

#8

Song

The song opens with a percussive alternation between a relatively long call answered by a short response. The exchange repeats, with slight variations in text and tune (A1A2). The group's second response flows smoothly into a brief new bit of text ("I will put my foot on Death's neck," mm.3-4) and then the opening alternation between leader and group is reprised with new melodic material (A3). In A1, after the leader works at the top of the gamut (g5-f5) and drops to d5, the group sounds the tonal center: g4. When the leader intensifies his phrase by going up to a5, the group sounds modal degrees 4-5 (c5-d5). The final segment extends the melodic play at this tessitura before descending down the mode to 1. I hear the rhythm of the melody in A1A2 within a steady alternation of the six-beat feel in the bell's second half and the four-beat feel in the first half (1-2, 1-2-3). In A3, however, I hear a shift to a steady six-beat feel starting on six-beat five in measure 3, extending through all of measure 4, and ending on ONE of m.5). The fact that the leader's call begins on the onbeat of four-beat 2 (just after bell stroke 2) gives this song a special quality.

Drumming

On the recording the kidi player renders the drum language all with eighth notes: a set of three bounces within four-beat 4, two presses, another set of three bounces whose second stroke falls squarely on four-beat 2. Two tendencies in the Ewe approach to rhythmic design are becoming clear: first, like kidi phrases in #4 and #5, this one plays with the idea of repeating a figure in different relationships to the bell phrase and the

metric matrix; second, we see the twelve-pulse period of the bell phrase interpreted as 5 +7, or (3+2) + (3+4). When GFA showed me the drum language, however, he suggested ending the kidi phrase with a sixteenth-dotted eighth figure so that it correctly fit with the end of the sogo phrase. This treatment adds the dynamism of 2:3 within four-beat 2. As we have seen before, sogo anticipates kidi's entrance, uses dzi strokes to outline the kidi bounce figures, and adds a stroke after the kidi bounces that extends the kidi figure.

The drumming seems highly independent of the song, in my view: two streams of music are running side-by-side, enriching each other but not coming together in a structured way. Rather, it is in their linguistic meaning that the song and drums come together.