

23.

GFA: The language [reads sogo drum language] simply means, "Sit on him." When I put this drum language to this song, I was remembering a battle between the Fons and the Anlos. According to the story, the Fon's leader was killed by the Anlos, so the Fon people gathered themselves for retreat. That is what this song is about: their war leader has been killed, so the Fons decided to retreat.

DL: When the drums say, "sit on it," it means that the Anlos have killed the Fon war leader?

GFA: Yes, and that is why the Fon are saying, "We should go and retreat."

DL: When I first heard this song on the recording, I said to myself, "I know that song." People sing this song in Agbekor also.

GFA: In our war songs, you will hear a lot about Fon and Anlo retaliation on the battlefield. Most of the Fon people live in Benin or Dahomey, but some have moved out from there. These are the people who fought us up to Ada.¹ There are Fons at Ada now, where they left them. Those who were captured were left at Ada, which is why we have Ada and Adafɔ. People at big Ada speak the Fon language, the same language, even though they traveled through the wars, trying to find places to live. They are there still, but they originated from Benin.

¹ The Fon homeland is east of Anlo and Ada borders Anlo to the west. Apparently, the Fon invaders had overrun Anlo territory before being beaten back.