

#13

## Song

This is the shortest, most percussive song in the batch of twenty-five. The call-and-response turns around so quickly that the song might best be characterized as a droning chant rather than a tuneful melody. Over-and-over the leader sings, "Brave ones," "Warriors," while the group keeps the focus on the scene of action. Tonally, the leader oscillates between two pitch centers d5 and c5, while the group counters with a4 and g4; in other words, the song is built on two dyads: a4-d5 and g4-c5 (2-5, 1-4). Even though there are six pitch classes (g4-a4-b4-c5-d5-e5), the melody always conforms to pentatonic patterns of steps and leaps. How should we theorize the b4? I suggest either thinking of the tune in two scales--1-2-3-5-6 (g4-a4-b4-d5-e5) and 1-2-4-5-6 (g4-a4-c5-d5-e5)--or simply taking b4 as a pitch added to the 1-2-4-5-6 scale to enable the upper neighbor motion in the group's first response that echoes the leader's c5-d5 move. Rhythmically, the song is completely in six with the leader marking six-beats 2-3 and the group finishing with 4-5-6-1. This six-feel motion would lead an Agbadza drummer to say that this song goes with the rattle part.

## Drumming

To go with a song strongly aligned to the onbeat six flow of musical time GFA has selected drumming that accentuates the upbeat six-beats! Kidi enters with a bounce on bell stroke 7 (pulse 12, 4.3) and places a second bounce on the onbeat of four-beat 2, just after bell stroke 2; both bounces fall on the upbeats of six-beats 6 and 2. As in the drum language for #10A, once again we find the twelve pulses shaped into a 4+8

proportion that suggests a 4+4+4 three-beat time feel (displaced within the frame of the bell phrase, of course). In the drum language, sogo joins kidi with a flam on pulse 12 and a dzi stroke on four-beat 2; a ga stroke on pulse 2, however, gives the sogo part three consecutive strokes right on the upbeat six-feel flow of time. Significantly, tsa strokes in the bell's second half shift the sogo accentuation to the onbeat six, articulating 3:2 (six feel:four feel) that is in synch with the song. In the recorded performance GFA adroitly displays his full creative power, making an exciting linear exposition from a mix of evanescent changes in time feel, interlocking figures, and dense rolling passages that have an internal rhythmic logic of their own. No matter where his musical imagination takes him, he always returns to the drum language.