

#12

Song

This song is characterized by the uniform duration and location of its phrases: all phrases have the same duration as the bell phrase (twelve pulses) but they all begin on four-beat 3 and move to conclusion within four-beat 2, i.e., phrases of bell and song consistently overlap. Rhythmically, all the song's phrases accentuate the onbeat six-feel (in synch with the hand clapping part) except for one crucial segment of the text that compares the deaths of men and women (mm.7-9) when the rhythmic surface shifts emphatically into the four-feel time. The consistently recurring musical features give the song a martial drive that is suitable to its theme: soldiers are prepared to die. One musical feature of this song is unique: the finalis is on the second degree of a hemitonic pentatonic scale, 1-2-3 \flat -5-6 \flat , transcribed as g4-a4-b \flat 4-d5-e5. The way the melody dips below the tonal center also is uncommon in comparison to other Agbadza songs in this collection.

Drumming

Although this music sounds virtually the same as in composition #1, the sogo-kidi phrases represent different drum language. During research interviews GFA confirmed that he hears different words in his mind as he plays so for him #1 and #12 are very distinct. Study of the two scores shows that in #12 GFA much more consistently matches dzi strokes to the first and third of kidi's bounces, while in #1 he often interlocks rather than overlaps. In #1 the sogo often shifts to strokes that fall with the onbeat six feel; perhaps the song is so strongly "in six" GFA avoids this sort of rhythmic play in #12. I

find it fascinating that sogo's time values in four-beats 1-2 are the exact reverse of those used in drum composition #11, that is, beat 1 is ternary, beat 2 is binary (ditto in beats 3-4).