

#1

Song

This short, uncomplicated song is in two parts: first, leader and group exchange two brief phrases, and then they join up to finish the song with a longer phrase. The call-and-response resembles a military rally, that is, the leader asks if the group is ready and they affirm their willingness to defend the town. The musical features of the tune's three phrases impart an aesthetically pleasant balance of similarity and difference: in their first and second interchanges the leader's phrases are tonally resolved to different pitches by the group's sustained notes (first c5-g4, then b4-d5); the rhythmic figures of the leader's calls each mimic timing in the bell phrase but in slightly different ways; the leaps in the leader's first phrase are echoed in the second; the sustained note in the group's second response is held longer than in its first response, thus setting the stage for the key word "Adzigo" to occur on ONE; and the longer third phrase retraces the melodic action in the first two phrases and by ending on ONE confirms the finalis on g4 as the song's tonal center. Although I have written the leader's second note as f#5, the pitch is consistently intoned flatter than written, perhaps to create similarity between the melodic intervals in both phrases--d5-f5 (m.1) and b4-d5 (m.2)

Drumming

Built with three bounces and three presses, the symmetrical and flowing kidi phrase appears in various types of Ewe dance drumming. The setting of the phrase within the metric matrix accentuates four-beats 2 and 4 (the third stroke in each bounce-stroke figure feels like a moment of arrival) and the upbeat six-beat feel (first and third

bounce strokes in each figure are in unison with upbeat six-beats). Kidi is in unison with bell strokes 5-6. Since the song also hits those bell tones, the composition feels agitated within the first half of the bell (four-beats 1-2) and more stable in the second half (four-beat 3-4).

The sogo part aligns closely to the kidi phrase, often playing de strokes in unison with kidi's bounces. Normally in Agbadza sogo cues kidi by outlining its bounce-stroke figures with dzi strokes; sogo conforms to this pattern at the opening and closing portions of the recorded performance of composition #1 (mm.15-48, mm.71-80), but for a while in the middle (mm.55-67) sogo creates interlock rather than unison with its dzi strokes (compare to #12). When GFA renders the drum language "koko," he plays ga strokes on second and third partials within four-beats 4 and 2 (pulses 11-12 and 5-6, 4.2-4.3 and 2.3-2.3), a two-note figure that persons familiar with Ewe music will recognize as a typical rhythm of the kaganu drum. The patterning of unisons and offsets between sogo and bell imparts different musical quality to the two otherwise identical "gaga" figures within each bell phrase: within four-beat 2 both sogo notes match bell strokes (3-4) but within four-beat 4 only the second of the two ga strokes falls in synchrony with a bell stroke (7). With quiet tsa strokes, GFA highlights 2:3 within four-beats (two dotted eighths: three eighths) or over the span of two four-beats (three quarters: two dotted quarters). GFA plays the rolling motif during the fifth, eighth, and thirteenth occurrences of the song. Although each roll occurs during a different portion of the song's form, in general, the sogo ends the roll (and begins stating the drum language) near the beginning of a new occurrence of the song.