), as well as with Agbadza drumming music and sometimes even with the Kinka bell. When used with Agbadza it is sung in a more pentatonic melody and sometimes only fragments of the song are sung. Ladzekpo tells me that the effect of lulling and calming down is kept when sung by adults but the words get a different, deeper meaning: 'your mother and grandmother are not here' - you are on your own to deal with your problems.

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⁹ W. Komla Amoaku, *Orff Schulwerk in the African Tradition, African Songs and Rhythms for Children* (Germany, Mainz: Schott, 1971):16.

Song 6

Zigilo Children's Chant

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side A, no.6

L: Ma - ma sia aha - lia de, G: Zi - go - lo. L: Fia fe gbo va dui, G: Zi - go -

- lo. L: Ma - ma fui kple kpo, G: Zi - go - lo. L: Gbo la ku dza -

- ka, G: Zi - go - lo. L: Fia be ye me lo, G: Zi - go - lo.

Zigolo

Leader: MAMA SIA AHALIA <u>DE</u> mah-mah shya ahahlya <u>de</u>	Grandma made corn drink
Group: ZIGOLO ji-go-lo	'Zigolo' is a vocal response with no meaning
Leader: FIA <u>FE</u> <u>GBQ</u> VA <u>DUI</u> fya fhe gbau vah <u>dwee</u>	The chief's goat ate it up
Group: ZIGOLO	Zigolo
Leader: MAMA <u>FUI</u> KPLE KPO Mah-mah fhuee kpleh kpoh	Grandma beat the goat with a stick
Group: ZIGOLO	Zigolo
Leader: <u>GBQ</u> LA KU <u>DZAKA</u> gbau lah koo djah-kah	The goat died
Group: ZIGOLO	Zigolo
Leader: FIA BE YE ME <u>LQ</u> fya beh yeh meh lau	The chief was angry
Group: ZIGOLO	Zigolo

Translation: This chant tells us a story about a grandmother who made *ahalia*, a soft drink made out of fermented corn. The chief's goat drank it and grandma beat the goat till it died. The chief was upset.

Explanation: This chant tells children that the same moral behavior is expected from everyone. When the chief is not keeping his goat from other people's property and the goat causes damage it is acceptable to kill it. The only thing the chief can do in such a situation is to be upset.

Notes on the song: This is more of a chant than a song with no specific melody. The melodic line above is just a general outline to guide the leader's call.

Song 7

**Keye Keye
Children's Chant**

As taught by Victoria Galley

Audio tape 1 /side A, no.7

Leader: KESE BE GBQA TOFU keh-seh beh gbau tofoo	Gorilla has fur just like the goat
Group: KEYE, KEYE, ke-yeh ke-yeh	'Keye keye' has no meaning - it is a response
Leader: MADINE WOGBE mah-di-ne wo-gbe	The gorilla wants the goat to take its fur off
Group: KEYE, KEYE, ke-yeh ke-yeh	Keye keye
Leader: BOBOGULEME bau-bau-gwee-meh	Snail shell is stuck to the fur
Group: KEYE, KEYE, ke-yeh ke-yeh	Keye keye
UUUEHNM oooo-eh-nm	Ah ha...
Group: KEYE, KEYE, ke-yeh ke-yeh	Keye keye.

Translation: The first two lines are a proverb saying that the gorilla has fur just like the goat but it wants the goat to take it off since it has a snail shell stuck to it. In other words the gorilla sees the problems of the goat but does not see its own problems. This

proverb is a parallel to the proverb about the camel who does not see its own hump. It tells the children not to laugh at other people's mistakes or faults when they might make the same one.

Story Songs

The two story songs in this section are an integral part of story telling. On nights with a full moon, especially in villages where there is no electricity, children gather around the elders who will tell them stories and riddles. This is an important medium of education. Through the stories the children learn moral behavior as well as the reasons for natural phenomena. Songs are often part of storytelling as they engage the children and allow them to take an active part in the situation. Stories can also be dramatized or include dancing and songs.

Song 8

Kplo, Kplo, Kplo Song to go with the story 'The Mouse and The Cat'

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no. 1 / side A, no.8

Kplo, Kplo, Kplo

Leader: KPLO, KPLO, KPLO,

ploh, ploh, ploh,

GA TSOM KPLO

gah tshom ploh

The sound of a pot falling and
turning over.

I am trapped

Group: ALEE MA WO

ah-lee mah wau

DZANKPLE ZEA GA TSOM KPLO

djahn-kpleh zyah gah tshom ploh

What can I do?

The Dzankple pot had trapped me,

ALEE MA WO

ah-lee mah wau

What can I do?

Translation: The pot turned over and trapped me / What can I do? / The Dzankple pot trapped me / What can I do?. *Dzankple* is a special dish made with corn flour, onion, oil, salted fish and tomatoes. It is usually made for special occasions.

Notes on the song: According to Mr. Tekpah, this song will be an integral part of storytelling and might occur as follows. One of the participants says: "The cat is here." and the storyteller responds: "Come here cat." Then everyone will sing the song and some children might dance to the song. The storyteller introduces the cat to the audience and starts telling the story. The song is sung again in the middle of the story in the appropriate place.

The story: (As told by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah) Long ago the cat and the mouse were very close friends. They lived together, ate together, slept together, played together. They did everything together. Wherever one went, his friend followed him. They liked each other very much.

One day the two decided to cook Dzankple, since they liked it very much. Dzankple is a special dish that is made with corn flour, salt, salted fish, onion, oil and tomatoes. The mouse told the cat that she knows a woman who sells some of these ingredients and she can go and steal some corn flour, salt, salted fish and tomatoes. The cat promised to steal some oil from the house.

The two decided to get together in the afternoon, after they got all the ingredients and cook the Dzankple together. So they both went on their assignments and stole all the necessary things for their meal.

In the afternoon they started to cook the Dzankple on a little fire. They mixed all the ingredients and took turns stirring them in the pot. It smelled so good that the cat said: "Oh, today we are going to have a great dinner, it will be a great feast." When they finished cooking and wanted to serve the Dzankple into plates they realized they had no plates to put the food in, so they left it in the hot pot. The cat suggested they let the pot cool down so that they will not burn themselves and eat later to their satisfaction.

They left the pot inside the room. The cat said he would go and hunt some birds, but the mouse said she would go to sleep in the house while waiting for the cat to come back. The cat went hunting and the mouse went to sleep, but the smell of the Dzankple kept tickling her nose.

Less than five minutes had passed since the cat left when the mouse could not resist the smell of the Dzankple and decided to taste a bit of the delicious food. The mouse went to the pot and tasted the Dzankple. It was so good that she ate some more, and soon

enough nothing was left. She even reached the bottom of the pot and licked it as well. But accidentally while trying to get out of the pot her legs pulled the edge of the pot and it turned over and trapped the mouse inside it. The mouse was very frightened and didn't know what to do. In her distress she started to sing the following song:

“kplo, kplo, kplo ga tsom kplo,
Alee ma wo
Dzankple zea ga tsom kplo,
Alee ma wo.”

When the cat finished hunting he came back home and called the mouse: “Mouse, mouse, where are you?” The mouse froze and kept quiet. The cat looked all over for the mouse but couldn't find her. He decided to go and look for the Dzankple pot. To his astonishment he saw that the pot was upside down. He cried: “Oh! Who did that to our special dinner?” He tried to pick up the pot but as soon as he did so, the mouse ran from underneath the pot and the cat started chasing her calling: “Catch her! Catch her for me!” The mouse who was faster than the cat scattered into a hole and the cat didn't catch her. But from that day the mouse lives in a hole and the cat tries to catch the mouse.

Song 9

Ayelevino Song to go with the story 'Ayele and the Flowers'¹⁰

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 /side A, no.9

Clap

A-ye le-vi-no ku lo Mi-do ba-ba n' Aye-le-vi. Yee, yee, Mi-do ba-ba n'A-

- ye - le - vi, A - ye - le - no ku lo Mi-do ba - ba n'A - ye - le, A - ye - le, A -

- ye - le Mi - do ba - ba, n'A - ye - le. Yee, yee, Mi - do ba - ba n'A - ye - le - vi.

¹⁰ The story 'Ayele and the Flowers' together with one version of the song were presented by Susan Kennedy at the National Conference of the American Orff Schulwerk Association in Philadelphia, on November 1994. Kennedy referred to the book *Tale Songs from Africa*, as her source for both the song and the story.

Ayelevinq

AYELEVINQ KU LO ah-ye-le-vi-nau koo-loh	Little Ayele
MIDO BABA N'AYELEVI mi-do bah-bah nah-ye-le-vi	Ayele lost her mother
YEE, YEE, yeh, yeh,	Oh, Oh,
MIDO BABA N'AYELEVI mi-do bah-bah nah-ye-le-vi	Ayele lost her mother
AYELENQ KU LO ah-ye-le-nau koo-lo	Little Ayele
MIDO BABA N'AYELE mi-do bah-bah nah-ye-leh	Ayele lost her mother
AYELE, AYELE ah-ye-leh, ah-ye-leh	Ayele, Ayele
MIDO BABA N'AYELE mi-do bah-bah nah-ye-leh	Ayele lost her mother
YEE, YEE, yeh, yeh,	Oh, oh
MIDO BABA N'AYELVI mi-do bah-bah nah-ye-le-vi	Ayele lost her mother

Translation: Little Ayele lost her mother / I feel sorry for little Ayele / Oh, oh / feel sorry for Ayele / Ayele, Ayele / Little Ayele lost her mother / Oh, oh / I feel sorry for Ayele.

Notes on the song: The version transcribed here is different than the one found in the book *Tale Songs from Africa*. The melody is not as symmetrical as in the book and there are more words to the song. Mr. Tekpah, from the village of Kopeyia, did not know

the story about ‘Ayele and the flowers’. He explained that presently, since children are sent to school to learn and get educated, the elders are less involved in educating the children. This results in a gradual fading of the storytelling tradition and with the loss of many wonderful stories that were passed on orally in the past. While the stories are forgotten, the songs are still sung by the children and therefore kept as part of the culture. The story is brought here as part of the song.

The story: (As presented by Susan Kennedy) The mischievous little Ayele lived in a small village in Ghana. Together with her friends she decided to slip away from the compound to pick flowers and catch flying insects on the top of the nearby hill. However they did not ask their mothers’ permission, for fear that they would be detained. Picking flowers and catching butterflies, the children lost track of the time and when they realized that the sun was sinking, they could not find their way back. At first they began to cry, but changed their crying to singing in the hopes that someone would hear and rescue them:

“Ayelevino ku lo mido baba n’Ayelevi

Yee, yee mido baba n’Ayelevi

Ayelevino ku lo mido baba n’Ayele

Ayele, Ayele mido baba n’Ayele

Yee, yee mido baba n’Ayelevi”

In the meantime, the children’s’ mothers set out looking for them with heavy hearts. One mother heard a faint, faraway song, and as they walked toward it, it became louder and louder, until they found the lost children. The mothers were breathless, worried

and angry, but when they saw their children with drooping shoulders and sad faces they could not think of scolding them. They embraced each other and together they walked back to the village where everyone joined in a celebration.

CHAPTER 6

Drumming and Dancing

The norm of African music is the full ensemble of the dance: all other forms of music are secondary...it is essential to have the full ensemble. This consists of the instruments of the orchestra, the hand-clapping, the song and the dance.¹

The following chapter deals with the drumming and dance music of the Ewe people of Kopeyia village, Volta Region, Ghana, as performed by children. It discusses the ensemble's structure, its instruments, their role and their playing technique. It includes detailed transcriptions of two dance drumming pieces that can be performed by children as well as adults.

The drum ensemble consists of membraphones and idiophones. Alfred and Kobla Ladzekpo divide the idiophones into three groups: bells, rattles and clappers. The membraphones, or drums, are usually barrel like, made out of wooden strips bound together with metal hoops, reflecting the geographical environment of the land. Some villages use carved drums from solid trees but this is not very common since it is no longer easy to find suitable wood.²

There are different kinds of instruments within each category, a variety of rattles, bells and drums in use. Each piece of music uses a distinctive combination of these

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¹ A. M. Jones, *Studies in African Music*, vol.1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 51.

² Alfred Kwashie and Kobla Ladzekpo, "Anlo Ewe Music in Anyako, Volta Region, Ghana" *Music of Many Cultures*, Ed. Elizabeth May (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 229.

instruments. This chapter describes only the instruments used in the transcribed pieces *Tokoe* and *Gahu*, which employ the drums - *kagan*, *kidi*, *sogo*, *boba* and *atsimeyu*, the *gankogui* bell and the gourd rattle - *axatse*.

Figure 6.1

The Drum Ensemble

The *gankogui* is an iron double bell; one short open chamber with a higher pitch and one long open chamber with a lower pitch. The two bells are welded together at the top to form a narrow handle. *Gankogui* can vary in their size and pitch. The interval between the two bells can also vary. The *gankogui* are traditionally made by a blacksmith who will custom craft them according to their purpose (the dance they will be played with, the song leader, and so on).³

The *gankogui* is the time-keeper for the whole ensemble. It usually plays a steady and continuous ostinato throughout the whole dance, creating the rhythmic framework of

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³ Jones, 52.

a piece. Abraham Adzenyah uses the term “conductor” to describe the function of the gankogui, since it keeps the whole orchestra in time. In the learning process it is essential to internalize the gankogui bell timeline.

The axatse rattle accompanies the bell and usually plays a rhythmic pattern that reinforces the bell pattern. The axatse is a hollowed gourd (calabash) covered with a net woven with bamboo, wooden, shell or glass beads. The sound is produced by the movement of the beads against the gourd while it is struck against the player’s body. The axatse is played by striking downward on the leg, creating a muffled lower sound, or upwards against the opposite palm or hand, creating a crisp and higher sound. Both the axatse and the gankogui have a distinctive tone quality that allows them to be heard when the whole ensemble is playing.

The drums can be divided into two main categories according to their function: lead drum and support drums. Generally speaking the kagan, kidi and sogo are used as support drums. The lead drum is either the atsimeyu or the boba. In *Tokoe* the atsimeyu is used as lead drum, and in *Gahu* it is traditionally the boba, but some villages or dance clubs use the atsimeyu.

Kagan is a single headed, open-ended slender drum with a high pitch. It is played with a flat rim shot technique using two long and thin sticks flat across the drumhead. The basic kagan pattern is a repeating series of paired “off beat” bounce strokes. The function of kagan is somewhat between a time keeping instrument and being a support drum. David Locke includes the kagan both with the “time” instruments that “articulate

and embellish the key musical phrase which ‘sculpts’ time into a distinct ‘shape’” and with the other response instruments (kidi and sogo) that together “create a three way musical conversation.”⁴

The kidi is a medium sized drum, as tall as the kagan but wider, and closed at the bottom with a small sound hole on its side. The kidi has a medium pitch and is played with two wooden sticks, producing open and mute tones at the center of the drum head. Open tones are produced by using a bounce stroke, and mute tones by pressing the stick with a slight pressure against the drumhead on stroke contact.

The sogo is also single-headed, closed at the bottom with a side sound hole, and has the lowest pitch of the support drums. It is about 2 - 3 feet tall, wider than the *atsimeyu*, and can be played by either using open hand and one stick or, with two sticks like the kidi. Both kidi and sogo interact with the lead drum through dialogues and call and response. In some pieces (see episode 3 of *Gahu*), the sogo functions as the lead drum.

The names of the drums in the ensemble are onomatopoeic, derived from their sound and pitch. Each drum has its own pitch range and its own sound quality. It is the pitch and timbre of the different individual drumbeats that form the musical pattern of each drum and of the ensemble as a whole.

Usually the larger the drum the lower its pitch, and within the ensembles the drums follow a hierarchical order from low to high pitch. The two largest drums are the

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⁴ David Locke, *Drum Gahu*, (Crown Point, IL: White Cliffs Media Company, 1987), 11.

lead drums: *atsimeyu* and the *boba*, which lead the ensemble, “setting the tempo, improvising on traditional phrases and providing choreographic signals.”⁵

The *atsimeyu*, is a tall (about 4 - 6 feet) and narrow drum, open in the bottom. It usually leans against a special stand called *wudetsi* when played. As the tallest drum in the ensemble its pitch range is the widest, from low *ga* to high *to* strokes. The *boba* is built like a big oil barrel, and is open at the bottom. It is the largest and lowest drum in the ensemble. Like the *atsimeyu* it leans against a stand when played. The playing technique on the lead drums varies and includes hand, stick and combination strokes.

In learning the different strokes the Ewe people use mnemonics that describe both the playing technique and the tonal level of each stroke. The following is a list of the different strokes used on the lead drum:

Lead drum strokes from low to high pitch:

GA - Bounce with full hand in the center of the head, producing a deep bass.

DE - Bounce with stick in the center of the head, using the strong hand.

GE - Bounce with weak hand, at the edge of the head closer to the rim (see *Tokoe*)
or, bounce with stick, using weak hand, in the center (see *Gahu*)

GI - Mute with fingers, using weak hand, at the edge of the head close to the rim,
producing a sharp clap-like sound.

KPA - Bounce or press stick stroke on the shell - the drum side - using strong hand.

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⁵ *Ibid.*

Combination strokes:

VLO or GRE - Bounce flam or two fast notes, alternating two sticks or weak hand and stick, in the center of the head.

TO - Weak-hand presses the drumhead, while strong-hand plays 'DE', creating a high pitched stopped sound.

DZA - A combination stroke of 'GA' and 'KPA'.

DZI - A combination stroke of 'GI' and 'KPA'.

Locke speaks of the function of the master drum.

The lead drummer's responsibility extends beyond his role as instrumentalist: he must control the dramatic effect of the entire performance. He needs to know when to intensify the music, how to keep the dancers 'in the mood' but not exhausted, and how to involve the audience in the event.⁶

Along the same lines, A. M. Jones says that the master-drummer not only combines in himself the complete orchestra but also is capable of playing variations that are spontaneous creations within the framework of the piece.⁷

The second part of this chapter consists of transcriptions of two dance drumming pieces: Tokoe and Gahu. Each piece includes a background information, the support drum rhythms and those of the time-keeping instruments followed by the lead drum parts with the bell timeline. This last part includes, when applicable, the responses of the support drums to calls of the lead drum. Dance movements are described for each section

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⁶ Ibid., 69.

⁷ Jones, 9-15.

of the dance. Since songs are an integral part of this music, they are also included when possible.

Western notation is used in this thesis as an aid in understanding the dynamic of an oral music tradition by non practicing individuals removed in time and space from the cultural context. Although it cannot capture the rhythmic and tonal subtleties of an oral process, it can serve as an educational tool, a guideline for the general reader. The time cycle of the bell for each piece is reduced to a western four-four meter, with the main beats corresponding to dancers' foot movements as quarter note values and the underlying subdivision of each beat into smaller pulses at the sixteenth note level.

The supporting drum and bell sounds are keyed as high or low (**H, L**), and mute or open (**M, O**), while the rattle strokes are marked as hand or leg (**H, L**). Lead drums (atsimeyu and boba) are capable of a wider range of tones, ranging from low *ga* to high *to* (with the highest sound a stick stroke on the shell as *kpa*), all of which are indicated on the spaces of the clef score for each piece. Measures are numbered successively, with numbers following a decimal point indicating beat number. Measure 5.3 would indicate measure 5, beat 3.

Traditionally, the pieces have no set order or choreography. For that reason and for learning purposes the music is presented here first in small segments, according to the changes in the dance movement and the drum rhythms, and according to their function. Each segment is marked with an upper case letter indicating its function as follows:

B - Basic dance movement and drumming pattern.

P - Preparation or 'get ready to change movement'.

I - Intensification in drum rhythm and in dance movement.

T - Turn and transitional movement.

C - Closure segment indicating the end of an episode or intensification.

E - Dance and drum episode, usually marked with a number to indicate a specific episode (E1, E2 and so on).

F - Free movement which can occur between episodes.

CODA - Ending of the full piece.

The two drumming and dance pieces, Tokoe and Gahu, share most of these functions. They both include basic pattern (**B**), some different episodes (**E**), a preparation (**P**) and a closure (**C**) segment. Gahu includes two kind of intense (**I**) segments, while Tokoe includes a turn (**T**) that, when following an episode, functions like the intense segment in Gahu. The free (**F**) segment appears only in Gahu. The use of these letters to mark the different segments appears also above the staff in boxes.

Rests in parentheses, in conjunction with symbolic arrows and letter boxes above the staff, indicate the completion or beginning of a separate dance or drum pattern that is not shown for purposes of analytical clarity. In most cases each separate segment or pattern has its own notation and functional description. However, in some cases, two or more segments are shown together. This happens especially in Tokoe, where each episode (**E**) has its own unique preparation (**P**), and the closure segment (**C**) is short and can be thought as part of the turn (**T**). Since the focus of this work is to make the music accessible rather than unnecessarily fragmented, it was important to keep these segments

together in order to retain the flow of the music and make it easier to perceive and learn it.

At the end of each piece all the segments are joined in their actual connected sequence into a performance score. This full score is one possible choreographed presentation of the dance, as taught to me by my teachers in Kopeyia: Godwin Agbeli, Emmanuel Agbeli and Agbeko Sodzedo.

Tokoe

Tokoe is historically a puberty dance music of the Ga-Adangme people of southern coastal Ghana. Master drummer C.K. Ladzekpo says that among the Ga-Adangme people girls who are about to go through their rite of passage into young womanhood perform this dance and only those who are virgins can dance it. The dance is performed when the girls are separating from their parents. Master drummer Abraham Adzenyah describes the girls as dressed in red, their skin covered with a special colored fragrance, special beads and ornaments decorating their waist and other parts of the body.

The Ewe people borrowed this music and use it as recreational music. Often young children dance and drum this music. According to C.K. Ladzekpo the drumming and dance movements I have learned during my stay in Kopeyia are a modified and simplified version of the original music of the Ga-Adangme. This allows children in the United States to learn these rhythms, to experience and taste the complexity and beauty of the multipart drum orchestra texture. In order to give as full a picture as possible of the

music, the traditional parts of the support drums, as master drummer C.K. Ladzekpo teaches them, are included.

The lead drum in Tokoe is the atsimeyu and it is used mainly to call the dancers to change one movement episode to another. The support drums are kagan, kidi, and sogo, which play the same basic patterns for virtually the whole piece. As in any other piece the gankogui and the axatse create the rhythmic framework for the drummers and the dancers. Both the bell and the rattle are the timekeepers for the whole ensemble.

The basic support ensemble (**B**), in the Kopeyia village version of Tokoe, is given below. It includes the gankogui, axatse, kagan, kidi and sogo. The ensemble plays these patterns throughout the dance, with the exception of one kidi response to the lead drum. It is important to note that the Tokoe bell ensemble rhythms can also be heard as starting from notated beat three in the following transcriptions. We have chosen this perspective to 'begin' with the first foot movement of the basic pattern rather than the third.

B

Repeat ad lib.

Gankogui H L

Axatse H L

Kagan

Kidi M O

Sogo RH Stick LH Hand

pa pa - ti pa pa - ti pa pa - ti pa pa - ti

R L R R L R L R R L

L L R L L R

The following example transcribes the basic pattern (B) of the time-keeping instruments and support drums in an additive form. This demonstrates the smaller unit of each part, regardless of meter and bar lines, to show the relationship between the different parts. I believe that this way of thinking of rhythm is closer to the way African people think of it.

Gankogui

Axarse H L

Kagan

Kidi M O

Sogo O B
RH Stick
LH Hand

*The kidi and the sogo parts continue.

According to C. K. Ladzekpo, the above patterns of *Tokoe* are a simplified version of the original rhythms as played by the Ga-Adangme people. These patterns are presented in the next example. Notice especially the difference in the sogo and the kidi part. The sogo is playing a more complicated and challenging pattern that requires an advanced technique while the kidi part is being simplified since the sogo fills in the space with many rapid sixteenth notes.

Gankogui H L

Kidi M O

Sogo 2 Sticks M O

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

While the support drums play the above rhythms the *atsimeyu*, the lead drum for Tokoe plays the following basic pattern. It is one of many possible variants played successively by the *atsimeyu*.

Gankogui

Atsimeyu

ga gi de gi de gi kpa kpa ga gi de gi de gi de de ga gi de gi

Repeat ad lib.

The dancers get their cues from the *atsimeyu* and react to its calls. Anytime the lead drum plays the above basic drumming pattern (B), the following basic dance movement is performed. The upper body is turned to the left, the hands are clenched in fists with thumbs up in front of the chest. On beats 1, 2 & 3 the dancers step three times with their left foot and on beat 4 hop on the right foot while turning to the right. The hands accompany the left footstep by moving the thumbs together upward three times, (on beats 1, 2, & 3). The shoulder and torso join the hands in an *Agbadza*-like movement.

This full movement of the feet, hands and shoulders then repeats to the right (right footstep, and upper body turned to the right). The dancers are travelling forward in one line with this movement, alternating to the right and to the left.

The following notation includes the gankogui and the lead drum parts for both. the preparation (P1) to the first episode and the episode itself (E1). The preparation (P1) is brought in measures 1-2 followed by the first episode (E1) in measures 3-7.

The musical notation is presented in three systems, each with a Gankogui part (top staff) and an Atsimevu part (bottom staff). The Gankogui part is in 4/4 time, and the Atsimevu part is in 2/4 time.

System 1: The Gankogui part starts with a double bar line, followed by a measure with a box labeled 'B' and an arrow pointing to a box labeled 'P1'. The Atsimevu part has a double bar line, followed by a measure with a box labeled 'P1'. The lyrics for the first system are: de de de de de de de de ga dege de to dza kpa kpa. There are 'x' marks under the first four 'de' notes in the Atsimevu part.

System 2: The Gankogui part has a double bar line, followed by a measure with a box labeled 'E1'. The Atsimevu part has a double bar line, followed by a measure with a box labeled 'E1'. The lyrics for the second system are: kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa ga de ge de to dza dza dza dza dza dza dza dza ga. There are 'x' marks under the first four 'kpa' notes in the Atsimevu part.

System 3: The Gankogui part has a double bar line, followed by a measure with a box labeled 'T'. The Atsimevu part has a double bar line, followed by a measure with a box labeled 'T'. The lyrics for the third system are: de ge de to dza kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa ga de ge de to dza. There are 'x' marks under the first four 'kpa' notes in the Atsimevu part.

Structural markers include 'Repeat ad lib.' above the Gankogui part in the first system, and '1-3' and '4.' above the Gankogui part in the third system.

P1. the preparation, starts immediately after the basic and is followed by the first episode (E1). During the preparation (m. 1-2), the dancers travel forward in and separate into two lines, women to the right and men to the left. They do the Agbadza/Ewe torso movement while traveling forward. Their foot movement is expressed in quarter notes: the right foot steps on the beat and the left foot steps on the second eighth note of each beat. The drum call *ga de ge de to* (measures 2.4 - 3.2) cues the dancers to get ready to perform the first episode.

For the episode the dancers change to a stationary movement with hands down at the sides. The shoulders are rotated backwards carrying the Agbadza movement to chest, torso and lower body. This shoulder rotation continues all through the first episode. The episode (measures 2.4 – 9.3) contains four sections, with a sequence of movements. The drum call *ga de ge de to* is used as a signal to the dancers to get ready to move to the next movement in the sequence, while the following *dza* is when the new movement starts or is added to the previous one:

In the first section (m. 4.4 – 8), upon the first *dza* (m. 5.3), the dancers first raise the right arm straightforward with a fist while the shoulders rotation movement continues. A series of *dza* sounds reinforcing the bell timeline culminate in a restatement of the *ga de ge de to, dza* motive (m. 6.4 - 7.3) whereupon the right fist is drawn back to the chest.

In the second section the dancers repeat the arm movement from the first section (first out and back to the body) with the left arm.

During the third section (third repeat of m. 5-8), upon the *dza* sound (m.5.3) the dancers turn 45° inward. The men face the women, and squat down gradually, bending the upper

torso to the right and left. in quarter note rhythmic movements. (two fists on the chest. right knee up and left knee squat but without touching the ground). Everyone then gets up on the lead drum's *dza*. facing forward (m. 7.3).

In the fourth section the dancers get down as previously, this time turning 45° outward, away from the opposite line (starting on m. 5.3). Here too, on the *dza* sound (m. 9.3) signal a quick rise, facing forward after completion of the squatting.

The second episode (**E2**) with its preparation (**P2**) can be used through the dance or as an ending. The rhythmic pattern of the preparation (**P2**) is used also as part of the third and last episode (**E3**), though in **E3** the dance movement is different. Measures 1.2 – 2.2 include the preparation (**P2**) and the second episode (**E2**) starts on measure 2.3.

The image displays two musical staves, Gankogui (top) and Atsimevu (bottom), with rhythmic notation and lyrics. The first staff is labeled with 'B' and 'P2' above it, indicating the beginning and preparation of the second episode. The second staff is labeled with 'E2' above it, indicating the second episode. The lyrics for the first staff are 'ge de ge de ge de ge de dza dza dza ga'. The second staff is labeled with 'Repeat ad lib.' above it, indicating a repeat section. The lyrics for the second staff are 'de ge de to dza dza dza'. The third staff is labeled with 'T' above it, indicating the final section.

The preparation **P2**, is a signal to the dancers to get ready for the second episode. The episode itself can be divided into two parts or segments. The first includes a series of

three *dza* sounds (m. 2.3 - 3.3 repeating in m. 4.3 - 5.3). The second is a very short call (*ga de ge de to*) that starts with a pick up to measure 4 and ends on m. 4.2. These two parts of the episode (**E2**) repeat as many times as the master drummer wishes. On the first part of **E2** (m. 2.3 - 3.3 and 4.3 - 5.3) the dancers turn either to the left or right and go down. The left knee is bent and the right knee squats but does not touch the ground. On the *dza* the dancers tap the right hand on left (palms up) three times, in a motion that mean, "I beg you". The first time the dancers get down they turn to their left, toward the inside of the circle, the next time they turn right toward the outside, and so on.

The second part of **E2** (m. 3.4 - 4.2) is used to make the turn from the left to the right and right to left. The dancers rise and turn toward the opposite direction while waving their right hands high as if saying 'hello'; as they turn they get ready to go down again. A bodily bounce in the squat position occurs with each *dza* sound.

Episode three and its preparation are transcribed in the following section. The preparation (**P3**) is in measures 1.2 - 3.1 followed by the third episode **E3**. This episode also has two parts to it. The first is the drum call *ge de ge de ge de ge de* in measures 3.2 - 4.2, repeating in measures 5.2 - 6.2 and 7.2 - 8.2. The second section (m. 4.3 - 5.1 or 6.3 - 7.1 and 8.3) includes a series of three *dza*.

Gankogui

Arsimévu

de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge

de de ge de ge de ge de de ge de dza dza

dza ge de ge de ge de ge de dza dza

dza ge de ge de ge de ge de dza

The preparation (P3) allows the dancers to change their formation. The dancers change it by using a running step. The right foot steps on beats 1 and 3 of each measure and the left steps on beats 2 and 4. The right arm joins the right foot and makes a big

circle backwards (clockwise). The right hand should be up high at 12 o'clock when the right foot lands. The left hand is held, palm against the body over the heart.

In first section of **E3** the dancers do 4 running steps in place, on the beat, and then jump on both feet (beat 2 of the even measures). The running starts with the right foot and goes as follows: right, left, right, left, jump. This part repeats 5 times, with each set of 4 running steps is used to change the direction the dancers are facing by progressing in a clockwise circle in 45° increments: front, right, back, left, and front again.

The movement in the second section of **E3** starts with bent knees, hands on knees and torso curled (like a cat). On the beat, or on *Dza*, dancers drop their back and let it straighten three times. Since this movement follows the running steps of the first section the movement is in the four different directions (facing the audience, to the right, the back, the left and the front again).

A turn (**T**) and a closure segment (**C**) follows each of the episodes (**E1**, **E2** and **E3**). This transitional part (m. 1.3 – 4.3) and the closure segment (m. 4.3 – 6.2) are always played together. They allow the ensemble (drummers and dancers) to return from any of the episodes to the basic pattern. This is also the only time that the *kidi* interacts with the lead drum, and leaves its basic pattern. The *kidi* part creates an intensification of the drumming and the dance.

Gankogui
 Atsinneyu
 Kidi

P₁ / P₂ / P₃ ← T
 to de ga dege de to dza dzi dza dzi
 R L R L R L R L...

Repeat ad lib.
 C
 dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi ge de ga

B
 de ge de ge de vlo kpa kpa de de
 B

In the turn (T) section the dancers are turning counterclockwise in place. The closure section (C) happens after the dancers have completed one full circle, comprising a circular turn of the palms inside-out from the body, ending with palms up and out from the body, as if presenting something (m.5.1 - 5.3) together with a small hop (m. 5.3). This is followed by a return to the basic movement.

There are different movement styles to the transitional section (T) of the dance. The kindergarten children in Kopeyia do the turn using the basic Agbadza movement as in the preparation to the first episode (P1). Emanuel Agbeli demonstrated a more stylish way to do this movement. The torso is bent down, arms down to the right of the body with closed fists and the right fist is a lower than the left one. On the beat, the right arm pulls up while the left fist pulls down. Each fist returns to its original position (right down and left up) on the second eighth note of each quarter note main beat. While the right fist is pulled up, the left hip is pushed out and as the weight is shifted to left foot, the right foot moves forward. It is as if the right arm is pulling the right leg with it so that it can make a small step forward. While the left fist is up the right hip is out, and the right foot rests on the floor. Throughout this whole movement the left foot is stationary and rotates by sliding on the ground, while the right foot facilitates the turn by taking small steps in a counterclockwise direction. The dancers complete one full turn.

The closure part starts with the lead drum's call *ge de ga* (m. 4.3-4.4) signaling to the dancers to get ready for the closing movement as they complete the circle. The dancers end with a turning out of the palms (m. 5.1 - 5.3) as described above, with the hands making a circle with open palms, out from the body.

The ending (**coda**) is usually played after the dancers have left the performing area. This segment signals the drummers to end the music together and does not include a dance movement. It is important to note that the same coda can be used both for Tokoe and Gahu, as shown later in this chapter.

The following transcription is a possible choreography of *Tokoe* as taught to me by Emmanuel Agbeli from the village of Kopeyia. As mentioned before this is only one of many possible choreographies for this dance and different groups or dance club will have different versions. Before presenting the full music, it is necessary to discuss the formation of the dance.

The dancers get on stage with the basic movement (**B**) in a single line, women leading and followed by all the men. They come in from stage right, creating a circle, then forming a straight line facing the audience.

Figure 6.2

Tokoe - First Formation

At **P1**, the preparation for episode 1 (**E1**), the first woman and the first man lead the dancers into two lines from up-stage to down-stage, creating two parallel lines. The following episode 1, turn and closure (**E1**, **T** and **C**) are performed in this formation.

Figure 6.3

Tokoe – Second Formation

At the return of the basic pattern (**B**), the dancers merge into a single line. The women travel forward and to the left, feeding into the men's line and creating an alternating sequence of woman, man, woman, man, and so on. The first woman leads the group into a circle formation. Once in a circle, the dancers perform preparation 2, episode 2, the turn, closure and the basic pattern (**P2**, **E2**, **T**, **C** and **B**). Episode 2 (**E2**), is performed first towards the inside of the circle, then to the outside.

Figure 6.4

Tokoe – Third Formation

Upon the lead drum change to preparation 3 (P3), the women's leader leads the dancers in a faster running style in the circle, eventually moving into two lines facing the audience, as for P1, then splitting into two lines from up-stage to down-stage as for episode 1 (E1). The women's leader leads women into a single line on stage right while men's leader brings the men into a line on stage left. In this formation the dancers perform the last episode, turn and closure (E3, T and C).

Figure 6.5

Tokoe - Forth Formation

After the turn and closure the dancers change their formation in the same way as after the first episode, E1. The women's leader leads the whole group into a single line while the women travel forward and to the left, merging with the men's line and creating a mixed line of woman, man, woman, man. The women's leader leads everybody into a circle formation and then breaks the circle into a line leaving the performance area. As the dancers exit, the lead drummer can repeat episode 2, turn and closure (E2, T and C), between returns to the basic movement until the last dancer disappears.

Video tape no.1 / piece no.1

B Repeat ad lib.

Gankogui

Atsiméyè

ga gi de gi de gi kpa kpa ga gi de gi de gi de de ga gi de gi

P1 Repeat ad lib. **E1**

de de de de de de de de gu de ge de to dza kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa ga

1-3

de ge de to dza dza dza dza dza dza dza ga de ge de to dza kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa ga

T Repeat ad lib.

de ge de to dza to de ga de ge de to dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi

Gankogui

Atsimenyu

C

B

dza dzi dza dzi ge de ga de ge de ge de vlo kpa kpa de de Ga gi de gi

Repeat ad lib.

P₂

de gi kpa kpa ga gi de gi de gi de de ga gi de gi ge de ge de ge

E₂

de ge de dza dza dza Ga de ge de to dza

T

Repeat ad lib.

dza dza to de ga de ge de to dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi

C

B

de dzi dza dzi ge de ga de ge de ge de vlo kpa kpa de de ga gi de gi

Repeat ad lib. P₁

Gankogui

Atsiinevu

de gi kpa kpa ga gi de gi de gi de de ga gi de gi de de ge de de ge de de ge

E₃

de de ge de de ged de ge de de ge de de ge de ge de ge de ge de dza dza

Repeat three times

ge de ge de ge de ge de dza dza dza ge de ge de ge

T Repeat ad lib.

de ge de dza to de ga de ge de to dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi

C B

dza dzi dza dzi ge de ga de ge de ge de vlo kpa kpa de de ga gi de gi

Repeat ad lib. $\S$ P₂

Gankogui

Atsimeyu

de gi kpa kpa ga gi de gi de gi de de ga gi de gi ge de ge de ge

E₂ T

de ge de dza dza dza ga de ge de to dza dza dza to de ga

Repeat ad lib.

C

de ge de to dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi dza dzi ge de ga

B

de ge de ge de vio kpa kpa de de ga gi de gi de gi kpa kpa ga gi de gi

Repeat ad lib. Coda

de gi de de ga gi de gi ga to ge de dza

Da $\S$ α $\oplus$ et poi Coda

Gahu

Gahu is a recreational dance music that is performed at social occasions. This music drama originated among the Yoruba speaking people of Benin and Nigeria. David Locke describes Gahu as a

satirical commentary on modernization in Africa. Performers poked fun at the pompous manners of Africans who had been to Europe or who turned their back on African tradition and affected European ways.¹

He also offers two different explanations for the word Gahu. The first is that of Kobla Ladzekpo, who translates Gahu as 'airplane', while the second is that of Gideon Alorwoyie, who translates it as 'money dance.'² No matter which translation we choose, Gahu is a dance music looking at a changing society and modernization with critical eyes.

The Gahu repertoire includes drumming, dancing and singing as well as a visual display of costumes. The following section includes a transcription of the drum music, a description of the dance movements, a fully choreographed version of the dance and transcriptions of some Gahu songs, primarily based on the version performed in Kopeyia village.

As in other pieces in this work, I encountered different playing styles and instrumentation. In Kopeyia, the Gahu lead drum is boba, but, other villages use either boba or atsimeyu. The transcriptions here are notated as taught in Kopeyia - on the boba.

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¹ Locke, 5.

² Ibid.

Small differences in the supporting drum parts and the use of different calls or episodes are common practice among the Ewe. In different villages one can hear slightly different styles of Gahu, but the broad features that distinguish a particular music are kept. In most cases, however, the bell pattern is kept the same since this is the basic time frame of a piece.

The traditional bell pattern for Gahu spans four beats. In Kopeyia, a two-beat bell cycle is normally used. There is no explanation for this fact, although C.K. Ladzekpo says that the original Gahu bell, with its four-beat cycle is a distinctive one and is played specifically and only with Gahu dance music. Since the texture of basic dance movement, the supporting drum ensemble and most calls and responses with the lead drum all relate to a four-beat time span, the two-beat cycle (which corresponds to the first half of the four beat rhythm) is heard as a four-beat timeline on its repetition. In other words, two shorter two-beat bell patterns can be heard as a four-beat cycle. The longer bell timeline is also found in most written sources, and is used by different master drummers that are well known authorities on this tradition.³ Given this background, and since the two-beat bell cycle is used only in Kopeyia, the following transcriptions present the two beat cycle only at the beginning, followed by the original four-beat bell cycle. All the episodes, support parts and calls are notated with the longer bell timeline.

Both C. K. Ladzekpo and Abraham Adzenyah use the four-beat bell pattern with Gahu. David Locke in his book and royal hartigan in his dissertation and book also use the four beat pattern.

The other instruments playing in Gahu are the axatse, kagan, kidi and sogo. Unlike Tokoe, Gahu contains calls to both dancers and drummers. Most of the episodes address both the kidi and sogo players and the dancers. The kidi and sogo interact with the lead drum, playing responses to almost all its calls. At one point the sogo takes the lead and calls the dancers and the drummers.

The basic support drums, bell and rattle patterns (**B**) are transcribed as played in Kopeyia. It is first presented in regular western notation, followed by an additive version, which emphasizes the relationships among the parts.

B

Gankogui

Axatse
H
L
pa pa ti pa pa pa ti pa

Kagan

Kidi
M
O
R L R L R R L R L R

Sogo
M
O
L R L L R L

Gankogui H L

Axatse H L

Kagan

Kidi M O

Sogo M O

The traditional version played by C.K. Ladzekpo uses the longer bell pattern and has a different kidi part. The rhythms are presented both in a regular and additive format.

Gankogui H L

Axatse H L

Kidi M O

pa pa ti pa ti pa ti pa

R (L) R R L R (L) R R L

Gankogui H
L

Axarse H
L

Kagan

Kidi M
O

Sogo M
O

The basic lead drum rhythm (B) has many forms and three common ones are given here (a, b and c). Each one of these patterns is one bell cycle in length. It is the lead drummer's choice to organize these segments in whatever order she chooses and to repeat each one as many times as desired.

Gankogui H
L

Boba 2 sticks

a. Repeat ad lib. b. Repeat ad lib. c. Repeat ad lib.

to to de ge de ge to to to de ge to de ge de ge de de ge

Gahu is performed in a circle of alternating female and male dancers, whose basic movement is counterclockwise. They step on the main beats, two steps with the right foot (on beats 1 and 2) and two steps with the left foot (on quarter note beats 3 and 4). The steps are small and are almost a slide with a flat foot close to the ground. David Locke describes this movement and its quality in detail.

Emphasis is on the hip and shoulder movements: on counts one and two the left hip shifts toward the diagonal left rear direction, the shoulders twist to the left, the left elbow pulls to the rear (with the hip), the right hand pushes forward (with the right shoulder, knee and foot); on the "and" of count two, the body returns to a neutral central position in readiness for a repeat of the first count's "look" on count two. Feet slide flat-footed along the ground; arms are bent at the elbow and swing freely from the shoulder; the torso is bent-forward slightly and a body wave ripples from feet to head on each step. The entire configuration is reversed over counts three and four, creating a repeating dance rhythm...⁴

The preparation bellow (**P1**) is a 'get ready' call to the drummers and dancers. It is followed by either an intensification section or one of the dance episodes. The dancers keep the basic movement, but on the first beat of measure 4 they raise their hands up while shouting "Yohhhh".

---

⁴ Locke, 8.

Gankogui H
L

Boba 2 sticks

de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge

Repeat ad lib.

B ← Pi

H
L

Kpa

de ge de ge de to to de to de ge de ge kpa

I

The Gahu dance features movements of intensification, which can be accompanied by more than one drumming pattern. Two are given here (I1 and I2). Intensification comes before any of the episodes and it is the lead drummer's choice as to which style to use. However, an intense section can be played after some of the episodes in which case (I1) is played.

According to Locke, this intense section, together with the basic, construct the original and traditional 'village' dance.⁵ In the first style of the intense section (I1), the lead drum plays the beat using the *Ga* or *Dza* sound. In Kopeyia it is played as a call to the sogo who responds with a fast sixteenth note that reinforces the intensity of the music and dance.

⁵ Ibid.

B/E ← I:
→ C

a. Repeat ad lib. b. Repeat ad lib.

Gankogui H

L

Boba 2 sticks

Sogo M

O

Basic R L R L R L L R L R L R L L

The intensification is characterized by a "get down" dance movement, with dancers keeping the basic movement in one place. The torso is bent lower than it was in the basic movement and movements are a little quicker and more intense.

When II (the first intense style) comes after an episode, the dancers keep the episode's dance movement stationary (without travelling), get lower and do the movement with a strong attitude.

The second style of the intense rhythms (I2) is a variation on the first (I1). The main beats are emphasized in sixteenth note couplets as kidi and sogo respond to the lead drum.

Gankogui H
L

Boba 2 sticks
Kpa
2
O
C
F
a
T
e

Kidi & Sogo
M
O

Basic

ge kpa ge kpa ge dza dza ge kpa ge kpa

Repeat ad lib.

B ← I2

→ C

The only change from the movement of I1 is in a circular two-arms 'grinding motion' with closed fists, forward on the beat and back to the body on the second eighth note of each beat.

The closure section (C) is two bell cycles in length that tells the drummers to go back to the basic pattern or get ready for a call. When followed by one of the episodes it functions as a signal to the drummers to pay attention and respond to the coming call.

Gankogui H
L

Boba 2 sticks
de
de
de
de
de
de
ge
de
ge

I/E ← C

→ B/E/P2/F2

The pattern is also a signal to the dancers to end their present movement and get ready for what comes next. The dancers go back to the basic step on the first beat of measure 2. while raising their arms up and shouting out loud "Yohhhhh!"

The following transcription includes a preparation section (**P2**) followed by a free- style movement (**F1**). Since they are always joined in performance, they are presented together here. The combination of **P2** and **F1** can appear instead of the basic (**B**) at any point in the performance.

This second preparation (as with **P1**), functions as a signal to the drummers and dancers to get ready for a change of movement and rhythm. In the free-style movement (**F1**) both kidi and sogo respond to the lead drum creating a dynamic rhythm (m. 4).

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system is labeled **P2** (Preparation 2) and the second system is labeled **F1** (Free-style movement 1). Both systems include a **B/C** (Basic/Change) section and a **P2** section. The **P2** section is marked "Repeat ad lib." and the **F1** section is marked "Repeat ad lib.".

System 1 (P2):

- Gankogui:** H (High) and L (Low) staves. The H staff has a melody of eighth notes. The L staff has a melody of eighth notes. The section is marked "Repeat ad lib.".
- Boba (2 sticks):** H (High) and L (Low) staves. The H staff has a melody of eighth notes. The L staff has a melody of eighth notes. The section is marked "Repeat ad lib.".
- Kidi & Sogo:** M (Middle) and O (Low) staves. The M staff has a melody of eighth notes. The O staff has a melody of eighth notes. The section is marked "Repeat ad lib.".

System 2 (F1):

- Gankogui:** H (High) and L (Low) staves. The H staff has a melody of eighth notes. The L staff has a melody of eighth notes. The section is marked "Repeat ad lib.".
- Boba (2 sticks):** H (High) and L (Low) staves. The H staff has a melody of eighth notes. The L staff has a melody of eighth notes. The section is marked "Repeat ad lib.".
- Kidi & Sogo:** M (Middle) and O (Low) staves. The M staff has a melody of eighth notes. The O staff has a melody of eighth notes. The section is marked "Repeat ad lib.".

The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines. The lyrics "de ge de de de de de de de" are written below the Boba staff in the first system, and "dza kpa ge dza kpa ge ge" are written below the Boba staff in the second system. The Kidi & Sogo staff in the second system has the word "basic" written below it.

Since this is a musical substitute for the basic rhythm (B), the basic dance movement is kept with one slight change. The arms swing freely from one side of the body to the other instead of the bent elbows and pushing movement. When stepping on right foot the arms swing to the left and when stepping on left the arms swing to the right.

The same free-style movement is also kept in the following section (F2), where the boba and the support drums interact, creating another strong rhythm. This section can also act as a substitute for the basic rhythm (B). It starts immediately after the closure section (C) at the end of an episode (substituting for the basic) and is in turn followed by an intensification section leading to the next episode.

Gankogui H
L

Boba 2 sticks

Boba & Sogo M
O

de ge kpa ge kpa de ge de

kpa de ge de kpakpa de ge de

kpa de ge de kpa kpa

basic or any call

RL RL L RRL R L

R L R L L RRL L

Repeat ad lib.

C ← F2

→ I

The lead drum plays the first episode (E1) of the dance music with no response from the support drums. It can occur more than once in the full choreography and follows

one of the intense styles (I1 or I2). Either the closure segment (C) or the first intensification style (I1) resolve it.

Gankogui H
L

Boba
2 sticks

C ← E1

Repeat ad lib.

→ B/I

dza dza de ge de kpa kpa dza dza de ge de kpa kpa dza dza

In Kopeyia this episode has two possible dance movements: The first is based on the Agbadza torso movement with a side step. Here, the dancers make three side steps on the beat and rest on the following beat (m. 1.3 - 2.2 and 2.3 - 3.2). This step is done first to the right (feet: right, left, right, rest) and then to the left (left, right, left, rest), with the foot movements on beats three, four and one. Since it is done with the Agbadza torso movement, when moving to the right, on the last *de* (m. 3.1 and 4.1), the right arm is bent upwards to the right, and the dancer looks at his palm as if looking at a mirror. When traveling to the left the same is done with the left arm.

For the second possible dance movement, the dancers make the circle smaller. They keep the basic footsteps and put their left hand on the hip of the person in front of them. On the lead drum's call '*Dza dza*' (m. 1.3, 2.3 and 3.3) the right hand waves toward the outside of the circle, at the audience. On the lead drum's call '*De ge de*' (m. 1.4 - 2.1 and 2.4 - 3.1) the right hand is brought inside the circle, under the left arm and. The head and eyes follow the hand. This movement is concluded by the first

intensification style (I1), with the dancers holding the hips of the person in front them with two hands.

The second episode (E2) calls both dancers and drummers. It follows one of the intensification styles (I1 or I2) and is completed by I1 (the first intensification style) followed by the closure rhythm (C).

Repeat ad lib.

Gankogui H L

Boba 2 sticks H L

Kidi & Sogo M O

de ge de ge de

kpa kpa de ge de ge de

basic

R R L R L R L R L

R R L R L R L R L

R R L R L

I

Abraham Adzenyah describes the dance movement for this episode as “hold your hips”. The dancers put their hands on their own hips and keep travelling forward with the basic footstep. On the drum call ‘De-ge de-ge-de’ (on beats 3 and 4 of each measure)

they stand up straight and pull the right elbow backwards and the left elbow forward. On the drum call '*kpa kpa*' (on beats 1 and 2 of each measure) they bend down with their torso and push the right elbow towards the ground while the left elbow moves backward.

Another episode (**E3**) involves the sogo taking the lead and boba supporting the kidi part. It includes three parts: the first (m. 1.1 - 2.3), is a preparation pattern during which the dancers move into formation. The length of this part is determined by the sogo player. The second part (m. 2.4 - 4.2), is set in length and is a signal for the dancers and drummers that the call is coming. The third part, (m.4.3 - 6.4) is the call itself with the kidi response.

C ← E3

Repeat ad lib.

Gankogui H
L

Sogo Kpe
To
1 stick 1 hand Gb
Da

Kidi M
O

de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de

b a s i c b a s i c

H
L

Kpe
To
Gb
Da

M
O

gi de ge de gi de ge de gi de ge de gi kpa gi kpa

b a s i c b a s i c

R L R L

Repeat ad lib. C

H
L

Kpe
To
Gb
Da

M
O

ga de ge de gi kpa gi kpa ga kpa kpa gi kpa gi kpa

R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L R L

The dancers' formation within the circle changes for this third episode. During the first part of the call (m. 1.1 - 2.3), the dancers turn 90° to the right, with their backs to the center of the circle. The men are creating an inner circle, left foot bent a little in front of

the body. The women are in front of the men almost sitting on the men's left knee. During the first and second parts of the call all the dancers hold their arms up and bounce on the beat. On the third part of the call (m. 4.3 - 6.4) the men stay stationary while the women travel around the circle and change partners every other pattern.

The men's movement spans two statements of the call. On the first they take two running steps in place while the torso does the Agbadza movement (on the two 'gi' strokes of the sogo, beats 3 and 4). They then land on both feet, with the left foot forward and knee slightly bent (on 'ga' stroke, beat 1) while the women sit on their knee for another beat. On the next cycle of the call they bounce the women on their left knee. (on the two 'gi', beats 3 and 4) and (on 'ga' beat 1) lean to the right and look at the women holding that position for the next beat (beat 2).

The full sequence of the women's movement also lasts two statements of the call and is done on the main beats (lead drums 'gi' and 'ga'). On the first cycle the women travel to the right with two shuffle steps while the upper body does the Agbadza movement (beats 3 and 4, drum stroke 'gi'). On the next beat ('ga', beat 1) they sit on the knee of the man that is now behind them, and remain there during beat 2. The second time the cycle is heard they bounce on the men's knee while doing the Agbadza movement on beats 3 and 4 and lean to the left while looking at their partner on beat 1 and 2.

An episode which closes the performance (E4) of Gahu brings the dancers off stage. While playing the episode all the dancers, singers, and instrumentalists call out the words that accompany the rhythms: "Les passez, le-pa le-pa" which can be translated as

“show your passport”. a creolization of the French *‘Les passez’*, from nearby French-speaking Togo. This pattern repeats as many times as the lead drummer wishes and ends with the boba, kidi and sogo playing the same rhythm (measures 7 and 8).

The musical score is divided into three systems, each with three staves: Gankogui (H/L), Boba (K/O), and Kidi & Sogo (M/O). The time signature is 4/4. The first system includes a key signature change from C to E4. The lyrics are: "to de to to to de to to de to de to de to de". The basic rhythm is: R L R L R L L R L L R L L R L R L L R L R L L. The second system includes a first ending bracket labeled "1." and "Repeat ad lib.". The lyrics are: "kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa to de to de". The basic rhythm is: Les pa - ssez le - pa le - pa le - pa le - pa. The third system includes a second ending bracket labeled "2. Coda". The lyrics are: "kpo de ge to de to to de to de ge dza". The basic rhythm is: - - pa le - pa le - pa A - sez A - eh.

System 1:

Gankogui H L: [C] ← [E4]

Boba K O: to de to to to de to to de to de to de to de

Kidi & Sogo M O: Basic

R L R L R L L R L L R L L R L R L L R L R L L
Les pa - ssez le - pa le - pa le - pa le - pa

System 2:

H L: 1. Repeat ad lib.

Boba K O: kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa to de to de

Kidi & Sogo M O: Les pa - ssez le - pa le - pa le - pa le - pa

System 3:

H L: 2. Coda

Boba K O: kpo de ge to de to to de to de ge dza

Kidi & Sogo M O: - - pa le - pa le - pa A - sez A - eh

The foot movement for this recessional style is derived from the basic pattern. For one bell cycle the dancers are doing the basic Gahu movement (measure 2) followed in the next cycle by a change in the upper body. On the first two beats (m. 3.1 and 3.2) the dancers lower their upper body to a 'get down' position. On the next two beats (m. 3.3 and 3.4) they lift their upper body a little and hold their right hand up with palm towards the audience as if they are showing their passports. The dancers go off stage together with this movement, followed by the closing drum rhythm (measures 7-8).

The following transcription is one possible choreography for the Gahu dance. In order to save space, a short version of the dance is presented, although traditionally each episode can be played more than once, and the order of elements – preparations, basic patterns, intensifications, closures - can be organized differently each time by the master drummer. The large amount of segments makes it possible to choreograph the dance in many different ways, making the specific realization of traditional repertoire and materials unique in each performance, parallel to a similar process in the African American jazz tradition. The full choreography given here is one version that the children of Kopeyia perform.

Video tape no.1 / piece no.2

Gankogui H
 L
 Boba 2 sticks

§ **B** Repeat ad lib. Repeat ad lib. Repeat ad lib.

to to de ge de ge to to to de ge to de ge de ge de de ge

P₁ Repeat ad lib.

de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de ge de ge de to to de to

I₁ Repeat ad lib. **C** Repeat ad lib.

de ge de ge kpa dza dza dza dza dza de de de de de de ge de ge Da §

2. **E₁** Repeat ad lib.

de ge de ge dza dza de ge de kpa kpa dza dza de ge de kpa kpa dza dza

C **B** Repeat ad lib.

de de de de de de de ge de ge to to de ge de ge

Repeat ad lib. Repeat ad lib. **P₁** Repeat ad lib.

to to to de ge to de ge de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge

de de ge de de ge de de ge de ge de ge de to to de to de ge de ge kpa ge kpa ge kpa

Repeat ad lib. **C** **E₁**

ge dza dza ge kpa ge kpa de de de de de de ge de ge dza dza de ge

Repeat ad lib. **I₁** Repeat ad lib. Repeat ad lib.

ge dza kpa dza dza de ge de kpa kpa dza dza ga kpa ga kpa ga kpa ga kpa dza dza dza dza

C **B** Repeat ad lib. Repeat ad lib.

de de de de de de ge de ge to to de ge de ge to to to de ge

Repeat ad lib. **P2** Repeat ad lib. Repeat ad lib.

to de ge de ge de de ge de ge de de de de de de de de de de de de de de de

F1 Repeat ad lib. **P1** Repeat ad lib.

de ge de de de de de de de dza kpa ge dza kpa ge ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge

I2

de de ge de de ge de de ge de ge de ge de to to de to de ge de ge kpa ge kpa ge kpa

Repeat ad lib. **C** **E2**

ge dza dza ge kpa ge kpa de de de de de de ge de ge de ge de ge de

Repeat ad lib. **I1** Repeat ad lib.

kpa kpa de ge de ge de de de ge de ge de de de ge ga kpa ga kpa

Repeat ad lib. C F₂ Repeat ad lib.

dza dza dza dza de de de de de de ge kpa ge kpa de ge de kpa de ge de kpa kpa de ge de

I₁ Repeat ad lib. Repeat ad lib.

kpa de ge de kpa kpa ga kpa ga kpa ga kpa ga kpa dza dza dza dza

C E₃ Repeat ad lib.

Sogo

de de de de de de de ge de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de

de de ge de de ge de de ge de de gi de ge de gi de ge de gi de ge de gi kpa gi kpa

Repeat ad lib. C

ga de ge de gi kpa gi kpa ga kpa kpa gi kpa gi kpa de de de de de ge de ge

B Repeat ad lib. Repeat ad lib. Repeat ad lib.

to to de ge de ge to to to de ge to de ge de ge de de ge

P1 Repeat ad lib.

de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de de ge de ge de to to de to

I2 Repeat ad lib. **C**

de ge de ge kpa ge kpa ge kpa ge dza dza ge kpa ge kpa de de de de de

E4

de ge de ge to de to to to de to to de to de to de to de

1. Repeat ad lib. **2. Coda**

kpa kpa kpa kpa kpa to de to de kpa de ge to de to to de to de ge dza

Gahu Songs

The following is a selection of five Gahu songs that can be sung with the drum music. All the songs are sung in a call and response manner. The song leader (**L**) starts the song and the dancers, singers and drummers respond (**G**). Since the roots of Gahu music are among the Yoruba people of Benin and Nigeria the Gahu songs often include words in Yoruba. In some cases the meaning and translation of the songs have been forgotten with time. In this part of the chapter an explanation and translation of the songs is included whenever possible.

Ewona dodo

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side B / no.1

Gankogui H
L

L: E-wə-na ɔ-ɔ loo ki-lo-ni ko-fi hee. G: E-wə-na ɔ-ɔ

ki-lo-ni ko-fi hee. L: Pa - pa -

- - pa G: Ke-te-ke la ku mi hee, L: pa - pa - hee, E-wə-na ɔ-ɔ

ki-lo-ni ko-fi hee. E-wə-na ɔ-ɔ ki-lo-ni ko-fi hee.

Ewona dodo

Leader: EWONA DODO LOO KILONI KOFI HEE

eh-wau-nah doh-doh lo-ho ki-lo-nee kofee hee

Group: EWONA DODO KILONI KOFI HEE

eh-wau-nah doh-doh ki-lo-nee kofee hee

Leader: PAPAPA

pah-pah-pah

Group: KETEKE LA KU MI HEE

ke-te-ke lah koo mee heh

EWONA DODO KILONI KOFI HEE

eh-wau-nah doh-doh ki-lo-nee kofee hee

Translation:

Kofi hee means you are proud. *Papapa* is the sound of the train horn and *ketekete* means train. The song tells us that proud people do not prepare themselves for the arrival of the train and will not be ready when the train comes to carry them.

Ma de yo teacher na ma

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side B / no.2

Ma de yo teacher na ma

MA DE YO TEACHER NA MA

mah deh yau teeche nah mah

MA DE YO NAGOBE

mah deh yau nah-go-beh

Translation:

Call the teacher with the long stick.

Explanation:

This song tells the children they should behave otherwise the teacher with the stick will come and teach them a lesson or discipline them.

Dza aha yevu hee

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side B / no.3

Gankogui H L

L: Dza-aha ye-vu hee. G: Co-to-nou ye-vu hee. G: Ma dza ha ye-vu

Repeat ad lib. Ending

hee. L: Co-to-nou ye-vu hee. G: Ma dza ha ye-vu hee.

Dza aha yevu hee

Leader: DZA AHA YEVU HEE

djah hah ye-voo heh

COTONOU YEVU HEE

coo-to-noo ye-voo heh

Group: MA DZA HA YEVU HEE

mah djah hah ye-voo heh

Leader: COTONOU YEVU HEE

coo-to-noo ye-voo heh

Group: MA DZA HA YEVU HEE

mah djah hah ye-voo heh

Translation:

Someone is in Cotonou, a town in Benin, buying drinks from the white people.

Kiloni nya de dzo ee

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side B / no.4

Gankogui H
L

L: ki - lo - ni nya de dzo ee ga - hu dze to mi - wa ee. Ki - lo - ni nya de

dzo ee ga - hu dze to mi - wa. G: Ki - lo - ni nya de L: A - li ko - ko sa wa

Ba - ba wa le - nko G: A - li ko - ko sa wa Ba - ba wa le - nko

Si ma do gbe - gbo nu ha Hu sia - wo de mi - wa Hu sia - wo mi - wa

he, ga - hu dze to mi - wa be Hu sia - wo mi - wa he, ga - hu dze to mi - we - aa

Kiloni nya de dzo ee

Leader: KILONI NYA DE DZO EE

kee-lo-nee nyah deh djo-eeh

GAHU DZE TO MIWA EE

gah-hoo dje toh mee-wah eh

Group: KILONI NYA DE DZO EE

kee-lo-nee nyah deh djo-eeh

GAHU DZE TO MIWA

gah-hoo dje toh mee-wah

Leader: ALI KOKO SA WA

ah-li ko-ko sah wah

Group: BABA WA LENKO

bah-bah wah len-koh

SI MA DO GBEGBO NU HA

see mah doh gbeh-gboh noo ha

HU SIAWO DE MIWA

hoo shya-woh deh mee-wah

HU SIAWO MIAWA HE

hoo shya-woh mee-wah heh

GAHU DZE TO MIWA EE

gah-hoo dje toh mee-wah heh

HU SIAWO MIAWA HE

hoo shya-woh mee-wah heh

GAHU DZE TO MIWEAA

gah-hoo dje toh mee-wah.

Afika Gahuviawo

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side B / no.5

Gankogui

L: A - fi - ka Ga - hu - via - wo yi? Ga - hu vua do ku - via.

L: A - fi - ka Ga - hu - via - wo yi? G: Ga - hu vua do ku - via.

A - fi - ka Ga - hu - via - wo yi, Ga - hu - via - wo yi ku - ma - si.

Ma de yo ri - tsa na ma Ne ma nlo le - ta ma - wo

Afika Gahuviawo

Leader: AFIKA GAHUVIAWO YI?

ah-fi-kah gah-hoo-vya-wo yee

Group: GAHU VUA DO KUVIA

gah-hoo voo-ah do koo-vyah

Leader: AFIKA GAHUVIAWO YI?

ah-fi-kah gah-hoo-vya-wo yee

Group: GAHUVIAWO YI KUMASI

gah-hoo-vyah-wo yee koo-mah-si

MA DE YO TITSA NA MA

mah de yau titshe nah mah

NE MA NLO LETA MAWO

ne mah nlau le-tah mah-woh

Translation:

Where are the Gahu members? / The Gahu ensemble is lazy / Where are the Gahu members? / The gahu members have gone to Kumasi / Somebody might call the teacher for me / to write them a letter.

Wawa yekooo

As taught by Mr. Edward Atsu Tekpah

Audio tape no.1 / side B / no.6

Gankogui H
L

Wa-wa ye-kooo Ge-le-shi wa-wa ye-koo, wa-wa ye-kooo

Ge-le-shi wa-wa ye-koo Ga-lu fo to-me na ge-le-shi wa yo-m be

ge-le-shi ge-le-shi wa-wa ge-le-shi wa-wa ye-koo o

Wawa yekooo

Leader: WAWA YEKOOO

wah-wah yekoo

Group: GELESHI WAWA YEKOO

ge-le shee wah-wah yekoo

GAHU FO TOME NA GELESHI

gah-hoo fo tome nah geleshee

WA YOM BE GELESHI

wa yaum beh geleshee

GELESHI WAWA, GELESHI WAWA YEKOO

ge-le shee wah-wah, ge-le shee wah-wah yekoo.

CHAPTER 7

The Application of Ewe Children's Music in a Western Classroom

The following chapter concludes my research work and summarizes my personal experience using the Orff Schulwerk approach in teaching Ewe children's music to elementary school students in the USA. I chose to work with two age groups: first and second graders and fifth and sixth graders. These two distinct age groups enabled me to teach pieces with varying degrees of difficulty.

The focus of this chapter is to present one possible way of exposing students to music from another culture by describing the teaching process that was used. In order to demonstrate different ways to approach the material, the chapter outlines the teaching sequence of three different songs (a game song, a story song, and a lullaby) and one drumming piece, all of which are transcribed in chapters five and six.

The focus in planning the learning activities was to create as authentic an experience as possible for the students using instruments from the culture, giving a detailed background on each piece and following the way these pieces are taught traditionally. Students saw videos describing life in rural areas of Ghana and discussed the people's ways of life. They were also exposed to live music through performances of West African drumming and dance led by a Ghanaian master drummer.

The learning unit was structured in order to keep the integrity of the music and the culture while allowing the students to feel part of the music making and to add their creative ideas to the performance. During the nine-week unit I met with students weekly for one forty-five minute session. At the end of this unit the students performed all the pieces they learned in a recital. Their performance is included in the second video.

The following sections will describe how I approached the three types of songs and one drumming piece.

Afokpavuvu - A Game Song

This rock passing game was presented to the first and second graders as part of reviewing the concept of steady beat (passing the rock) while singing. The students learned the song aurally as done in the culture. The first few times they listened to the song while keeping a steady beat by clapping or patting.

After the students were familiar with the melody they were told that *afokpavuvu* is the word to describe a person who mends shoes. They were asked to rub their hands every time they heard the word in the song as if checking the sole of a shoe and to keep on the beat on the rest of the song. At this point the song was taught by rote and the meaning of the words were discussed.

Once the students memorized the song they practiced passing the rocks on the beat. This was introduced to them through speech. They were asked to use the words 'take' and 'pass'. While saying 'take' they picked up the rock in front of them and on

hammering. Some of these movements were used to create the rhythmic patterns that are suggested by Komla Amaoku in his book.¹

The next step was to layer three of these rhythms as suggested in Amaoku's book. Students used words that they would say while doing the movements such as "*pound*" or "*grinding corn*" to facilitate the learning process. The movement was then transferred to a rhythmic body sound, still supported by speech as follows:

Figure 7.1

Rhythmic Work-Words for 'Tu, Tu, Gbovi!'

Once the students were comfortable with the layered rhythmic patterns, the melody of the song was played on a recorder on top of the rhythms. Students learned the song by rote and practiced singing with movements and body sounds. At this point the students chose an unpitched percussion instruments that could be played by doing the same movement as they did to create the original rhythmic pattern. For example, a cabasa

¹ Komla Amaoku, *Orff-Schulwerk in the African Tradition, African Songs and Rhythms for Children* (London: Schott, 1971)

rattle was played by being rubbed on the floor to create the dotted quarter note and eighth note rhythm.

The last step was transferring these rhythms to the Orff instruments to create an accompaniment. That activity was also taught and assigned to the students by rote. At all times, students were reminded that the overall sound should be appropriate for a lullaby. For the performance the students started with the unpitched instruments together with movement, creating a 'working picture', and then added the barred instruments and sang the song.

Video tape no.1 / piece no. 3.2

Kplo, Kplo, Kplo - Story Song (The Cat and the Mouse)

This story-song was introduced both to the first and second and the fifth and sixth graders. It was an excellent tool to present the tradition of storytelling among the Ewe people, as well as an effective way to expand the learning of musical concepts being presented in both grade levels. The story-song was used to introduce rhythmic ostinati to the first and second graders. They also created sound accompaniment to the story and explored creative movement. The fifth and sixth graders learned the song with an arranged accompaniment on the Orff instruments, focusing on harmony (tonic and dominant chords change - I, V).

The process of teaching the song and story started by telling the story to the students and singing the song. Even hearing the story for the first time students were

actively engaged by participating in the story telling, adding vocal sounds and speech to accompany the story.

At this point, the first and second graders were introduced to rhythmic ostinati. The story tells us that the cat and the mouse decided to prepare *dzankple*, a traditional Ewe dish. Since the students were not familiar with this food a list of the ingredients was used to create a rhythmic ostinati as part of the story telling.

Figure 7.2

Speech Ostinati

The detailed description of the dznakple allowed us to later discuss the food and nutrition of the Ewe people and how it differs from ours. The song was sung at the end of

the story and then taught to the students by rote. At this point we discussed the onomatopoeic word *kplo* that describes the sound of the pot turning over.

The next time we worked with the story and the song the students were asked to transfer the rhythms to unpitched percussion instruments thinking about appropriate sounds. They were also asked to add sound effects that would represent the mouse trembling in the pot and the cat chasing the mouse. They were also asked to work on creative movement to represent the pot turning over. At the end students acted out the story with all the sounds and movements they created and sang the song. This active and engaging approach to storytelling where the audience actively participates is closer to the way storytelling is done in the village.

The fifth and sixth graders were introduced to the story in a similar way, but once the song was known they focused on creating and learning the accompaniment. The students had to brainstorm ideas to add sound effects to the song. The instrumental accompaniment to the song was then taught. I have found that adding a simple accompaniment to the song enhances the learning of musical concepts appropriate for this grade level. In this part of the process we discussed the fact that among the Ewe, however, the song would be sung with no accompaniment, although storytelling encourages creativity and participation of the audience. To stay as close as possible to the quality of sounds that exist in the culture students played mainly xylophones for the accompaniment (an instrument parallel to the *gyilli* wooden xylophone that is in used in

the northern part of Ghana). The students therefore learned the arrangement on the barred instruments and focused on the harmonic changes in the melody.

The first and second and the fifth and sixth graders worked together. During the performance the first and second graders told the story adding movement and acting, sang the song and added sound effects while the fifth and sixth played the accompaniment on the barred instruments and sang the song.

Video tape no.1 / piece no. 3.3

Tokoe

In order to create a full experience of Ewe music for the students it was important to teach them one of the drumming and dance pieces, but this was also the most challenging task. The students had to learn some basic drumming technique such as playing open and mute tones on the drums. They also needed to be able to play five different rhythmic patterns simultaneously. For children who grew up in the United States that was not an easy task. Therefore the learning process was long and the music was approached in many different ways: through speech, movement, melody and at the very end using visuals, all of which were presented with an additive approach to the rhythm.

The first attempt to teach the rhythm was through speech. While staying in the village of Kopeyia I often noticed that the children would gather and speak-sing the rhythms of a drumming piece, using either nonsense syllables or words. Since the drumming rhythms traditionally are derived from language I chose to present the basic rhythmic patterns of Tokoe using words in English. This also made the rhythm more

accessible to the students, The students practiced saying each of the patterns separately and than were divided into groups and practiced saying the different lines together. This allowed students to begin to hear the relationship between the different lines while keeping their pattern. The following are the five texts I have used to teach the rhythm, though any text could work for this purpose.

Bankogui	Come	and	play	the	drum	Yao — tse
Kagan	Ka - gan		Ka - gan		Ka - gan	
Kidi	Play	the	ki — di — ki		mid — dle drum	Ki — di
Sogo	So — go,		play		so — go,	play

Figure 7.3

Tokoe Visual - Rhythmic Speech Patterns

Master drummer Godwin Agbeli from the village of Kopeyia says that one should attempt hearing the relationship between the drum parts as a melody. Listening to the drum music in that way provides another anchor on which the player can rely while

playing with the full ensemble. The second attempt to teach the rhythms of Tokoe to the students was based on this idea. The students were presented with a melody for each of the speech lines they had previously learned. They sang the melodies and played them on the barred instruments. After they were familiar with the five melodies and rhythms we layered them again, creating a melodic piece.

At this point we discussed the relationship between the different parts of the piece in order to reinforce their learning. Only after it was clear that students could hear and understand the inner relationship among the different parts were they presented with a visual that demonstrated this relationship. They were now ready to move to the drums.

In their drumming we have used the traditional Ewe drums and all the students got a chance to play all the parts and experience the different drums. At this point students were introduced to the way the lead drum interacts with the support drums and learned the basic dance movement for Tokoe.

Video tape no.1 / piece no. 3.4

Although long, this process was both fun and rewarding to the students and myself. It is my belief that my positive experience completed a cycle that started with the question of multiculturalism, the Orff Schulwerk and the music of the Ewe people. It is my intention that by demonstrating one way of teaching this music, doors will open to other teachers to develop their own personal ways to teach this and other world music traditions, establishing much needed connections in our emerging global community.

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