

#20

Song

In song #20 a short vamp-like chant is imbedded within the longer main tune; the only other song in the collection with this feature is #25. The lyrics of both songs in #20 focus on a raid by the Ewe warriors into the stronghold of Kundo, an enemy leader of legendary power. Song B celebrates the Ewe victory and taunts the vanquished enemy. Musically, the main song (song A) is similar to other Agbadza songs with this type of rounded form and tonality (g4-a4-c5-d5-f5, 1-2-4-5-7^b) and needs no detailed analysis. Although the tune uses six pitch classes, its melody is pentatonic since b^b4 is used only in descent to g4 and ascent to c5, never in b^b4-a4 motion. In the recorded performance, after two times through song A, the leader's distinctive descending line calls the switch to song B (mm.34-35); song B also comes after fifth occurrence of song A (mm.74-80). Song B repeats at the discretion of the song leader. The striking quality of this interpolated song is its short duration and rapid six-feel alternation between leader and group: the leader's call fills six-beats 2-3-4, group responds over six-beats 5-6-1. Variation in the leader's tune notwithstanding, the melodic idea is descending major second motion c5-b^b4 by the leader and a4-g4 by the group. As was true in song A, the melodic design in song B creates contrast between a phrase final on b^b4 versus a phrase final on a4.

Drumming

This drum composition is "standard issue" Agbadza: sogo's dzi strokes cue kidi's three bounces, which flow on to three subsequent presses; sogo enlivens the music with

improvisation that always moves towards the kidi statement of the drum language; sogo times its rolling phrases to fit with the form of the vocal music; sogo moves through four-feel beats in oscillation between binary (four-beats 1, 3) and ternary (four-beats 2-4) motion. In this composition song and drumming reinforce each other rather than co-existing in an independent or even contra-rhythmical manner. In the context of Agbadza and even Ewe dance-drumming as a whole, this composition is unusual for the way that kidi's bounces to culminate on four-beats 1 and 3; 3+3 morphology occurs in more commonly other locations within the bell phrase (see #1 for the most typical).