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The Transmission of Ghanaian Music by Abdul Adams in Calgary, Alberta, Canada:

Teaching and Learning Kpanlogo of the Ga and Adowa of the Ashanti
as Social Expression

by

Lianne Burns

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Abstract

This ethnographic research examines how Abdul Adams, a Ghanaian Canadian living in Calgary, Alberta, transmits drumming represented by the Ga and Ashanti people of Ghana. The processes of transmission examined are relevant to the classroom music teacher in Calgary because they represent a fusion of teaching and learning styles from two cultures. This fusion helps to dispense the sensibility of Ghanaian music while offering accessibility to all students. The personal history of Abdul Adams is examined both in Ghana and in Canada. The term “drumming” is investigated from a Ghanaian and a Canadian perspective. The instruments used in a Ghanaian ensemble are determined and described. Two rhythms—Kpanlogo of the Ga and Adowa of the Ashanti—are analyzed and the context in which these rhythms are used is illustrated. An accompanying interactive CD-ROM allows the user to hear and view the rhythms performed by Abdul Adams.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

In spring 2000 a course was offered at the University of Calgary, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Music, titled *An Introduction to Culture Studies and World Musics in the Classroom*. New to the Department of Music, this course was organized and taught by Professor Jerry Kerlin who saw a need for world musics to be shared among undergraduate and graduate University of Calgary students, and Calgary music educators. Class members had little or no experience with musics of other cultures. Through a series of lecture/demonstrations given by guests from six cultures—Bali (Indonesia), China, Ghana, Iran, Ireland, and North India—students were initiated into the world of multicultural music. It was during one of these lecture/ demonstrations that Abdul Adams was introduced.

Abdul Adams is a Ghanaian Canadian who has been residing in Calgary for eleven years. He gave a particularly inspiring lecture that touched on differences in cultural beliefs and value systems between Ghanaians and Canadians. His presentation exposed students to the sound of Ghanaian instruments and rhythms. From this exposure this researcher developed an interest in knowing more about Abdul Adams, Ghanaian music, and Ghanaian traditions.

This research will focus specifically on two ethnic groups in Ghana—the Ga and the Ashanti. See Appendix F for a map of Ghana. The data collected is not meant to translate directly to other countries or people in Africa. Klaus Wachsmann and Peter

Cooke discuss the misconceptions North Americans have about African music. "It is customary in the Western world for people to use the term 'African music' as if it were a single clearly identifiable phenomenon. Yet when one considers the size of the continent (the second largest in the world), the enormous differences in climate and terrain producing contrasting ways of life across the land mass, and, above all, its extreme multilingualism (more than 1000 different languages have been identified), one should not be surprised at the diversity of music and the difficulty of isolating distinctly African features common to the whole continent" (1980, 144). Thomas Turino echoes the same misconception. "Indeed there is a tendency among North Americans and Europeans to think of Africa as one place, and African music as a single, identifiable phenomenon. The continent of Africa has over 50 countries, however, and linguists have identified at least 800 ethnolinguistic groups" (1997, 168). This thesis will examine experiences of Abdul Adams and knowledge that he shared with the author through individual meetings and formal lessons from 19 May 2000 until 1 March 2001.

Statement of Problem

Numerous authors have traveled to Africa to study with master musicians. Much has been written about Ghanaian music in Ghana and its relationship to people who live there. However, according to Abdul Adams (informant) there is a diaspora of Africans that has not been studied. He is aware of a large Ghanaian community in Toronto that has not been fully explored. Gerhard Kubik discusses how the diffusion of cultural traits happens. There are four avenues a trait can take to establish itself elsewhere. The first is

human migration, which can be voluntary or forced such as slavery. The second is contact between neighboring groups. No human migration occurs here. Contacts have accelerated in the past century because of easily accessible transportation. The third is long-distance travel and migration. These people travel widely for economic, religious, or other aims. The fourth is diffusion through the media. Abdul probably belongs mostly to the third avenue according to Kubik's explanation. "The difference between avenues 1 and 3 is that the human agents, though moving in different lands, stay abroad temporarily: they eventually return home" (1998, 296–298). Abdul plans to return to Ghana within the next few years. Urban ethnography is a way for Calgarians to become acquainted with the musics of other cultures here at home. This kind of research gives a new perspective on context in Calgary.

The first meeting with Abdul Adams took place on 19 May 2000 at the home of the author. Over a casual supper an in-depth conversation ensued about Ghanaian music. It became clear that there is a marked difference between Canadian and Ghanaian meanings for music. For instance, in Ghanaian traditional music performance there are less clear distinctions between performers and audience. This is not to imply it is impossible to differentiate between performers and audience, even for a Westerner, according to Agawu. "At no Northern Ewe performances is it impossible to tell the difference between performers and audience, even when the latter sometimes behave like the former" (1995, 116). However, the distinction is less clear because everyone participates through dancing, clapping, or calling out encouragement to other participants. The average Canadian nonmusician typically listens to music as a quiet

audience member, or hears music in the background of some other activity. Often the Canadian listener is not a participant in the musicing (Elliott 1995) that is going on around her/him. David Elliott defines listening by stating "music listening is a complex form of thinking and knowing that can be taught and learned. Music students can achieve competent, proficient, and expert levels of music listening. But teaching and learning this kind of thinking effectively requires that its development be embedded in efforts to develop musicianship through performing, improvising, composing, arranging, and conducting" (1995, 105–106). This definition is accurate for a musically trained Canadian. However, there are many Canadians that are not musically trained that listen to music.

This thesis examines how Abdul Adams, a Ghanaian Canadian living in Calgary, Alberta, transmits drumming represented by the *Ga* and *Ashanti* people of Ghana. The author suggests that these processes of transmission are different both from those in Ghana and the ordinary Western music lesson.

From the main question stated above many subproblems arise. The first subproblem involves Abdul Adams himself, who has a personal history of "living" music in Ghana that will be examined and discussed. It is also important to understand how the role of music in his life has changed since leaving Ghana.

A second subproblem is the exact definition of "drumming" by Abdul Adams as a representative of native Ghanaians. Ghanaian meaning of "drumming" may be quite different from the Western definition. This term seems to have a much broader meaning to Ghanaians than to Canadians of European descent. According to the Canada World

Factbook found on the Tradeport Website, most Canadians fall into the European descent category. This website states: "Ethnic groups: British Isles [England and the Celtic Nations] origin 40%, French origin 27%, other European 20%, Amerindian 1.5%, and other, mostly Asian 11.5%"¹. Therefore, there are probably misunderstandings between these groups of people when they define for themselves what drumming means. There are also gender roles associated with drumming in Ghana that are emphasized less in Canada. Gender roles are further discussed in the Definitions (pages 10–13) under the term Master Drummer.

A third subproblem is a discussion of the spectrum of music instruments belonging to the drum family in Ghana. For westerners a drum is a membranophone—there is not much room for expanding that domain. Ghanaian drums are not necessarily membranophones at all. In fact, most Ghanaian "drums" are unfamiliar to Westerners and include idiophones or other instruments that do not belong to the membranophone family.

A fourth subproblem is a diagnostic look at Ghanaian rhythms. A basic sequence of the rhythms which Abdul terms "body" will be recorded in Western notation and separated for analysis on a sound recording. However, there are many possible sequential alterations that change with every performance. There is a high degree of improvisation Abdul calls "filling the gaps" that is difficult to notate. In his opinion "filling the gaps" is not meant to be and should not be notated. Each rhythm studied belongs to a particular group of people that reside in Ghana. The Ga and Ashanti are the two groups that will be

¹ Electronic reference. *Tradeport: Canada World Factbook*. Retrieved 2 October 2000 from the world wide web: <http://www.tradeport.org/ts/countries/canada/wofact.html>. 1995.

examined, although there are many other peoples and rhythms that could be studied in the future. Each rhythm is used in a specific context which will be described. The demonstration of each rhythm will be analyzed.

A cross cultural perspective looks at music from a viewpoint other than that of the majority of learners. The meaning of music might be different for the culture in question than the meaning of music the learners in the classroom understand. This study examines music from a cross cultural perspective and may influence teachers to try and tackle a world musics program for their students. Meeting with and studying another culture here at home makes the learning much less foreign and unattainable. Studying with informants like Abdul provides a valuable resource to draw upon to enrich and expand music education programs. Nicholas Cook believes that "psychological research has placed too much emphasis on the psychoacoustical parameters of music and has not addressed questions intrinsic to the meaning and the cultural value of music" (1994, 65).

Significance of the Study

Calgary supports a rich and diverse population. At Spruce Cliff Elementary School, where this author is currently employed to teach music, there are many immigrant students. They have arrived from Asia, Africa, and from politically unstable countries such as Kosovo. At this school this author has adopted a Kodály-based approach to teaching music. The Kodály philosophy emphasizes use of traditional musics. However, an Anglo-Celtic traditional song does not belong to a child from Africa. The Music Educators National Conference slogan "Music for every child—every

child for music" is the core of its professional philosophy" (Anderson and Campbell 1996, viii). Therefore, educators must find ways to share at least some musics from other cultures. It is not possible to know about all cultural musics but it is possible to become at least bimusical.² Educators must make an effort at inclusion. "To believe that we can blindly continue to maintain a narrow focus on the customs and values of a single culture in the social sciences and the arts is to ignore the realities of our multicultural society" (Anderson and Campbell 1996, viii).

Page supports a multicultural perspective in the following statement. "Embracing this diversity can enrich our lives, broaden our understanding of the world we live in, and deepen our appreciation for the music of our own culture" (2001, 29). Anderson and Campbell list four reasons why the study of multicultural musics is important.

Although many people have encouraged an investigation of world musics as a way to promote intercultural and interracial understanding, multicultural music study can also provide a number of strictly musical benefits. First, students are introduced to a great variety of musical sound from all over the world....Second, students begin to understand that many areas of the world have music as sophisticated as their own....Third, students can discover many different but equally valid ways to construct music....Fourth, by studying a variety of world musics, students develop greater musical flexibility, termed by some as "polymusicality". They increase their ability to perform, listen intelligently, and appreciate many types of music (1996, 5).

Racial tensions continue to be a problem in Canada, even in Calgary. In September 2000 flyers were posted near Bowness High School by a white supremacist group. Ellis states that "Through experiencing music, people can attain a perspective

2 Mantle Hood. 1971. "Field Methods and the Human Equation," *The Ethnomusicologist*. 230–232. ("Bimusical" and "polymusical" refer to human competency in two or more areas of world musics.)

which allows validly opposite opinions to coexist without damage to either" (1985, 2). Perhaps through a multicultural approach to education postings such as the one named above would not exist.

"Multiculturalism is among the most discussed topics in American education in the twentieth century" (Volk 1998, 3). The concept of multicultural education has changed and evolved during this time. According to Volk, researchers have identified five basic viewpoints that developed in sequential order: "assimilation, amalgamation, ethnic studies, multiethnic models, and multicultural curricular reform" (15).

Assimilation encouraged those of minority ethnic origins to adopt the cultural values of the majority. Amalgamation sought to fuse the cultural beliefs of all ethnic groups into a melting pot. Ethnic studies focused on the specific ethnic groups present to help the self-esteem of those groups. Multiethnic models encouraged all students to learn about other cultures instead of specific minority groups. Multicultural curricular reform is the current viewpoint that Volk defines as encountering the beliefs, values, and environments of that culture. This includes differences of religion, age, gender, socioeconomic status, and exceptionality (4). The importance of a multicultural education has already been approached. The question now is how to teach it. There is relatively little quality resource material for teaching the music of another culture. Often these resources contain reduced discussions of musics from many different parts of the world—discussions that marginalize native feelings and meanings of musics.

Music in Ghana is a way of life. Music is used in work, play, ritual, and every other aspect of life. Page states an example of music in work. "A West African musician

might sing as a blacksmith forges a tool. Without the singing, they believe, the tool would have not strength. The music, for them, has power" (2001, 29). Music is also a tool in educating both children and adults about their societal beliefs and values. Without teaching the Ghanaian social context, music loses its meaning.

How should music from another culture be taught here in Calgary? A source from that culture needs to be found here. Abdul Adams is a skilled musician from Ghana. He is currently living in Calgary and has lived here for the past eleven years. He is a source from which this author can draw important information.

Definitions

The following definitions clarify terms used in this thesis.

Body: Abdul Adams shared his definition of the body of the rhythm as being, "a recognizable, fundamental, underlying rhythm. All other parts are derived from this basic rhythm."

Filling the gaps: Filling the gaps is the improvised element in African drumming.

Filling the gaps makes the "body" more interesting and rich.

Ghanaian drumming: Abdul explains the concept of Ghanaian drumming by saying,

It's a matter of language. For instance, again, in a family set up in Africa, if you say brother, that does not necessarily mean your mother's child or your father's child. It could be your cousin, but we don't have that word....When we say drummer, it's somebody who knows the whole thing, the ensemble— everything about it....If you're a drummer at the Chief's house, do you think you just play the drums? No... Everything, he can play it all—bells, everything. It is an institution. Remember that (personal communication, 14 October 2000).

Inclination: A strength or talent in a particular field. Gardner believes this is a result of intelligence within the field. Gardner defines intelligence as "a biopsychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture" (1999, 33–34).

Master drummer: Adzenyah, Maraire, and Tucker define a master musician. Master musicians are

highly motivated, extensively trained and gifted performers. They are also, and perhaps most importantly, living archives of the traditions of their societies—of the history, religious ceremonies, festivals, moral and ethical teachings, proverbs, wise sayings, and praise poems—and are respected for their character as much as for their musical expertise (1997, 125).

Although this source later states that master drummers can be male or female, Doris Adams, wife of Abdul Adams, has never seen a female master drummer and doubts if they exist in Ghana. She believes "If there are female master drummers, they are very rare." Abdul Adams explained that Ghanaian traditional knowledge holds that a woman who drums will not conceive a child. This belief has deterred women from drumming in the past.

Bebey states "Because the drum is, in certain circumstances, equated with a man...women must consequently treat it with the same respect that they show towards their menfolk. No woman would dream of beating her husband in public...nor may she beat the drum in the village square" (1975, 14). Agawu concurs that "As in many other African societies, drumming is the exclusive

preserve of male members of the society" (1995, 91). These statements support the opinion of Doris and Abdul Adams.

In an electronic mail message Judith Cook Tucker defends the statement made in *Let Your Voice Be Heard*.

Abraham Adzenyah and Freeman Donkor both told me that traditionally, only men were master drummers, for the reason you state, and also because of the various distinct ceremonial roles master drummers play. Traditionally, women might play the axatse [Ewe rattle] and sing with an ensemble of male drummers. But contemporary practice, especially in urban areas now has many women who are drummers, and in ensembles of women only, are master drummers.

A young drummer friend of mine, who just spent 20 months living in Ghana, studying and touring with members of the Ghana Dance ensemble, staying with drummers and musicians in various villages, said he saw numerous women leading ensembles, who also are active in their communities at maintaining the musical and ceremonial traditions and carrying out what previously might have been limited to males.

So I would say female master musicians are NOT TRADITIONAL but do exist. For that reason, we did not want, in the newest edition of the book especially, to act as if they don't exist, or as if there is as strict taboo against women master drummers as there might have been in the past. The younger women in Ghana, as in many other cultures, are asserting themselves more, and do not believe taking on a leadership role musically will make them sterile.

It is certainly not common practice, however. Judith (personal communication, 26 September 2000).

In response to reading Judith Cook Tucker's electronic mail message, Abdul stated,

First of all a master musician is totally different from a master drummer. Let's make it totally clear. A master musician may be yes, she can sing and really they have women ensembles in Africa. In Ghana it's called *nyuom kro* at the Chief's house. . .If you watch *nyuom kro* you see they basically play percussion—shakers and clapping things. Because it comes down to the role of men and women in African society, whatever is comfortable again.

If you go to the urban areas, then you're talking about a fusion of western culture coming in there.

I've never seen a group with a [female] master drummer in it. Like what's she gonna play? In the first place...your definition of a master drummer is a highly motivated, extensively trained, and gifted performer. That tells you right there—highly motivated. What motivates? Society we live in, the norm of society. That's what motivates them. Extensively trained—yes, they pick you up if you're gifted. To be a master drummer, I do not believe somebody can train maybe from the age of twenty years and become a master drummer.

The author interrupted Abdul to clarify, "You need to start as a child?" Abdul replied "Yes, yes!"

We're talking about drumming—a spiritual thing. The thing that invokes spiritual power. That Africans, and where I came from, people use it to invoke the spirit of ancestors.

When growing up as a woman, there's nobody wishing to play drums, because the society doesn't accept that in the first place.

To be considered a master drummer, society must recognize the individual as a master drummer. If society does not accept a woman to be a master drummer, she is not socially recognized as a master drummer no matter what characteristics or skills of a master drummer she exhibits. Abdul refers to the belief about women who play drums not being able to conceive. He adds to this,

Men who go in the kitchen and a woman hits you with a wooden spoon, you get impotent. Ooh! You're out of there....It's wrought with mythology.

If you see anything like feminism happening, it is in the urban areas, and it's coming from Western infusion—that is nothing to do with African society.

According to Abdul, the master musician—master drummer correlation is misleading. They are two separate ideas. Traditionally a leader of a female

ensemble would be a master musician, but not a master drummer (personal communication, 14 October, 2000).

Musicing: Elliott coins the term "musicing" to mean "making music". "Musical works are not only a matter of sounds, they are also a matter of actions" (1995, 49). The actions he is referring to include "performing, improvising, composing, arranging, and conducting" (1995, 105–106).

Transmission: Shelemay refers to musical transmission as "any communication of musical materials from one person to another, whether in oral, aural, or written forms, without regard to the time depth of the materials transmitted" (1997, 202).

Delimitations

Abdul Adams is the main source of information in this study. One informant will be used because there are few other informants knowledgeable about Ghanaian music available in Calgary and because of the close relationship between Abdul as teacher the researcher as pupil. Other sources may be named that are connected to Abdul through family ties or the Ghanaian community in Calgary. Extensive generalizations about Ghanaian-Canadian sensibility will be difficult due to the limitation of using only one informant.

There will be two rhythms studied, each belonging to a group of people in Ghana. The first will be the *kpanlogo* (PAH loh goh) rhythm of the Ga people and the second will be the *adowa* (A doh wah) rhythm of the Ashanti people.

Because most women in Ghana do not drum, this study will be limited to male instrument playing. Female forms of musicing will not be considered in this study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviewed has been divided into three categories: 1) Drumming—its meaning and role in Africa, 2) Ghanaian instruments, and 3) African rhythms and how they are transmitted.

Drumming: Its Meaning and Role in Africa

In North America there are specific functions that music serves. Radocy and Boyle name six kinds of music that serve a function: 1) stimulative and sedative music, 2) music in ceremonies, 3) commercial music, 4) therapeutic uses of music, 5) music to facilitate nonmusical learning, and 6) music as a reward (1997, 32–61). In Africa the role music plays is quite different.

Chernoff questioned some native Ghanaians about "what difference it makes to have music." One of the responses he received was "Music is essential to our life" (1979, 35). Warren writes, "For the African, music is not a luxury, but a part of the process of living itself" (F. Warren and L. Warren 1970, 3). Bebey has a similar opinion—"African musicians do not seek to combine sounds in a manner pleasing to the ear. Their aim is simply to express life in all of its aspects through the medium of sound" (1975, 3). Each of these authors used a common understanding—"life" and "living." Music for Africans is living.

Chernoff comments on the intense criticism and critique of performers in Ghana. He believes that "Criticism in Africa is a measure of people's concern that the quality of their art is intimately connected with the quality of their lives" (1979, 36–37). It would

be an overstatement to believe that critics in Canada have an interest in the quality of the lives of performers they are judging.

Music in Africa relays nonmusical information to the members of the culture group during a performance. A performer's social status and character are apparent by the music in which s/he performs or participates. Chernoff suggests that "music helps people to distinguish themselves from each other. In many parts of Africa, one need not be a sociologist to determine someone's social background from the music he dances to or plays" (1979, 35). The instruments and performers in a Ghanaian drumming ensemble represent the hierarchy of the members of the community. Wachsmann and Cooke write that the interaction in the music is defined by social organization (1980, 148). Avorgbedor supports this idea as well (1998, 390). Ladzekpo clearly illustrates this representation through a description of the hierarchy of performers and producers in a drumming ensemble (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>). DjéDjé explains that a more elaborate drumming ensemble indicates a measure of the king's greatness in the Ashanti royal court (1998, 464). Chernoff writes that "music-making in Africa is above all an occasion for the demonstration of character" (1979, 125). Cultural traditions are shared at a public performance as well. According to Chernoff, "music carries the mark of tradition to an occasion, and at a rudimentary level it thus signifies the traditional solidarity of a community" (151).

Music is a part of the African day—every day. Certain songs and dances are occasion specific. DjéDjé discusses the relationship between music and context in the Ga culture group (1998, 463). Nketia concurs that specific music is associated with

particular social activities (1980, 327). He comments on when and where public performances occur. "Public performances...take place on social occasions—that is, on occasions when members of a group or a community come together for the enjoyment of leisure, for recreational activities, or for the performance of a rite, ceremony, festival, or any kind of collective activity, such as building bridges, clearing paths, going on a search party, or putting out fires...." However, music used for specific ceremonies should not be performed out of context (1974, 21, 2–27). Warren shares this view with Nketia by stating "Music follows the African through his entire day from early in the morning till late at night, and through all the changes in his life, from the time he came into this world until after he has left it" (1970, 3). Ladzekpo also discusses some specific contexts in which the Anlo-Ewe perform music (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>).

Nketia believes there is a nonmusical benefit to these public performances. "The performance of music in such contexts, therefore, assumes a multiple role in relation to the community: it provides at once an opportunity for sharing in creative experience, for participating in music as a form of community experience, and for using music as an avenue for the expression of group sentiments." He does not limit performance to public or group settings. Individuals also use song to accompany domestic activities (1974, 22–23). These activities might include preparing meals or putting a baby to sleep.

Ghanaians integrate music with culture by carving symbols which represent proverbs on drums. For instance, Adzenyah, Maraire, and Cook Tucker describe the symbol of a bird leaning back to pick up an egg. This symbol represents *sankofa*—"Go back and take it" (1997, 18). Click on "Instruments" and "Kpanlogo Drum" in the

interactive CD-ROM for a description. Ghanaians should not forget their roots.

Christine Price describes the symbol of a crocodile with more than one head. This symbol represents *fiuntanfunafu* [FOON tahn foon AH foo]—"The two crocodiles, who share the same stomach but still fight over their food, poke fun at anyone who is greedy and wants too much for himself" (1975, 34).

Talking drums in Ghanaian ensembles perform rhythms and pitches that directly represent speech (Turino 1996, 182). Through the talking drum, communication takes place between the performer and listener. Kubik discusses the relationship between oral literature and music by stating they are "intimately connected" (2001, 205). Wachsmann and Cooke briefly describe the context of the communication that takes place through talking drums (1980, 150). The talking drum conveyed information to community members long before technology and literacy existed (Jahn 1961, 187). The transition between the oral tradition and literacy is discussed in detail by Walter Ong (1982, 48). He explains that the thinking patterns of members in an oral culture are quite different from a literate society. For instance, members of an oral culture have a highly developed skill for organizing thoughts in their mind whereas members of a literate culture record information then reflect on it and organize it through written representation.

The nonmusical functions of the musics listed above are socially and culturally important in Africa. Chernoff calls this the "'functional integration' of music and culture in Africa" (1979, 33). He explains this mixing of culture and music by stating "the values of African traditional wisdom are integrated into a style of communication which is both musical and social. In such a context, they do not have to be made explicit; they are there

to be understood in action, and their validity is measured by their social effectiveness" (154).

Ghanaian instruments

The instruments used in the Ga and Ashanti drumming ensembles are closely related to the instruments used in Ewe drumming ensembles. The Ga and Ashanti instruments serve similar functions to the Ewe instruments in an ensemble, but are sometimes physically different and called different names. Each culture group speaks a different language and therefore calls an instrument by a different name. The literature available deals mostly with the instruments used by the Ewe. These instruments will be discussed with the Ga and Ashanti names indicated as well. "The Ewe orchestra consists of the three sections: these are the background-rhythm section, then the drum section, and lastly the claps and song" (Jones 1959, 51). This author will focus on the first two sections because the last section is not concerning instruments.

In the background rhythm section there is an *Axatse* (ah ha TSEH). Adzenyah, Kobena, and Tucker describe it as "a dried, hollowed round gourd of widely varying size...typically surrounded by a netting interwoven with small shells, beads, or round dried seeds. This netting can be manipulated to produce a range of sound..." (1997, 129). The Ga call this same instrument *Maraka* (MAH rah kah) while the Ashanti call it *Entrua* (en TROO ah). The Axaste produces a rattling sound. However, when played with the entire ensemble, the Axaste sounds similar to the western cymbal.

The *Gankogui* (gahn KOH gwee) is a double bell instrument similar to the cow bell with one bell tuned high and the other low. The Ga call this instrument *Annawuta* (an nuh woo TAH). The Ashanti use a *Dewuro* (DEH woo roo) for the same function although it is not the same instrument. The Gankogui “provides a background rhythm which keeps the whole orchestra in time” (Jones 1959, 53). Adzenyah, Kobena, and Cook Tucker describe its function.

The timekeepers have a role to play as an integral part of the overall sound texture....Gankogui parts take advantage of the high and low tones on the gong, as well as the timbre variations which result by muffling the mouth of the bell by holding it to the body momentarily. A gankogui part which marks off the first or important beats in a pattern by calling for the player to hit the low bell can be a tremendous aid to neophyte percussionists feeling lost in the conversation created by many drums talking. Each drummer can cue their repeating phrases to a particular part of the bell pattern, and mentally keep track of their cue as it relates to the low bell tone ringing out periodically (1997, 127).

In the drum section of an Ewe ensemble there are four main drums. Each of these drums will be described physically and functionally. According to Jones “The drums are the most important section of the orchestra: they form its main body” (1959, 57).

Jones describes the largest drum, the master drum, named *Atsimevu* (a SEE me voo). The Ashanti use two large drums similar to this called *Atumpan*. (a TOOM pan) The Kpanlogo ensemble for the Ga culture group does not use this kind of drum. It is either carved from a solid tree trunk (preferred) or from planks with iron hoops lapped over. This drum is open at the bottom, measures approximately five feet high, and 1.75 feet in maximum diameter. The *Atsimevu* drum needs a special stand because it is open at the bottom and owing to its length, it must be canted. “This is done by means of a simple and functional stand called *Uudetsi* (oo deh chee)....It can be placed at any

convenient angle to bring the head of the drum to a convenient height for playing” (Jones 1959, 60). Chernoff describes the Atsimevu (Atsimewu is the Chernoff spelling). He writes “the largest of the drums, Atsimewu, is between four and five feet tall and is propped up at an angle so that the drummer may stand beside it” (1979, 43).

The second drum is called the *Sogo* (SOH goh). The Ashanti use a drum called *Apentemma* (a pen TEM mah) to serve a similar function. The Ga use the *Kpanlogo* drum and the *Tamare* (tah MAHR ay) drum to serve a similar function. The *Sogo* is a smaller drum, however, Jones mentions that “in some dances—Agbadza [AHG bah jah] dance for instance, Atsimevu is not used, its place as master drum being taken by *Sogo*” (1959, 59). Chernoff agrees with Jones by stating that “either Atsimewu or *Sogo*, a large fat drum which sits on the ground, serves as a ‘master drum’, whose rhythmic patterns stand out in timbre, voice, and complexity” (1979, 43). Jones describes this drum briefly. He writes “the bottom of *Sogo* is covered with wood but it may have a hole and a cork through which to wet the inside”... (1959, 57).

Jones briefly describes the structure of the last two drums in the section. The *Kidi* (KEE dee) drum is closed at the bottom like the *Sogo* and the *Kagan* (KAY gahn) is open at the bottom like the Atsimevu. The *Kidi* is smaller than the *Sogo*. The Ashanti call this drum *Apentemma* as well. The *Kagan* is the smallest drum in the section (1959, 57). The Ashanti drum that is the smallest in the ensemble is called the *Petia* (pet EE uh). The Ga drum that is the smallest is called *Dondo* (DOHN doh) but it is much different both physically and functionally. The *Dondo* is a tension drum that can be tuned by increasing or decreasing the tension of the skin. It is used for an improvisatory function

in the Kpanlogo ensemble. Chernoff describes the Kidi and Kagan in a similar way to Jones. "Kagan is slim and high-pitched, and Kidi is slightly larger than Kagan and pitched lower" (1979, 43).

Jones goes on to reveal the tuning process of the drums. The Atsimevu is the first drum to be tuned. He was told by the Ewe drummers that "it must be the lowest drum, overshadowing all the others by its fullness and volume and by its rise and fall." If the Atsimevu drum is being used, the "Sogo must sound fairly low but it must be higher than the master." If the Atsimevu drum is not being used and the "Sogo is used as master, the orchestra has to be retuned. Sogo itself has to be lowered in pitch, but not so low as Atsimevu normally is." The tuning of the Kidi drum is slightly lower if the ensemble is using the Atsimevu as the master drum and it is slightly higher if the ensemble is using the Sogo as the master drum. Either way it is tuned "about a fifth above the master." The Kagan is tuned "the highest of all" (1959, 58–59).

When the drums are being constructed the skin is put on all of the drums in the same way. Jones presents the process—"the skin has to be thin but tough. The edge of the skin is rolled over a hoop of wood, circular in section and of a diameter just larger than the top of the drum. The skin is fixed to the hoop by sewing with thick home-made twine.... This twine also serves to fix the skin to the drum and therefore it has a series of double loops hanging down all round. Through these loops pass the drum pegs which have a notch near their head to catch the string. They sit in holes bored in the side of the drum and are held by friction only." He also describes the outside shell of the drums briefly—"The drums are painted in bright colours" (1959, 57–58).

Chernoff and Jones disagree on one point. Jones mentions that all of these drums are played with sticks (1959, 59–60). However, Chernoff states that "master drums are often beaten with hands or with one hand and one stick" (1979, 43). This discrepancy was answered by Abdul Adams who agreed with Chernoff. Both hands or sticks can be used depending on the rhythm being performed.

Interestingly, Chernoff discusses a metaphoric analogy that the Ewe use to describe the drum section. He writes "The Ewes sometimes think of their drums as a family. The bell is like the heartbeat which keep things steady. Kagan is the baby brother; Kidi is the mother; Sogo is the elder brother...Atsimewu, the master drum, is the father, who according to their tradition, is in charge of everything" (1979, 43). This metaphor is in accord with the statement Abdul makes below (see Individual Roles in Ghana). It is also linked to the ensemble representation of hierarchy in the community (see the Ladzekpo citation in the Integration of Music and Life in Ghana section).

Transmission of African Music

The method of transmission of African music differs depending on the identity and location of the learner. There are three different perspectives that will be discussed in this section of transmission. The first is the type of transmission that will provide the learner with the best understanding of both the music and culture. This is the African learner growing up in Africa. The second is the foreign learner studying with an African teacher. Ideally this would take place in Africa, but could take place outside of Africa.

This is the best way a nonAfrican can learn about African music. The third is the foreign learner studying African music through a nonAfrican.

The knowledge about music that an African can develop by being immersed in the culture has irrefutably the most meaning to the learner. This learner has ownership of the knowledge that s/he acquires as a member of that culture group and as a participant in society. Nketia discusses the African growing up in Africa. "Traditional instruction is not generally organized on a formal institutional basis, for it is believed that natural endowment and a person's ability to develop on his own are essentially what is needed. This endowment could include innate knowledge, for according to the Akan, 'One does not teach the blacksmith's son his father's trade. If he knows it then it is God who taught him'" (1974, 59). Nketia explains that although an African child may study with an established musician, "musical apprenticeship...is not a highly developed institution" (63). The African child, therefore, is not formally instructed but learns through a different method which Nketia later outlines.

Immediately after a child is born s/he begins an informal music education. Nketia explains some of the ways in which a child is exposed to music from the time of birth until s/he is mature. The African child listens to mother sing, sings with mother, learns to imitate drum rhythms by rote, participates in children's games, is exposed to music performed by adult groups, and imitates and corrects herself/himself when advice is volunteered. These are examples of a single principle that embodies African music education. "The principle...seems to be that of learning through social experience. Exposure to musical situations and participation are emphasized more than formal

teaching. The organization of traditional music in social life enables the individual to acquire his musical knowledge in slow stages and to widen his experience of the music of his culture through the social groups into which he is gradually absorbed and through the activities in which he takes part" (1974, 59–60). The child discovers meaning through "living" the music and culture.

Chernoff discusses the origins of Kpanlogo as well as the current social context in which it is used by the Ga. It is used mostly for recreation or at a funeral or wake. The Ga youth particularly enjoy the Kpanlogo performance (1985, 163–164). Ladzekpo believes the Kpanlogo is a way for youth to advocate their perspective in shaping political vision (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>). The transmission takes place through participation in the social context.

Nketia describes the appropriate context for the performance of the Adowa rhythm. The Adowa is a more serious rhythm used mostly at funerals especially the funerals of the upper hierarchy (1987, 205). The transmission takes place through participation as well.

There is a phenomenon taking place today in which cultures hunger for knowledge about other cultures. A learner can acquire knowledge about another culture that helps her/him compare and better understand her/his own culture. The best way for a nonAfrican to learn about African culture is to approach and study with a member of the African culture. Chernoff discusses the foreign learner studying with an African teacher. He learned about African music through the process of participant observation. He writes "My method of studying the music was to learn to play it myself, and therefore on the

crucial issue of judging the appropriateness of my participation in the context of my research, I could rely on the judgement of my teachers" (1979, 20).

Chernoff describes the process of transmission that he undertook as a student of African teachers. "My instruction was, so to speak, directly and physically musical: I imitated what my teachers played, and I attempted to follow them through their changes by responding to their gestures and bodily cues.... In many ways, their adeptness at mimetic techniques made their teaching perhaps less ambiguous than it might have been had they used words" (1979, 21). A nonAfrican might find the use of spoken rhythm syllables helpful in learning an African rhythm. Kubik mentions that rhythms can be transmitted by "vocal mnemonics" (2001, 202). Abdul agrees that if you can say it, you can play it. Rhythm syllables are a helpful teaching tool.

Chernoff illustrates how his teachers showed him to perceive African rhythm in a different way than finding the typical Western beat. He explains that "...musicians must keep their time steady by perceiving rhythmic relationships rather than by following a stressed beat.... Only through the combined rhythms does the music emerge, and the only way to hear the music properly, to find the beat, and to develop and exercise 'metronome sense,' is to listen to at least two rhythms at once" (51). This is the polyrhythmic element in African music that often perplexes non-Africans. Ladzekpo discusses how a composite rhythm is created from a rhythm based on two beats and a rhythm based on three beats being combined (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>). Inniss suggests teaching these cross rhythms at the same time in the form of a composite rhythm. He believes learning two cross rhythms at the same time is easier for

nonAfricans (1974, 52). By combining the difficult cross rhythm with an easier, more prevalent rhythm, a medium of understanding can be reached through a crutch (the easier rhythm). This provides a familiar perspective for a student to fit in with the overall ensemble.

Ladzekpo describes proper body and arm technique for playing drums. However, he most importantly insists that to learn about drumming, a student must understand the “real-life meaning” of the music (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>). The real-life meaning of music includes social and cultural issues which will be discussed in upcoming chapters.

Chernoff speaks of a lecture given to him by his teacher Ibrahim Abdulai. Abdulai explains the difference between being learned and being wise.

If you are a learned person, when you get up, you will search for knowledge, and you will learn to your extent. And it all comes from asking. If you are a wise person, and you go round, you will see people who are also wise. Then you should put down your wisdom and make yourself a fool, and you follow that fellow's wisdom.... But "I have already known": that will not give a human being wisdom. Unless you say, "I don't know." Drumming is "I don't know" (1979, 103–104).

Ibrahim explains in his story that in order to become wise about drumming, you must never reach a point in learning where you believe you know it all, you must become a life-long learner. Life-long learning is considered a desirable outcome of being educated in North America today. The Vision Statement of the Faculty of Graduate Studies at the University of Calgary states that "we aim to create a stimulating and encouraging environment for discovery and personal development as well as to prepare our graduates for fulfilling careers and a lifetime of continuous learning" (Onn 2000, 185).

Ibrahim Abdulai briefly outlines the process of transmitting rhythm. He says "You can't learn it in a hurry. If I am teaching someone, I will teach the fellow one style today, and tomorrow I will teach him another style, and the following day I will teach him another. But if I want to teach him three or four styles in one day, he will not know how to play, because to know how to play the different styles in drumming, truly, it is very difficult" (1979, 105). A teacher must be careful not to overwhelm the student with too much information at one time. The rhythms should be taught in a relaxed fashion and the student given time to comprehend one rhythm before being given another.

Ibrahim Abdulai also gave Chernoff advice about where to find good teachers. "If you want to learn drumming, you should learn it from someone who respects it and knows much about it. And it is good if you learn it from many people." He also suggested to Chernoff that he watch old men and women play and dance as they are "matured in drumming" (1979, 104–105).

Respect for the music is a key issue in the transmission of African music. Ibrahim stressed to Chernoff that when he considered accepting him as a student, he considered whether or not Chernoff was a serious student. He explains "you should know that it is not...because of money that I am showing you. I have seen that you have shown great love since the time you came, and I have taken pains to show you.... I considered one thing: respect" (1979, 133–134).

George discusses the third approach to learning African rhythm—the foreign learner studying African music through a nonAfrican. She emphasizes that there are three strategies that should be included in the study of African music. "The basic classroom

strategies in the study of African music will be: (1) listening experiences that include a wide variety of musical sounds to aid in recognition of those elements and characteristics that make the music sound uniquely African; (2) activities that emphasize the polyrhythmic characteristics of the music; and (3) singing, dance improvisations, body use and games to further the understanding of African music within the framework of the culture" (1976, 42). These strategies are in agreement with Nketia and Chernoff's ideas in that a student should be immersed as much as possible in both the musical aspects as well as the social aspects of the culture being studied. She explains that "The social context of the music can hardly be divorced from the music itself. This is because African music is so closely connected with African life and the way the people live" (63).

George reveals a number of practical domains that teachers should explore to enrich the student's learning. She believes that "It is far better for them to know a few things accurately and in some detail than to have inaccurate concepts and fragmented information." Some of these domains are (1) the study of "African history; its past is very interesting and there have been historic changes since 1960.... (2) Use children's games and songs in the classroom activities. This helps students to acquire a definite rhythmic sense.... (3) Always encourage the students to let their bodies move when listening and performing scores; in African music, rhythm and movement are used almost as one.... (4) Emphasize instrumental improvisations: use cowbells or double bell to indicate the timeline; select a master drummer; let the other instruments improvise.... (5) Developing a sensitivity to treat the music with respect, as if it's our own, should be a desired outcome of the study" (1976, 65). This final domain is an important link to

Chernoff's research, but all domains are related to the important issues discussed by both Chernoff, Nketia, and Ladzekpo.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

According to Abdul Adams, Ghanaian people do not teach and learn music, they "live" music. Music is a part of everything they do and is tied to their culture in important ways. Therefore, this study must explore the culture as well as the music of the Ghanaian people. Ethnography is the approach that will be used. James Spradley writes "no longer relegated to exotic cultures in far-off places, ethnography has come home, to become a fundamental tool for understanding ourselves and the multicultural societies of the modern world" (1980, v). He also explains why ethnography is a vital research process. "Ethnography offers all of us the chance to step outside our narrow cultural backgrounds, to set aside our socially inherited ethnocentrism, if only for a brief period, and to apprehend the world from the viewpoint of other human beings who live by different meaning systems. Ethnography...is a pathway to understanding the cultural differences that make us what we are as human beings" (vii–viii).

Spradley outlines a step-by-step procedure to conducting fieldwork through participant observation. Chernoff comments briefly on this same method by saying, "though participant-observation cannot claim the same *kind* of scientific rigor as certain other methods of social research, it is especially well-suited to examine relationships of intimacy and differentiation and processes of individuation and communal expression. In the search for significant generalizations relevant to these central concerns of the classical social scientific traditions, participant-observation has become a way to turn the limitations of many standard investigative methods to advantage through the uniqueness

of a researcher who uses his individuality to address social questions" (1979, 20).

Spradley names the procedure he uses for accomplishing ethnographic research through participant observation the "DRS or Developmental Research Sequence" which contains twelve steps. This author uses the Spradley sequence as a guide, but does not follow the steps exactly as outlined.

The first four steps involve choosing a social situation and beginning to observe and record information. These steps have been completed in this study by meeting with Abdul Adams and setting up weekly formal lessons. Steps five and six involve analyzing the collected information into domains, then using these domain analyses to help focus future observations. See the domain analysis in Appendix B.

From these domains the main focus will be rhythms of each group of people. These rhythms are the Kpanlogo of the Ga and the Adowa of the Ashanti. However, the other domains will be examined.

Step seven of Spradley's DRS involves creating a taxonomy. A taxonomy is "a set of categories organized on the basis of a single semantic relationship." It "shows more of the relationships among the things inside the cultural domain." It "reveals subsets and the way they are related to the whole" (1980, 112–113). See the taxonomy in Appendix C.

After creating a taxonomy, the next important step that the author will incorporate is step ten—discovering cultural themes. Cultural themes "give us a holistic view of a culture or cultural scene" (1980, 140). Spradley defines a cultural theme as "*any principle recurrent in a number of domains, tacit or explicit, and serving as a relationship among subsystems of cultural meaning*" [Author's italics] (1980, 141). This

step serves to examine the data in an inductive manner after the deductive analysis is finished.

Cooley sheds light on the process of conducting fieldwork and writing an ethnomusicological study. He states in the introduction

this volume is not a how-to manual for fieldworkers, but is motivated by issues in fieldwork that are essential for the continued contributions of ethnomusicology and related fields. Rather than an intermediary step toward an ethnographic monograph in which culture is represented, fieldwork is potentially an inherently valuable model for 'being-in-the-world.' ...the essays in this volume offer diverse approaches for chasing the shadows of music-cultures and of cultural understanding generally. We hope they will ignite in readers a passion for knowing and a desire for understanding that can be achieved only through the experience of human interaction (1997, 18).

Shelemay discusses the role of the ethnomusicologist. She explains that while studying a culture, the researcher, often unwittingly, becomes a part of the culture. "Most of us are well aware that we do not study a disembodied concept called 'culture' or a place called the 'field' but rather encounter a stream of individuals to whom we are subsequently linked in new ways." Her advice to future researchers is to "begin by teaching and practicing an ethnography that acknowledges a reality of sharing and interaction, one predicated on negotiated relationships" (1997, 201–202).

Kisliuk suggests to researchers that there are three components essential to an ethnography of musical performance.

The challenge to ethnomusicologists is to create ethnographies of musical performance that are fully experiential. To that end I have developed a checklist that can encourage interactive, performative writing: There are at least three levels of conversation (literal or metaphorical) in the ethnographic process, and they each need to be addressed. The first is an ongoing conversation between the field researcher and the people among whom she works. The second is the researcher's 'conversation' with the material of performance such as song, dance, storytelling,

and ideas about politics, social life, and aesthetics. The third—the ethnography—is a re-presentation and evocation of the first two conversations, within an overall meta-conversation among the ethnographer, her readers, and the material and ideas she addresses (1997, 41).

The Ghanaian music transcribed in this research uses both traditional Western notation as well as some additional descriptive notes. The rhythm itself is transcribed in a staff with the meter of the rhythm displayed. However, Western notation does not describe the music enough by itself. Notes about rhythm syllables used during the transmission process, the use of the left or right hand, and whether the sound produced is muted or allowed to ring are described beneath the staff notation. The position of the note played on the drum head is also recorded. The position system used in the transcriptions was borrowed from Jones who felt it necessary to specify the location on the drum head a note is played. There are three zones in which notes may be played. The first is the centre zone = C, the second is between the centre zone and zone three = 2, and the third is the zone closest to the rim of the drum = 3 (1959, 62–63).

To notate the Ghanaian rhythm is not a tradition of the Ghanaian people. Titon says “Africans do not traditionally write down (notate) their music as a way of preserving or teaching it. Rather, music is learned by rote and preserved by memory” (1984, 67). Titon cautions that “In generalizing about African music we must keep in mind that just because composers and arrangers do not traditionally notate their music we would be wrong to assume that the product is disorganized. It is better to begin with the assumption that strict rules—rules quite different from those guiding our own music—are in operation” (1984, 68).

If Ghanaian music is not traditionally notated to preserve or teach it, why would it be necessary for a Westerner to notate it? Averill states

Because it points to relationships, details, interactions that we can see better than we hear; because it is one more tool to jog our thought process; because the visual representations help to fix a temporal process into an immediately apprehensible one (allowing us to find important elements that may elude us if separated by the time or performance); because it permits some form of interpenetration of audio with other performative analysis...; and finally because it allows us to compare certain features across repertoires or cultural barriers (2000, email exchange, <http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/music/>).

These authors offer a wealth of experience and knowledge for a beginner ethnomusicologist to draw upon. The advice and procedures suggested in these writings will influence the process undertaken by the author. The method used for the research of this study will consider the philosophies and techniques discussed above.

CHAPTER FOUR: GHANAIAAN CULTURE AND MUSIC

Western Influence

Ghana is becoming more and more influenced by the West as technology continues to spread. Marshall McLuhan discussed the effect technology is having on society.

After three thousand years of explosion, by means of fragmentary and mechanical technologies, the Western world is imploding. During the mechanical ages we had extended our bodies in space. Today, after more than a century of electric technology, we have extended our central nervous system itself in a global embrace, abolishing both space and time as far as our planet is concerned. Rapidly, we approach the final phase of the extensions of man—the technological simulation of consciousness, when the creative process of knowing will be collectively and corporately extended to the whole of human society, much as we have already extended our senses and our nerves by the various media. Whether the extension of consciousness, so long sought by advertisers for specific products, will be “a good thing” is a question that admits of a wide solution.

...our world has become compressional by dramatic reversal. As electrically contracted, the globe is no more than a village (1964, 3–5).

According to Abdul, the young people are especially rejecting their own culture in exchange for the supposedly more sophisticated Western ideals. To visit a Ghanaian city is to visit a scene from any typical Western city. Familiar food chains, clothing, and music can be easily found for tourists. Traditional Ghanaian culture has to be carefully sought out and is more easily found in rural towns and villages.

There is, however, a movement taking place by concerned traditionalists to maintain Ghanaian culture. This movement has been spread through the symbol *sankofa*. Adzenyah, Maraire, and Cook Tucker define *sankofa* as “Go back and take it,” indicating how people rush forward to grasp the good things in life, but forget that there are equally

good things they have left behind. They are advised to go back for them, for 'the past experience is a guide for the future'" (1997, 18). Abdul explained the meaning of this symbol which depicts a bird leaning back to pick up an egg.

What is happening in Africa right now is they have this symbol here of...you can call it whatever kind of bird you want, a raven, an ostrich. You can see the bird is reaching backwards to pick up its egg. And basically that's the Ghanaian symbol for "going back to your roots to pick up whatever you left behind". When you go to Africa, there are a lot of youth and people who have been very much Westernized. But you still have the traditionalists and the people who still want to go back to their roots again because they are leaving their roots behind. There goes our values, there goes our African culture and everything. With this symbol it's telling you to go back to your roots and be a little less Westernized and be more back to your roots where you came from. So it's called sankofa;" go back and pick it up; go back and take it". The bird is going back to pick up its egg, you've got to go back and pick up your cultural values and stop being a second rate Westerner. That's what it means (personal communication, 17 June 2000).

Sankofa is an important symbol to Abdul. He shared a video that exploited young Africans trying to imitate Michael Jackson with the researcher to help explain how this mimicry of Western society is very frustrating.

Ghanaian Customs

Many Ghanaian social practices are foreign to the West. Abdul discusses some of these differences. His descriptions and explanations are enlightening as they challenge a Westerner to rethink or question her/his own customs. One example comes from the proverb: It takes a village to raise a child. Abdul explains this by giving an example. If a child is getting in trouble on the street and a neighbour sees this, s/he will give that child a whipping and then tell the parents. The child can expect to get another whipping when arriving home. It is the same situation with misbehaviour at school. A child's behaviour

is controlled by the social stigma that can mark her/his family if the behaviour becomes unacceptable. Teenagers are not afraid of the police, they are afraid to shame their families. To shame one's family can result in being excommunicated. This would be a very serious consequence as Ghanaians consider family to be the centre of community.

Respect for your parents and extended family members (grandparents, elder relatives) is expected and demanded. However, this may be shown in ways that would mislead a Westerner. For example, Abdul does not look directly into his mother's eyes. Children are expected to avert their eyes when speaking to an elder. This is a sign of respect. In Western society, however, this might be construed as a sign of deception and lead to mistrust. Westerners are encouraged to make eye contact. Abdul found this to be a problem when he returned to Ghana for a visit after living in Canada. His mother became confused and asked him what he was looking at when he met her eyes out of his learned Canadian habit.

Other social practices a Westerner might not notice define respect and status. A respectful Ghanaian uses her/his right hand to gesture or hand something to another person. Use of the left hand would be disrespectful—it should be used for disdainful tasks and is not as clean as the right. Similarly, an Ashanti drummer does not wear shoes in front of the chief as a sign of respect. Informed Westerners can observe these social practices with understanding.

In Ghana, because members of society are expected to honour their mothers and fathers everyday, they do not have a Mother's Day or Father's Day. Abdul interprets special days—to be nice one day and ignore the rest of the year is not the Ghanaian way.

He believes that these special days in North America are promoted by capitalism. The media, advertising companies, and greeting card companies are the largest beneficiaries of special days.

Individual Roles in Ghana

Family is the backbone of Ghanaian society. Abdul maintains that the worst curse to fall upon a woman is that she would be unable to conceive a child. In Ghanaian culture everything is shared within a family and everyone is considered to be family. It is common to have a neighbour or friend enter one's house without knocking and without prior notice, upon arrival be served something to eat. Children do not sleep in their own rooms or have their own beds. They find a spot with the other children of the household with whom they are comfortable. These family practices are related to another Ghanaian symbol called *funtanfunafu*—this is portrayed by three crocodile heads coming out of one body according to Abdul. He asks "Why compete or struggle when all heads feed the same stomach?" Christine Price defines *funtanfunafu* by saying "The two crocodiles, who share the same stomach but still fight over their food, poke fun at anyone who is greedy and wants too much for himself" (1975, 34). Abdul and Christine Price disagree as to how many heads the crocodile has, but the message remains the same.

Each person in Ghanaian society has a role. According to Abdul, everyone is comfortable in her/his role to make a workable system. In Ghana polygamy is the norm. This family setup is important, and is similar to the musical ensemble as explained by

Abdul. He was eager to share a conversation he had with his teacher from Ghana that illustrates his point.

It was quite exciting, the discussion we had. What he was trying to do was let you see how drumming—African drumming, talking drum, the drumming ensemble—how it relates to society.

Everybody has a role in society. The community is based on people. The most important resource is people—not money. That's why people have a lot of kids in Africa.

The only way you could have more labor for the farm and build up your little community is you allowing him—or it's agreed upon—he has different wives again. He can just procreate kids—have a lot of children. And they are the labor on the farm—he's building up his little clan.

This explains the big nature of the ensemble—all these drummers, drummers symbolizing everybody—adult male, adult female, teenage girls, teenage boys, little kids, everybody. The drums come in sequence like that and it all comes together to form the melody and that's the concept of life. That's what it's all about.

People have roles in Africa. Nobody tells you what it is. If you are a female and you are a young girl growing up in a family, you know your role. You are supposed to help nurture the little ones.... If you are the guys, you know your role. Everything manual, you are supposed to do that. Nobody tells you, you don't expect a little kid, your little sister to go ahead and start cutting the tree down, or chopping the firewood. And that's what they do. It's really distinct, defined.

Each person is comfortable with their role. So nobody looks up at somebody's role or looks down at somebody's role. It's your role, that's fine, it doesn't make you any better than me. Which brings a lot of harmony between the genders too. It's even made manifest in the way we call God...God is not male or female. It comes right out in our music too.

Abdul wanted to share a particular wise saying that sums up the roles of men and women.

The hen knows it's daylight, but it allows the cock to crow.

if you go to traditional setup, (the Chief's house), the council and the inner core... is made up of the Chief, the Queen Mother, and the people. They are the inner

core. As a matter of fact, the Queen Mother and the people, they install the chief. When you go to the chief's house, what you see is the cock crowing. Because they let him...crow out "his" decision. But really it's not, because the women are so comfortable with their role that they do not feel threatened.

If you are comfortable with your sexuality as a woman, you know your role. You know that "his" decision he is going to crow out, you are a part of it.

So there is total harmony. So that's why you see it's related to the drumming ensemble, the music of Africa. It's the male and female are in unison. Even if the male drum is the master drummer's drum and it has to make all the noise, they are comfortable with their roles (personal communication, 14 October 2000).

According to Abdul women in Ghana do not drum. This is not part of their role [see the definition of *master drummer* on pages 10–13]. There are other customs and practices that Ghanaian women perform that are unusual for Western women. For instance, the female breast is not considered to be sexual in nature in Ghana. The breast serves a purpose like any other body part. Breasts are for providing nourishment to children and therefore are not always covered with clothing just as arms or legs are not always covered with clothing. It is common to see women dancing with breasts exposed or breastfeeding children at any time. This practice is related to a Ghanaian saying called *efirititi* (EH fer TEE tee)—"don't tell me it's wrong 'cause it's been around for ages." Abdul was referring to the trend in Canada that it became frowned upon or unacceptable for women to breastfeed, especially breastfeed in public.

Young girls from about the ages of 6–10 must sweep the compound every morning. Young boys of the same age must collect the garbage to take to the dump. Girls from the age of 10–15 are responsible for making breakfast while the boys of the same age get the equipment ready to farm. Older men offer counsel and advice to the younger. The eldest women offer their opinions through their sons. They ask their sons

to speak to the elder men to voice their opinions. Each person takes care of her/his responsibilities and tasks are completed in an efficient manner. Children know their roles which teach them a work ethic.

Integration of Music and Life in Ghana

Abdul explains what music means to Ghanaians. Music is a way of life and life is expressed through music. Music is an expression of emotion, existence, and achievements. The words to a song are meaningful because they depict everyday living. In order for music to be considered beautiful, it must first be appropriate for the function in which it is being performed. Beautiful music affects the audience emotionally whether it be to exhilarate or invoke deep sorrow. Music should communicate feeling.

Abdul illustrates above how drums symbolize the family. Drums in fact symbolize the whole hierarchy of the community. Wachsmann and Cooke write that "For social anthropologists the interaction in the music is postulated to be generated by, or be reflected, or at least be defined by social organization" (1980, 148). Avorgbedor supports this statement by saying "Forms of musical organization reflect and support the social hierarchy" (1998, 390). Ladzekpo illustrates the hierarchy among the Anlo-Ewe community by explaining who is allowed to play each part in putting on a performance.

The degree of participation by each individual, however, varies and reflects a hierarchy of relative importance among the performers. This hierarchy has the elders at the top representing the chiefs and the leadership of the community.... Their principle role is to provide a source of authority and advice insuring an orderly and systematic performance according to the shared tradition of the community and the entire traditional state.

The second level of the hierarchy is held by the composer (*hesino*), the master arts man, who is responsible for the creation of the distinct texture that forms the characteristic dance-drumming style. He is followed directly by the lead drummer (*azaguno*), another master arts man, who guides the entire ensemble in performing the various shared traditions of good dance-drumming.

The next level of the hierarchy includes: (a) *Tonuglawo* (ring-leaders), consisting of some more experienced participants with leadership potentials, who inspire and exhort the performers along the performance arena and provide them with examples that they emulate. (b) *Haxiawo* (supporting song leaders), who assist the composer in leading and directing the singing. (c) *Kadawo*, the whips of the musical community who enforce discipline and secure the attendance of the community members at every performance.

The fifth level of the hierarchy is occupied by the supporting drummers who assist the lead drummer in the performance of the various musical guidelines. The rest of the ensemble occupies the lowest level of the hierarchy. Their main roles are to sing, dance, and at times accompany themselves with rattles and hand claps (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>).

DjeDje cites Nketia as he describes the Ashanti royal court. "Performances at the Ashanti royal court are a most important context for music making. Royal musicians permanently attach themselves to the Asantehene and other chiefs, and oral tradition attributes certain chiefs with the introduction of musical instruments, orchestras, musical types, and styles of singing. Such traditions appear in all Akan areas." DjeDje continues to say that "The number of musicians, variety of instruments, and musical types are indicator of a king's greatness. Chiefs with a higher status may keep drums and other instruments that lesser chiefs may not" (1998, 464).

There are other ways that music and life are integrated. Chernoff explains that "the aesthetic principles of African music are to an extent dependent on how the music can become socially relevant [author's underlining]" (1979, 35). He later quotes J. H. Kwabena Nketia as saying "A village that has no organized music or neglects community

singing, drumming, or dancing is said to be dead" (1979, 36). He discusses the function a musical performance plays by explaining that, "the integration of African music with its social context is the basic movement and concern of a musical occasion..." (1979, 88). DjeDje cites Hampton and Nketia concerning the Ga in southeast Ghana. The Ga have particular songs for social occasions "Song types include work songs, recreational songs for various age groups, music associated with political and military institutions, and songs for social occasions and ceremonies." DjeDje quotes Hampton by saying "Contexts for music making include durbars, harvest festivals, events of the life cycle (but not marriage), celebrations or ceremonies associated with court, hunters warriors, and cult groups.... People learn music by imitation—girls, from coresident matrikinwomen; boys, from coresident patrikinsmen. Musical ensembles are often unisexual" (1998, 463). Nketia supports these statements. "In traditional societies music-making is associated with social activities. Specific types of music are customarily assigned to particular social occasions and social groups create and maintain their own musical types" (1980, 327). Ladzekpo discusses some of the Anlo-Ewe contexts for performing.

"...Dance-drumming is a key element of the religious culture and each divinity offers a distinct repertoire for various devotional activities. These devotional activities include: rite of consecration or medium of centering oneself in the divine spirit, rite of invocation or yearning for spiritual communion with the divinity and rite of gratitude, reverence and respect for the divinity."

"...In the military culture, the dance-drumming repertoire, among other things, assumes the responsibility for the emotional and spiritual preparedness of the population for battle" (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>).

The discussion above has focussed mainly on who performs and where performances take place. Now, most importantly, why do people participate in music-making in Ghana? Chernoff explains his viewpoint in a number of statements. "In Africa the practice of art is an explicitly moral activity because African art functions dynamically to create a context of values where criticism is translated into social action" (1979, 143). "Music-making in Africa is above all an occasion for the demonstration of character" (151). "A typical musical event, with its distinctive patterns of interaction and communication, presents us with a basis for an interpretation of African social life, an interpretation modeled on Africans' own standards of order.... Music is essential to life in Africa because Africans use music to mediate their involvement within a community, and a good musical performance reveals their orientation toward this crucial concern.... The values of African traditional wisdom are integrated into a style of communication which is both musical and social. In such a context, they do not have to be made explicit; they are there to be understood in action, and their validity is measured by their social effectiveness" (154). "Africans rely on music to maintain the happiness and vitality of their social worlds.... It is not easy to be evil when music is playing. It is possible to be in bad taste, of course, but if somebody makes trouble, music stops.... Music teaches people to recognize and judge what is valuable in social and personal life" (167).

Ladzekpo specifically describes why music-making is important for all members of the Anlo-Ewe community.

Dance-drumming is an integral part of this community life and an important necessity in the pursuit of the collective destiny, perhaps the essence of their shared experience. Everybody participates. Non participation amounts to self excommunication from society as a whole and carries with it severe consequences

in a similar manner as non performance of some civic obligations in other cultures of the world.

The most severe penalty for non participation is to be denied a proper burial. Receiving a good burial is extremely important to the *Anlo-Ewe*. In contrast to other societies of the world that demonstrated the importance of having a good burial by buying funeral insurance from commercial funeral homes, the participation of the *Anlo-Ewe* in the collective and shared experiences of the community is the only insurance towards receiving the proper burial.

...In *Anlo-Ewe* cultural understanding, a drum is a super projection of the human voice. In this view, the role and power of the drum in play embodies the Sub-Saharan concept of combining natural forces of the universe in forming the supernaturals. In the composition of this conscious experience, human force is combined with other natural forces—skin of animal, hollowed solid tree-trunk, etc.—as a medium for arousing the attention and reaction of mankind. In a variety of tonal properties—pitch, timbre, intensity, and intricate rhythms—the drum and the drummer, in mutual cooperation, create patterns of consciousness that give a moment of inspiration to those they touch.

Among the Anlo-Ewe, a legendary metaphor, "*ela kuku dea 'gbe wu la gbagbe*" which means, "*a dead animal cries louder than a live one,*" is commonly used to explain the human experience that inspired the origin of the drum. A human being has a tendency to attract a lot more attention when dead than when alive. So when the need came to communicate louder, a super voice surrogate was built out of a skin of a dead animal that could deliver the message louder and clearer (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>).

Ladzekpo also provides specific examples of how the actual elements of rhythm, cross rhythm, and polyrhythm relate to everyday life in the Anlo-Ewe community. He explains that rhythm provides the beat which unites the community in their pursuit of collective destiny. It is also an important instructional medium in developing mental and moral consciousness in terms of what is real and important in life. Cross rhythm symbolizes "the dynamics of contrasting moments or emotional stress phenomena likely to occur in actual human existence." Polyrhythm represents "the highly unpredictable occurrences of obstacles in human life.... It reinforces the need for the development of a

strong and productive purpose built on a foundation of adequate preparation for life.”

Finally, Ladzekpo describes the over-all significance of dance-drumming.

...dance-drumming is an integral part of the life of everyone from the moment of birth. A training in dance drumming is an essential part of the larger comprehensive preparation of every child for a productive and fulfilled participation in adult life. In this community, artistic elements are not abstract phenomena. They assume real-life characters. A main beat scheme represents a strong purpose in life and a secondary beat scheme represents an obstacle. Tension created by the customary ordering of these characters conveys a number of ideas simultaneously (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>).

During a lesson with Abdul, there was confusion on the part of the researcher as to what was the beginning and the end to each of the rhythms. Abdul explained that there is no real beginning or end. You should play it the way you feel. This statement was clarified by Ladzekpo.

In contrast to the Western measure concept of accenting the first beat of each measure, the *Anlo-Ewe* concept maintains regular accents on all the main beats. However, there is a tendency to end phrases as well as the entire composition on the accented pulsation of the first main beat implying further movement or flow. This attitude of considering the beginning of a measure to be also the end embodies the sub-saharan cosmological concept similar to reincarnation. This is the belief that every new born child is a partial rebirth of an old ancestral soul in a new body. Thus all human life is cyclical, every ending is a new beginning (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>).

Communication Through Talking Drums

Abdul explained transferability of language to drums. The researcher was having a hard time differentiating between the pronunciation of two drums. The first drum *dondo* is also called the hourglass drum or the talking drum. Strings lace the top and bottom skins of this drum together and when pressure is put on the strings, the pitch of

the drum is raised. The second drum *dundu* is a larger drum. The pronunciation of these two drums is similar to the untrained ear.

Abdui demonstrated with a Ghanaian word how the pitch of each syllable of the word can change the meaning to something totally different. The word he used to demonstrate this was *papa*. If this word is spoken with a low even pitch on each syllable it would refer to a "fan used for cooling". If this word is spoken with a medium even pitch on each syllable it would become an adjective meaning "good". Lastly if the first syllable is spoken with a medium pitch and the second syllable with a higher pitch the meaning changes again to become "father".

The pitch variations in the language allow communication to be transferred to the drums. Different sized drums can be used to achieve the pitch variations or a tunable drum such as the *dondo* can be used that changes pitch while being played by tightening or loosening the strings that bind the two drum heads together. This skill takes many years of practice to master.

The oral tradition in Ghana was very important for retaining historical data. Kubik writes that "Oral literature and music are intimately connected in most parts of Africa and are often impossible to separate" (2001, 205). Wachsmann and Cooke state that "Song texts draw both on political events, such as wars, the genealogies of rulers and the development of clan structures, and on topical events in living memory" (1980, 150). Turino writes that "pitched drums are used in many African societies to imitate speech" (1997, 182).

Jahn illustrates why communication through drumming was efficient in Africa. "Writing is Western culture's most important instrument for conveying information, and for thousands of years it had no other. The Africans, however, did not need an alphabet to convey information; instead they developed the drum language, which is superior to writing for that purpose. It is quicker than any mounted messenger and it can convey its message to a greater number of people at one time than telegraph or telephone. Only recently has the wireless come to excel in this respect the language of the drums" (1961, 187).

Oracy and History in Ghana

Communication through drumming is one phenomenon of Ghanaian oral/aural culture. Oral tradition, however, must be relevant to the present in order to survive. Therefore, the information retained is mutable. Ong, writing about orality and literacy, comments on a report done by Goody and Watt that sheds some light on how orally transmitted information may change to become relevant in the present.

Written records made by the British at the turn of the twentieth century show that Gonja oral tradition then presented Ndewura Jakpa, the founder of the state of Gonja, as having had seven sons, each of whom was ruler of one of the seven territorial divisions of the state. By the time sixty years later when the myths of state were again recorded, two of the seven divisions had disappeared, one by assimilation to another division and the other by reason of a boundary shift. In these later myths, Ndewura Jakpa had five sons, and no mention was made of the two extinct divisions. The Gonja were still in contact with their past, tenacious about this contact in their myths, but the part of the past with no immediately discernible relevance to the present had simply fallen away. The present imposed its own economy on past remembrances (1982, 48).

The oral tradition is a system that has lasted for centuries. It has preserved Ghanaian history and has been essential for communication.

Music itself has been preserved and passed down orally/aurally from generation to generation in Ghana. Titon and Slobin illustrate how this happens.

Some music-cultures transmit music through a master-apprentice relationship that lasts for a lifetime.... The master becomes a parent, teaching values and ethics as well as music. In these situations music truly becomes 'a way of life,' and the apprentices 'devoted' to the music his master represents. In other music-cultures...there usually is no formal instruction, and the aspiring musician must glean from watching and listening, usually over a period of years. In these circumstances it is helpful to grow up in a musical family. When a repertory is transmitted chiefly by example and imitation and performed from memory, we say the music exists 'in oral tradition.' Music in oral tradition shows greater variation over time and space than music that is tied to a definitive, written musical score (1996, 11).

Abdul learned about Ghanaian rhythms and culture in both ways listed above as illustrated in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE: KPANLOGO OF THE GA AND ADOWA OF THE ASHANTI

Instruments

Kpanlogo Ensemble

The instruments Abdul used for the Kpanlogo ensemble were as follows:

1. *Annawuta*
2. *Maraka*
3. *Kpanlogo* drum
4. *Tamare* (a djembe drum was substituted for the recording)
5. *Dondo*
6. Hand claps

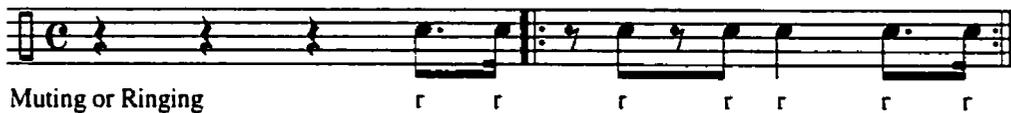
The Annawuta and the Maraka are idiophones that have a time keeping function in the ensemble. The Kpanlogo drum, Tamare, and Dondo are the membranophones that each play a particular rhythm. The hand claps are often provided by listeners/participants in the performance. During a Kpanlogo performance, there would be many people dancing, clapping, and participating along with the ensemble.

The Annawuta is a double-belled instrument played with a stick. The instrument is commonly called the Gankogui in most literature. Abdul's Annawuta is made of metal and is quite dented and scarred from a great deal of use. The bells have been flattened out on top due to extensive use. For the Kpanlogo performance, two separate rhythms are played. Therefore there must be two separate players and instruments. The Annawuta is normally the first instrument to play at the beginning of the performance and provides time keeping for the other instruments to enter. The first Annawuta rhythm is performed on the lowest pitched bell. To mute this instrument, it is held to the chest to prevent the bell from ringing while it is struck. Click on "Rhythms" and "Kpanlogo" and

“Annawuta – low bell” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording.



The second Annawuta rhythm is performed on the highest pitched bell. Click on “Rhythms” and “Kpanlogo” and “Annawuta – high bell” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording.



The Maraka is a kind of shaker. It is made of a gourd which has been cleaned out and allowed to dry. A netting of beads is strung around the outside of the gourd which creates a rattling sound. Abdul’s Maraka is painted red with colourful plastic beads strung through the netting. The beads were made by children in Ghana. He explained that much nicer beads can be used to make the instrument as well. For the Kpanlogo performance, the Maraka is cradled in both hands while the fingers tap out the following rhythms. The sound created is comparable to a ride cymbal in a Western drum kit. Click on “Rhythms” and “Kpanlogo” and “Maraka” and “audio of the rhythm” in the

interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording. Click on “Instruments” and “Maraka/Entrua” in the interactive CD-ROM for a description of the instrument.



The Kpanlogo drum is a beautiful barrel shaped instrument with a distinct sound. The membrane is quite soft as this is a hand drum. It is made of goat skin. The barrel of the drum is made of one piece of wood which has been hollowed out and left open at the bottom. The drum is slightly tipped when played to allow the sound to escape through the bottom opening. Abdul's drum has a symbol carved on each side of the barrel. On one side is a map of Africa. The country of Ghana is highlighted to stand out from the continent of Africa. On the opposite side of the drum is the symbol called *Gyenyame*. Abdul described the meaning of the symbol.

The emblem over there that you see is the Ashanti emblem for Gyenyame. That is "only God, or except God". It's a very very important symbol in Ghana. Everybody's using it everywhere you go. Everybody has it on their cars or houses, clothing. So it's a very strong symbol with a very strong message. It literally means "only God" but what it means is "you cannot stop me, nothing can stop me but God". It's a very motivational kind of thing. You see this on a lot of things. They had it on this drum just to let you know that you can play the music, only God can stop you. You have to remember, music is always supposed to be...drums are supposed to have spirits too. They are not just like drums, so sometimes before you play the drums, most times actually, you need to pour some libations to the Gods of the drums and to your ancestors and the drums come out very well. And if somebody does not want you to have a good show, he may also be doing something negative spiritually which is a superstitious measure of Africa

against you. So basically the Gyenyame symbol, you know nothing can stop you. You are still going to play the drum and do what you are supposed to do.

The rhythm played on the Kpanlogo drum is called the "body" of the rhythm. Click on "Rhythms" and "Kpanlogo" and "Kpanlogo drum" and "audio of the rhythm" in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording. Click on "Instruments" and "Kpanlogo drum" in the interactive CD-ROM for a description of the instrument.



Rhythm syllables	du ba dun du ba dun to pa tam de pa
Hands (left or right)	R L R R L R L R R L L
Position on Drum	2 2 C 2 2 C 3 3 3 2 C
Muting or Ringing	m m m m m m r r r m m

C = centre zone

2 = zone 2 (between centre zone and zone 3)

3 = zone 3 (zone closest to the rim of the drum) (Jones 1959, 62–63)

Abdul played the next rhythm on the Djembe drum which was substituted for the Tamare. The Djembe drum is not really a traditional Ghanaian instrument but it is becoming more and more commonly used. The Djembe drum looks more like a tapered drum head sitting on a hollowed out pedestal. Again it is made from a single piece of wood which has been hollowed out. The membrane is made of soft goat skin which is better for hand drums. The Djembe is open at the bottom and is played in a tipped position to allow more sound to escape from the opening. Abdul's drum has a unique feature which he requested when it was being made. The pedestal at the bottom has a slat cut from each side to allow more sound to escape. On the sides of this drum there are

two carvings. The first is of the symbol *Sankofa*. See pages 36–37 for a description of this symbol. The second symbol is a mask. Abdul described the significance of masks in African society.

We have a mask here which is very prominent in African culture. Masks have been used for a lot of celebrations and functions. Warriors used to wear masks and hunters. The mask has become a very integral part of African culture. You can tell kids stories like mythology and stuff like that. So this is just a mask that has been carved on the side of the drum. You can get a mask like this too. They sell quite a bit of these to the Westerners when they come to Africa. And they are very beautiful.

Click on “Rhythms” and “Kpanlogo” and “Tamare (Djembe)” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording. Click on “Instruments” and “Tamare (Djembe)” in the interactive CD-ROM for a description of the instrument.



Hands	R	R	R	RL	RL	RL		R	L	R	R	R	RL	RL	RL			
Position on Drum	3	3	C	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	C	2	2	3	3	2
Muting or Ringing	r	r	m	m	m	r	r	m	m	m	r	r	m	m	m	r	r	m



Hands	R	LR	RL	R	LR	RL	R	LR	RL						
Position on Drum	C	2	C	2	2	C	2	C	2	2	C	2	C	2	2
Muting or Ringing	m	m	m	r	m	m	m	m	r	m	m	m	m	r	m



Rhythm syllables	du	da	ba	dun	pe	da	ba	dun	ta	daba	dun	pe	da	ba	
Hands	R	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	R	R	L	R	L	R	L
Position on Drum	C	3	3	C	2	3	3	C	2	3	3	C	2	3	3
Muting or Ringing	m	r	r	m	m	r	r	m	m	r	r	m	m	r	r

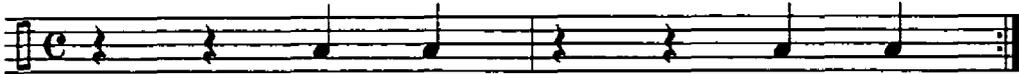
C = centre zone

2 = zone 2 (between centre zone and zone 3)

3 = zone 3 (zone closest to the rim of the drum) (Jones 1959, 62–63)

The Dondo drum has many names. It can be called an hourglass drum, a tension drum, or a talking drum. It has an hourglass shape with a membrane at each end. The membrane is made of goat skin but this drum is played with a stick. It is a small stick but it is not straight like Western drum sticks. It has a straight handle but a hook on the end for playing. The hook is at a right angle to the handle with a flattened playing surface. This curve allows the drummer to hold the drum under one arm and strike the drum with the other hand in a comfortable playing position. The two membranes are strung together with a network of ropes. These ropes when pressed raise the pitch of the membrane by stretching it and lower the pitch of the membranes when they are loosened. This instrument is capable of playing many pitches. The rhythm played on this drum is of an improvisatory nature. Click on “Rhythms” and “Kpanlogo” and “Dondo” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording. Notice how Abdul included a Western folksong, “Mary Had a Little Lamb” into the music to communicate to Westerners how the drum can speak.

The clapping rhythm can be performed by a great number of participants. Click on “Rhythms” and “Kpanlogo” and “Clapping” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording. Two tracks of clapping were included to provide a full sound.



Adowa Ensemble

The instruments Abdul used for the Adowa ensemble are as follows:

1. *Dewuro* (Annawuta was substituted for the recording)
2. *Petia*
3. *Apentemma*
4. *Apentemma*
5. *Entrua*
6. *Petini* (electronic kick drum was substituted for the recording)
7. *Atumpan* (two drums of unequal pitch substituted for the recording)

The Dewuro, Entrua, and Petini have a time keeping function in the ensemble.

The Petia, Apentemma, Petini, and Atumpan drums are all membranophones. The Atumpan is a set of two drums, one pitched higher than the other. The Atumpan are also commonly called talking drums as they serve the purpose of imitating speech in many ensembles. The Dewuro and Entrua are idiophones.

The rhythm begins with the Atumpan. The rhythm represents the words *A dewuro Kofi ma so ho nye ha*. This means “Dewuro player, get ready to play. Click on



Hands (left or right)	R L	R L	RL RL	RLRL	RL RL	RL
Position on Drum	C C	C C	CC CC	CCCC	CC CC	CC
Muting or Ringing	r r	r r	rr rr	rr rr	rr rr	rr

C = centre zone

2 = zone 2 (between centre zone and zone 3)

3 = zone 3 (zone closest to the rim of the drum) (Jones 1959, 62–63)

The Apentemma 1 is a medium sized, barrel-shaped drum with the same cloth pattern covering the body as the Petia. It has a medium pitch and is played with the same sticks as the Petia. Click on “Rhythms” and “Adowa” and “Apentemma 1” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording.



Hands (left or right)	R	LR R	LR R	LR R	LR
Position on Drum	C	CC C	CC C	CC C	CC
Muting or Ringing	m	rr m	rr m	rr m	rr

C = centre zone

2 = zone 2 (between centre zone and zone 3)

3 = zone 3 (zone closest to the rim of the drum) (Jones 1959, 62–63)

The Apentemma 2 is a longer drum than the Apentemma 1. It has the same cloth pattern covering the body as the Petia and Apentemma 1. Apentemma 2 has a lower pitch than both the Petia and Apentemma 1, however, it is again played with the same sticks. Click on “Rhythms” and “Adowa” and “Apentemma 2” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording.

Click on “Instruments” and “Petia/Apentemma (Kete drums)” in the interactive CD-ROM for a description of the instruments.

The image shows two musical staves with rhythmic notation. The first staff is in 12/8 time and consists of two measures. The second staff is also in 12/8 time and consists of two measures. Below each staff is a three-line code indicating the hand used (R for right, L for left), the position on the drum (C for centre zone), and the muting or ringing effect (r for ring, m for mute).

Hands (left or right)	R L	R L R	LR LRL	RL R	LR L	RL
Position on Drum	CC	CCC	CC CCC	CC C	CC C	CC
Muting or Ringing	r r	r r m	mm m r r	r r m	mm m	r r

R L R	L RLRLR	LR R	LR L	RL
CC C	C CCCCC	CC C	CC C	CC
r r m	m r r r r	r r m	mm m	r r

C = centre zone

2 = zone 2 (between centre zone and zone 3)

3 = zone 3 (zone closest to the rim of the drum) (Jones 1959, 62–63)

The Petini is a larger drum with a lower pitch that is played with the hands, not a stick. The Djembe drum is becoming a common substitute for the Petini, however, during the recording, the Djembe drum was already being used as a substitute for one of the Atumpan drums. It could not be used for the Petini as well because the timbre would have been identical and unrecognizable as a separate rhythm. Therefore an electronic kick drum was substituted for the Petini in the recording. The Entrua rhythm is the same as the Petini rhythm. The Entrua is the same instrument as the Maraka used for the Kpanlogo rhythm, however, it is played differently. The Entrua is swung in a swishing motion to create the sound. Click on “Rhythms” and “Adowa” and “Petini” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording

of the Petini rhythm. Click on “Rhythms” and “Adowa” and “Entrua” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording.



The Atumpan are barrel shaped drums. These drums are large and often must be canted in order to comfortable play. They are normally played with sticks that are curved at the end. This allows the arm position to be more natural and comfortable. The membranes are made of goat skin. Two drums of unequal pitch were substituted for the Atumpan on the recording—an Apentemma and a Kpanlogo drum. The Apentemma is represented by the lower note and the Kpanlogo drum is represented by the higher note in the following notation. Abdul was unable to attain Atumpan during the course of lessons. Click on “Rhythms” and “Adowa” and “Atumpan” and “audio of the rhythm” in the interactive CD-ROM included with this package to hear a recording.



Hands (left or right)	L	R	RL	R	LRRL	R	RL	R	LRR
Position on Drum	C	C	CC	C	CCCC	C	CC	C	CCC
Muting or Ringing	r	m	rr	m	rrrr	m	rr	m	rrr

C = centre zone

2 = zone 2 (between centre zone and zone 3)

3 = zone 3 (zone closest to the rim of the drum) (Jones 1959, 62–63)

Transmission of Kpanlogo in Ghana

The transmission process of Ghanaian music in Calgary differs from the transmission process in Ghana. The main reason for this is that the teaching and learning take place outside of the social context. The teacher is a member of Ghanaian society but lives outside of it. The student is a nonmember of Ghanaian society and also lives outside. Therefore a student in Calgary will have a very different experience than a member of Ghanaian society immersed in the social context of the music.

The social context of the Kpanlogo rhythm in Ghana would be found primarily in the Ga territory. The history of how Kpanlogo was developed is unclear. However, Chernoff sheds some light on its origins. "Kpanlogo drumming started after the Second World War, but Kpanlogo undoubtedly developed from a more archaic beat that is no longer played but has been transmuted rather than significantly transformed. When one hears how naturally and endlessly inventive a Kpanlogo drummer is, it is difficult to think that the early Kpanlogo groups organized themselves by saying, 'Hey, let's play highlife on our drums!' Rather, Kpanlogo is an old beat with a new name. In its rhythmic structure, Kpanlogo is not quite the same as highlife; it sounds like a highlife beat that has been turned around" (1985, 163–164). Highlife is a fusion of West African indigenous dance rhythms and melodies with influences from the West (Collins 1985, 1). Abdul supports Chernoff's statement by saying "I believe this is probably a very old rhythm" (personal communication 18 February 2001).

Abdul explains that the main function of the Kpanlogo ensemble is primarily recreational. A Kpanlogo ensemble would be heard on the beach or within the

community for purely recreational purposes. Chernoff supports this statement by explaining, "One might also find Kpanlogo on Sunday afternoons, another typical time for traditional social and recreational drumming in African cities" (1985, 164). He also names another common site for a Kpanlogo ensemble. "Ordinarily, at a Ga funeral or wake, people play Kpanlogo, and amateur musicians who are normally fishermen or earn their living in other walks of life are the drummers. Most wakes are weekend affairs, and Saturday is the night.... Kpanlogo musicians may be amateurs, but as at a palm-wine gathering, there is no lack of qualified personnel for an impromptu ensemble. When Kpanlogo drumming gets going, the music becomes a jam, the kind of scene where no one gets offended if another drummer comes around and sits in." (1985, 164).

Kpanlogo has been a rhythm for the youth of Ghana. Ladzekpo believes "It is essentially an urban youth dance-drumming and a symbol of the commitment of a rapidly growing Ghanaian urban neighborhood youth in advocating their perspective in shaping the political vision of post colonial Africa" (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>). Chernoff supports this view. "...Kpanlogo is primarily a dance for young people. As such, but unlike most traditional Ghanaian dances and despite the moralistic homilies regarding friendship and love in Kpanlogo song lyrics, Kpanlogo is slightly irreverent. Kpanlogo as it is danced by young men is exceedingly macho, and as danced by young women it is very, very sexy. Originally, the elders of the Ga community tried to ban Kpanlogo, but it survived its critics with support from no less a person than Kwame Nkrumah, [a Ghanaian visionary who gained Ghana independence as a Commonwealth dominion in 1957 and continued to strive to unite

Africa] who recognized indigenous African qualities perhaps in the improvised artistic expressions of individuality and in the instant community that the vitality of the drumming encouraged among Kpanlogo participants" (1985, 164).

Transmission of Adowa in Ghana

The social context of the Adowa rhythm in Ghana would be found primarily in Ashanti territory. This is a much more serious rhythm than the Kpanlogo. It is not as appropriate at recreational occasions. It is primarily performed at funerals. Nketia describes a setting for the Adowa ensemble. "When a courtier or a member of a royal lineage died, the music of various performing groups (such as *adowa* groups) as well as the ruler would be performed" (1987, 205). If Adowa is performed for members of the upper hierarchy, it would have to be a serious music.

Abdul had a much different experience learning these rhythms in Ghana than the researcher could possibly have in Calgary. Abdul describes the process of transmission that he was involved in as a child in Ghana.

Abdul: I'd take any instrument like the conventional guitar, no one really taught me anything. I was able to play before I found out what is the "E" key, what is a "B". I listen to music differently. I can dissect it one by one in my mind. And I just picked up on stuff like that. When I was little...look where I was born, in the northern part of Ghana. I just loved Don Williams, you, stuff like that.

Lianne: That's probably unique because if it was not the kind of music you were used to hearing, it's unique to really like it.

Abdul: Yes. I did. And for me it's funny because I love Spanish music, any kind of music. That tells me it's just here [Gestures toward himself]. I listen to it and think, Whoa, that's kind of cool. At first when I was listening to a Nigerian music group, I was mesmerized. My mom said to me "your great grandfather was a master drummer."

I was like, "Oh my God, that's kind of interesting." So I thought, that explains it. My mom said, "Do you remember your grandfather had a drum in your grandmother's room and he used to play when he was happy sometimes?" My grandfather was in the army.

Lianne: Your grandfather?

Abdul: Yes my grandfather.

Lianne: So he was taught by your great grandfather?

Abdul: Yes, he was the son of a master drummer too. And really, when I was little I remember my mother talking to me. My grandmother's room had a drum in it all of the time. And that was my grandfather's drum. That is what he, when he was leaving Burkina-Fasso, he brought it with him. So here was I, nobody in my family has got it but me. Nobody. I'm the only one. I amazed my own family. They're shocked. When I go to Ghana all the time, they say, "O yeah, he's going to buy drums, eh?" What is he going to do with them?" Everytime I go to Ghana they say that to me. The first time my mom saw me play, she was like "Whoa!" But as I was growing up, I discovered myself, I started questioning myself. It can't be just out of nothing.

At my grandfather's house, he had this Ewe group. The main man, the head of the clan...

Lianne: Why were they there?

Abdul: They rented the house there. The man rented a room there...three rooms there.

Lianne: He was just working up there?

Abdul: He did local laundry. They would come and take your laundry and wash it and iron it for you. It was like a laundry, but I was a one-man-show. He was good, especially for people who worked in offices. It was his job. So he brought his Ewe family to the North. He actually had his children raised in the north. He rented my grandfather's house. I think he was eventually one of the community leaders of the Ewe group. It was the same as the Ghanaians here. They have the Ghanaian-Canadian Association. So they had an Ewe Association because in Tamale they were all visitors to the North. They came from Ewe land. So they have their own little group. They had their weekly meetings. They contribute money in case somebody dies they can help each other out. It was a community thing. And then this guy was also a drummer. So they used to come to the house

and they met periodically to discuss community issues, pay their dues, contributions, whatever, and they played drums. That's where I came in.

Lianne: You lived right there too?

Abdul: They lived in my grandfather's house. I lived in that house with my grandfather too. And then the biggest day for me is when they would play drums. If I'd see them putting the benches out, I wouldn't eat the whole day. I was excited, ecstatic. And before long I was playing with them. I was like four years old.

Lianne: Now do you remember how that happened? Did they show you how?

Abdul: Nobody showed me anything.

Lianne: They didn't show you anything.

Abdul: The man had a son my age. He was being taught by his father how to dance and how to play some on the drums. He was my friend. I played around with him. And I was doing better than him anyway. So, eventually I was part of the group. I remember vaguely because I was very little. Probably four or five.

Lianne: You were playing with them when you were four or five?

Abdul: Yes, and they used to have these functions when they'd have a dignitary come to the city. The Ewes would take a group there, the Ashantis would take a group and the place was packed. I was always there and they even gave me a traditional outfit. I'd be dancing and with the little boy. That's how I started. Before I knew it I was playing the drums with them.

Lianne: So you don't know how you learned then? You just learned?

Abdul: No. I just picked it up.

Lianne: Do you remember watching their hands or anything like that?

Abdul: I had it in me. If I can hear the rhythm in my head, I can express it with my hands. That's what being inclined means. I don't know, maybe I heard a pitch somewhere. I don't know how, I just did it. So I did that until my parents took me away. My parents moved to the South and they came and took me away. That was the end of my drumming career in the North. I was about nine or ten.

Lianne: So when you were drumming in the North, you were learning Southern rhythms?

Abdul: Ewe rhythms.

Lianne: But were you also learning Northern rhythms?

Abdul: I didn't learn any Northern rhythms because I didn't have access to them. But I had the rhythms all in my head. If I hear Northern rhythms being played...

Lianne: So you knew what they were but you weren't playing them.

Abdul: Yes, I was playing Ewe rhythms because I had access to the whole thing. I never had access to playing northern drums at all. So when I left at nine or ten years for the South, I went to this school, an elite school. A university primer school. That's where I met this guy...[Dr. Koo Nimo, his drumming teacher]. He decided to form an ensemble at the school.

Lianne: Was he teaching there?

Abdul: I think he worked in the chemistry lab as a lab technician. He was always helping the school with their cultural education. He was a traditional African musician. Everyone knows him. He was very popular over there. So they said, "Let's have a cultural ensemble at our school. So can you help us Koo Nimo?" So he came down with his little group and there was a boy a little older than me who was playing atumpan. I was amazed at that time. So we were all in this hall and then they had little kids doing a demonstration. I was like "Wow!" And I just couldn't wait.

Lianne: And these were students of his?

Abdul: Yes his students but not students of the school. But eventually they came to the school because they were the nucleus of the group that we formed. So they did that a couple of days they played. Then they said, "Can anybody catch on to anything? You can pick it up and play it." I caught on to the *frichua* {time keeping instrument} right away. So before I knew, they had formed the group and I was playing frichua. And I remember my friend was playing...[Abdul begins to rhyme a part of the Adowa drum rhythm.] When he was finished school 'cause he was one year ahead of me, I took over that. Adowa was everything he taught us. Then before I knew, Noah, he's now in Australia, I would listen to him play and he would rhyme it to me. So before I knew I could play this. I was playing this on the atumpan. So by the time I finished junior high school and senior high school. I could play all those things.

And then the Ewe music was in my mind. I had an opportunity to play the Ewe one too [rhythm] at that school. They had an Ewe ensemble too and I was part of that too. And I could play this just like that. And the guy was like, "Hey!" But I said I learned it when I was little.

Lianne: Was it the Ewe rhythm called Agbadza that you played?

Abdul: Yes. Agbadza.

Lianne: That's what you played when you were little?

Abdul: Yes, but I played a bit of it in junior high school.

But the Kpanlogo itself, nobody taught me anything. The rhythm was in my head. I could [he rhymed a part of the Kpanlogo rhythm]. In junior high everybody plays it. Whenever we were having a sports activity. That's how I picked it up, because I was so inclined again, I just picked it up again. Then eventually I went back because I wanted to know this [he rhymed another Kpanlogo part]. I learned by just watching. The only thing that was actually taught was the Adowa. Everything else I learned by watching, I just picked it up. I played lots of it. Everywhere there were drums, I played. Eventually, I polished up (personal communication 18 February, 2001).

Transmission of Ghanaian Drumming in Calgary

The teaching and learning process that the researcher experienced was far different from the experience related above. Abdul began teaching lessons by describing where and when the rhythm he was focusing on were performed in Ghana. He tried to find video footage that illuminated the social context. He then demonstrated the most simple rhythm within the network of rhythms that make up the ensemble. He sometimes broke the rhythm down into more manageable sections that could be easily imitated. When he felt the student was comfortable with part of the rhythm, he would demonstrate another manageable section. Eventually he would demonstrate how the sections fit together. He often used spoken rhythm syllables to reinforce the rhythm being taught.

See the transcription of the rhythm on page 54 for an example of some rhythm syllables used during a lesson. Kubik briefly discusses these rhythm syllables. "Time-line patterns are often transmitted by vocal mnemonics used for teaching. These are either mere syllables or verbal patterns to suggest timbre, durational values and even rhythmic characteristics of the strokes to be executed" (2001, 202).

Kpanlogo in Calgary

Abdul started by teaching the Kpanlogo rhythm first. This rhythm is easier for a Western ear to capture than the Adowa. In the basic underlying rhythm there are fewer cross rhythms. Cross rhythms will be discussed further in the Adowa in Calgary section of this paper.

Abdul began teaching one of the simple rhythms from the Kpanlogo ensemble.



Rhythm syllables	du	da	ba	dun	pe	da	ba	dun	ta	daba	dun	pe	da	ba
Hands	R	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	R	R	L	R	L	R
Position on Drum	C	3	3	C	2	3	3	C	2	3	3	C	2	3
Muting or Ringing	m	r	r	m	m	r	r	m	m	r	r	m	m	r

C = centre zone

2 = zone 2 (between centre zone and zone 3)

3 = zone 3 (zone closest to the rim of the drum) (Jones 1959, 62–63)

In this preliminary lesson he demonstrated many techniques that must be used in order to create the right sound from each "tap" of the drum. Abdul clearly stated that in order to

hear a proper drumming sound a player must not beat the drums, but tap them. Playing with one finger near the edge of the drum will create a ringing sound as the skin is allowed to vibrate. In order to properly muffle, a player must play more toward the center of the drum. All fingers are used to muffle and they should be kept quite close together, not splayed apart. A player can also keep the opposite hand on the drum head to help prevent the head from ringing.

Abdul vocalized the rhythm with the syllables shown above. He explained that a rhyming scheme is used in Ghana to help teach children. He believes that if you hear the rhythm in your head, you can say it. If you can say it, you can play it. This system was probably developed because of the talking drum and its relationship with language.

The researcher was interested in knowing which hand should be used for each tap of the drum within the rhythm. Abdul explained that each hand can play the same role, however, a player will eventually develop a preference because of control issues and the resulting sound. To begin, the researcher tried to imitate the rhythm using the same hands as Abdul used in his demonstration.

At the end of the lesson, Abdul thought it best that the researcher spend the next week at home playing this rhythm until she felt it second nature. At the following lesson, Abdul started by playing this rhythm with the researcher and then diverting into other Kpanlogo rhythm variations while the researcher maintained the original rhythm. It was interesting to the researcher that even though she felt this rhythm to be second nature at home, hearing the variations at the same time were a bit unnerving. This feeling was a sign of needing more practice. At the end of the second lesson, Abdul suggested

experimenting with the rhythm to see if the researcher could "fill the gaps" (see the definition on page 9). Filling the gaps gives the rhythm fluidity, however some drummers try to fill the gaps too much and this shows they still have more to learn. Keeping it simple is better than trying to show off complicated patterns. Simply-played rhythms fit together better and are clearer. Too much spoils the overall texture and covers up the "body" of the music (see the definition on page 9). It takes experience to add to a rhythm at the right time without spoiling it.

In the third lesson, Abdul introduced the "body" of the Kpanlogo rhythm. This was a longer, more complicated rhythm than the first, and Abdul tried to simplify it by teaching a section at a time. He then demonstrated how to put the sections together. The researcher had a difficult time with this rhythm and found it important to video-tape the lesson and review the recording while practicing. A new technique was introduced in this lesson. The center of the drum should be tapped with a cupped palm or arced hand and fingers together. This creates a deeply pitched ring. Abdul also explained that when the hands become sore from practicing, the player is doing something technically wrong. "Always remember to tap the drum, not beat it" (personal communication, 2 September 2000).

Eventually as more of the rhythms were learned, Abdul began to show the researcher how a player can alternate between the rhythms. The transitions between rhythms were difficult for the researcher because in Ghanaian rhythms there is no beginning or end. Therefore, to end one and begin another takes much practice. Abdul eventually showed the researcher a pivot point in each rhythm where a transition could be

made. The identified pivot point did provide the researcher with a much clearer understanding about how the rhythms fit together and become an ensemble. However, the pivot point shown is not the only spot where a transition can be made. A pivot point is any point within two rhythms where both rhythms have a common beat—where each drum is played simultaneously. Refer to the full score of each rhythm to find pivot points. An example of a pivot point for the Kpanlogo rhythm can be found on page 74, second measure, third beat. In this particular spot, all drums are played simultaneously. When the rhythms are aligned vertically it is easier to see where any two drums are struck simultaneously. From the pivot point a player can make a transition from one drum variation to another. The drum rhythms can be interchanged. A rhythm played on one drum can be transferred to another drum, but a drum rhythm cannot be played on time keeper instrument. Similarly, a rhythm for a time keeper instrument cannot be played on a drum.

At this point, Abdul felt it necessary to explain that although in a performance the music may start at a slower tempo and eventually reach a frenzied state in the excitement, speeding up the tempo is a fault common to many performers. A steady tempo is preferred.

During a performance, if a player gets lost in the rhythm, s/he should not show it on the face. The researcher had developed the habit of grimacing or stopping when she had made a mistake. If the player does not show a mistake on the face, the audience will not necessarily know there was a mistake made.

Abdul would have liked to have arranged a group of players to get together and have the researcher experience being part of a Kpanlogo ensemble. However, Ghanaian drummers in Calgary are rare and this was too difficult to arrange. This was an important aspect of the transmission process that the researcher was unable to experience.

The following score shows how each part fits together. Click on “Rhythms” and “Kpanlogo” and choose any one of the instruments listed and “audio of the rhythm” and “-the regular Kpanlogo mix” to hear a recording of the full ensemble.

Kpanlogo

Annawuto-Lowbell



Annawuto-High bell



Maraka



Kpanlogo drum



Tamare variations (Djembe)





Clapping


Adowa in Calgary

The Adowa rhythms are played with sticks. The transmission process for Adowa drumming was similar to the Kpanlogo transmission. The first rhythm taught was the most simple. Eventually, when each rhythm had been learned, it was time to understand

how they fit together. The Adowa rhythm contains more cross rhythms which you can observe in the transcription below. One technique that was important for stick drumming was to keep the elbows close to the sides. Otherwise the arms become exhausted. Ladzekpo supports this idea. "The most important attribute of good drumming technique is, perhaps, a firm relaxation of the entire body as the hands go into motion, supported in position from the elbows and not the shoulders. The elbow is only a support mechanism for the hands held in a very relaxed but firm posture. The actual swing of the hand is done from the wrist and not from the elbows" (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>).

The position of the stick on the drum head was similar to Kpanlogo for particular sound effects. A ringing sound was created by letting the stick bounce off the drum head. This allowed the drum head to vibrate. A muted sound was created by tapping the drum head with the stick but not allowing the stick to rebound off. The stick was instead pressed on to the drum head which did not allow the head to vibrate.

Abdul explained that to Ghanaians, cross rhythms are not counted, they are felt. However, in Ladzekpo's analysis of cross rhythms, he demonstrates that for Westerners, cross rhythms can be counted if they need be. Ladzekpo explains that, "A simultaneous articulation of beat schemes of contrasting rhythmic motions normally produces a cross rhythmic texture. In practice a cross rhythm is produced by interacting beat schemes based on two or multiples of two units against those based on three or multiples of three units (2:3 ratio)" (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>). When played together these cross rhythms merge into what is called a composite rhythm. Ladzekpo

explains that, "In performance, a cross rhythm becomes a composite unit by combining the contrasting beat schemes into a *one line resultant rhythm—or–motif that recurs throughout the measure scheme as a unifying element*" (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>). An untrained Western ear can more easily comprehend a composite rhythm than separate the cross rhythm into two opposing parts.

To learn to play each rhythm, however, a drummer must understand how the cross rhythms fit together to form a composite rhythm. This skill is very difficult to start with. Therefore, Abdul thought it wise to start with Kpanlogo as cross rhythms are not nearly as common as in the Adowa rhythm. Inniss describes his teaching process of a cross rhythm to high school students in the "Music Educators Journal". "Sogo's rhythm, [an Ewe drum] although very simple when played alone, is very difficult to do in the total complex because it is grouped in *three* whereas most of the other rhythms seem to be in *two* (except the rhythm of kagang [another Ewe instrument], which, though in three, nevertheless relates easily with that of kidi [another Ewe drum]). I only entrust sogo to a musically experienced student, and I have found it expedient to teach the student to play it in combination with the gong—the right hand beating the gong, and the left hand beating sogo.... This sounds complicated, but, as mentioned earlier, it is easier to do the two rhythms together than to do one rhythm alone against the other rhythms. (At least, it is easier for non-Africans)" (1974, 52).

Most importantly, at all lessons, Abdul stressed the imperative of knowing the social context behind the music. If a student is to know anything about Ghanaian drumming, s/he must first understand who the rhythms belong to and where and when the

rhythms are appropriately performed before knowing what the rhythms are and how they are played. Ladzekpo states that, "It is very crucial, in the development of informed skills of appreciation and performance to translate the artistic techniques into their real-life meanings. In other words, if it is to be meaningful, the developmental techniques must be studied within the context of the shared customary ideas that they convey to the mind" (1995, <http://www.cnmat.berkeley.edu/~ladzekpo/>).

The following score shows how each part fits together. Click on "Rhythms" and "Adowa" and choose any one of the instruments listed and "audio of the rhythm" and "the regular Adowa mix" to hear a recording of the full ensemble.

Adowa

Dewuro



Petia



Apentemma 1



Apentemma 2



Entra



Petini



Atumpan



CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

The Value of Studying Music as Culture

After studying with Abdul Adams for a year, the researcher has learned much about Ghanaian music and culture. However, every answer generates more questions. Becoming an insider in another music is a never-ending quest.

The search is well-worth the effort. The journey opens up a realm of awareness that would not be possible within familiar territory. This awareness comes from an exposure to social structures that at first seem disconcerting—such as gender roles and polygamy. When issues such as these are examined through the eyes of a member of the culture a researcher can begin to address and redefine personal biases. It becomes apparent that people construct their lives differently and that other societies are equally viable.

It is revealing to observe the role music plays in everyone's life in Ghana. Music in Ghana has a far greater role in both everyday tasks and special ceremonies than in Canada. This is an interesting reflection for a Westerner who perhaps thought that Western music was very functional and highly superior to other ethnic musics. The reflection reveals that knowledge of another music can influence a perception of one's own. Agawu states that researchers emphasize the differences between African and Western music too much. It is through comparing the similarities that the differences become more clear (1995, 389–390). It is not necessary to judge one's own music and culture harshly, but perhaps it is necessary to add a new angle and perspective to how

music is defined in the mind. Nketia discusses a bimusical visionary named Phillip Gbeho who spearheaded public education in Ghana. He was a master drummer competent in the Ewe tradition. "Though a staunch supporter of traditional music, Gbeho never rebelled against Western music, or suggested that it should be deemphasized. He believed in bimusicality, because bimusicality made sense in terms of his background and experience" (1998, 34).

Is this kind of research meaningful (past), relevant (present), and significant (future)? To share knowledge of another culture's music with children in Calgary classrooms is to open up a window to heritage. This other music might be the personal heritage of a student or it might not. In either case, and considering the diverse classrooms in Calgary today, it is important to examine other cultures to become aware of Canadians as a polyculture. Knowledge of roots is not just knowledge of European pioneers arriving in the West. Today's population has arrived from all over the world. Each individual shapes Canadian culture into a diverse whole.

Is it good enough to buy a book containing music from other cultures? Should teachers teach a song from Africa and leave it at that? According to Wachsmann and Cooke, African music is not a single clearly identifiable phenomenon. The continent is large and diverse (see citation on pages 1-2). To teach music of another culture in this way is to teach nothing. Nketia states "in Africa, where music is an integral part of social life, musicology cannot but be an integrated study of music, society, and culture" (1998, 32). The music of Africa must be recontextualized in the classroom. The knowledge of African music and culture does not come only from books. This knowledge best comes

from people. Members of any ethnic community being studied are available for consultation and input. These people are the best resources available.

Teaching Ghanaian Music in Calgary

The teaching process of Ghanaian music is clearly defined. There are three main steps in acquiring a well-rounded knowledge about drumming. The first is to learn about the social context surrounding the rhythm in question. The second is to become familiar with the instruments of the ensemble. The third is to learn to imitate the rhythm with proper technique. To leave out any of these steps would be to leave large gaps in a student's knowledge.

The social context of a rhythm cannot be separated from the teaching process. Discussion with a member of the Ghanaian community is of immeasurable worth. There is also video footage available through libraries that can enlighten the student as to how music is performed in Ghana³. Abdul on many occasions insisted that

³ "Africa: The Gambia, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria," in *The JVC/Smithsonian Folkways Video Anthology of Music and Dance of Africa*. Japan: Victor Company of Japan, Ltd., 1996.

"Asante Market Women," in *Disappearing World*. Canada: Granada Television, Thomas Howe Associates, 1982.

Ashanti Kingdom. Films for the Humanities and Sciences, Inc., 1992.

"Dance at Court," in *Dancing Series*. Thirteen/WNET in Assoc. with RM Arts and BBC-TV, Princeton Book Publishers, 1993.

Great Tree Has Fallen. Canada: Robert Lang Productions, 1973.

Negro Kingdoms of Africa's Golden Age. Atlantis Productions, 1969.

Repercussions: A Celebration of African-American Music. Part 5—The drums of Dagbon. Chicago: Home Vision, 1984.

Ghanaians do not play music, they live music. Titon expresses that “Music symbolizes a people’s way of life; it represents a distillation of cultural style. For many, music is a way of life” (1996, xxi). Choksy explains that there are four steps in music transmission by saying, “teachers must stop trying to cover the vast subject of music and begin to uncover it a little bit at a time. This uncovering process involves four steps: *Prepare*→*Make Conscious*→*Reinforce*→*Assess*.” The prepare stage gets the learner ready through background knowledge for the concept to be taught. The make conscious stage reveals the actual concept to the learner. The reinforce stage provides the learner with an opportunity to practice and internalize the concept. The assess stage enables the teacher to evaluate whether or not the learner has mastered the concept. If the learner has not mastered the concept at this time, the concept must be revisited (Choksy 1999, 171–173). Teaching a student about the social context involved with the music being investigated could be considered part of the “preparation” stage for learning.

The instruments of a drumming ensemble are intricately created and painstakingly carved. The detail and care that is invested in the making of an instrument expresses the esteem in which instruments are held. These instruments are not mass-produced in a factory. A craftsman is trained to create the instrument by hand. The emblems carved on the sides of drums symbolize proverbs and beliefs that members of society live by. The care of the instrument is taught through a tradition of respect and honour. The instruments themselves can share a great deal of knowledge about the society and culture that plays them. This could be considered to be a part of the “preparation stage” as well (Choksy 1999, 171–173).

The technique for learning to play in a Ghanaian ensemble is complex. The transmission process should not be rushed. The researcher found that even though each rhythm demonstrated was often simplified and broken down, it is immensely helpful to videotape lessons to view while practicing. Due to the lack of experiences a Westerner has in the oral/aural tradition, s/he can find it difficult to remember the rhythms and how they fit together without technological tools.

Proper technique must be encouraged from the first lesson. A student should be corrected immediately if s/he is displaying poor technique to avoid developing bad habits. The first rhythm learned must be simple in order to concentrate on technique rather than the complexity of the rhythm. Again, it is important not to rush. Learning proper technique may take many lessons. This could be considered part of the “make-conscious” stage of learning (Choksy, 1999, 171–173).

There were three main ways in which Abdul tried to reinforce learning. The first was by vocalizing rhythms into rhythm syllables. Secondly, he repeated demonstrations and had the student echo the rhythm many times. Finally, when the student could maintain the rhythm independently, he added a complementary rhythm to be sure that this would not result in the student’s independence breaking down. A reinforcement technique that would be helpful for a student, but was unavailable to this researcher, would be participation in an ensemble. This step of creating an ensemble would follow the three listed above. It would provide cohesion to the knowledge and skill learned through individual lessons. This final stage could be considered the “reinforcement” and “assess” stage of learning (Choksy 1999, 171–173).

The transmission process used by Abdul Adams and the researcher can be used as a model for educators in Calgary to follow. Within this package a CD-ROM has been included to help the learner become familiar with some of the instruments used and the sounds of the rhythms that merge to form the ensemble. The CD-ROM was inspired by Mary Goetze and Jay Fern's research titled *Global Voices: An Interactive Multicultural Experience vol. 1: Four Swazi Songs*. This research is very helpful for exposing a learner to the sights and sounds of traditional African music. Included are video clips of musicians performing, as well as interviews with members from the South African society. Pronunciation of the Swazi language is provided. Goetze and Fern defended using an interactive CD-ROM to learn music.

Because the music included on this CD-ROM is not learned by South Africans from musical notation, we feel that it is appropriate for westerners to learn it aurally as well. First, we want to honor the musical tradition and learn from it. We feel that this is accomplished by embracing aspects of the process by which it is transmitted rather than transforming the music to accommodate western musicians' reliance on musical symbols. Second, conventional western notation would be insufficient in representing all aspects of the music, such as vocal timbre, idiosyncratic slides and scoops, improvised ululation, and subtle rhythmic nuances. Third, if it were notated and no aural model was provided, western musicians would apply the same conventions of reading music that they apply when interpreting western scores, and sing it as they would European art music, and/or employ a generalized notion of style (1999, 5).

Educators should take advantage of the technological tools that are available to help them in the classroom.

Plans for Implementation

To teach Kpanlogo or Adowa in a public school setting, the first step would be to introduce the students to the social context involved with each rhythm. This could be

achieved through video footage, a guest presentation from the Ghanaian community, or if possible attending a performance of Kpanlogo or Adowa. Students could also explore books containing information about Ghana and Ghanaian people. The internet is a useful resource for exploration as well.

The instruments of a Kpanlogo or Adowa ensemble should be investigated next. Pictures or ideally actual Ghanaian drums could be examined. A discussion about the construction of the instruments including materials and symbolic designs would be important. The issue of respect for the instruments would need to be explored and the reasons for respecting the instruments discovered such as the spiritual connection for the Ghanaian people.

To introduce playing the drums, the students should be exposed to the sound of a Kpanlogo or Adowa ensemble. A recording, video, or ideally live performance would probably motivate students to desire to create an ensemble for themselves. Students in an ensemble would need to meet with the teacher individually as well as rehearse with the ensemble to develop proper technique and to learn to fit each rhythm together. An extra-curricular group would probably be the most successful as it could be smaller than a regular classroom of students.

Questions for Future Research

The researcher focused on the experience and knowledge of Abdul Adams primarily. In future research, a female member of Ghanaian society living in Calgary should be consulted. The female perspective appears to be an important angle that has

yet to be examined. Different age groups should also be explored. Both children and elders should be consulted and the viewpoints of each generation should be compared.

There are also other Ghanaian communities in Canada and North America that should be studied. Abdul informed the researcher that there is a large Ghanaian community in Toronto, Ontario. A comparison of the diaspora across North America would reveal a more detailed picture of Ghanaian-Canadian sensibility. Finally, a comparison between the North American diaspora perspective and what is actually happening today in Ghana would be captivating⁴. There is a distinct possibility that a Ghanaian living in North America would perceive Ghana to be as it was when s/he left and not be aware of the social evolution that has taken place. After living in North America for a number of years, how does a Ghanaian perceive her/his homeland? Is the perception accurate only to the time period s/he remembers? Have views been influenced by North American culture? Has the culture in Ghana evolved into something different than remembered? How much difference is there between urban and rural music? These questions could be answered by studying groups in North America and travelling to Ghana to observe the reality of today.

In Ghana alone, there are many culture groups that were not examined in this research. In Africa there are a myriad of culture groups that were not examined in this research. Africa is a large continent with a diverse population. There is endless research waiting to be done on the diaspora from Africa in North America. This research would provide North Americans with a better understanding of our global culture.

⁴ Anthony Seeger. 1987. *Why Suyá Sing: A Musical Anthropology of an Amazonian People*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Finally, from this research, a detailed method for teaching the two rhythms discussed above could be developed with a series of lessons for teacher in the public school system. This would be a practical resource from which nonAfrican music teachers could rely to help expand their world music curriculum.

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Appendix A: Samples of Fieldnotes

1 July 2000

Beautiful day. Abdul was fixing his TV remote when I arrived. He was joking about being frustrated with his kids wrecking everything.

I clarified how many ropes are attached to the jarra dancer costume and we discussed further how these dancers show their skill by dropping the ropes one at a time or very slowly.

We talked about how Abdul does not really fit the image of a drummer in Ghana because of his western clothes and his education. When he goes back to visit, often if he is looking at drums, the people think he is a tourist wanting to buy them. They are surprised to find out he can actually play them. Most often a drummer in Ghana is not an educated man except in the area of drumming.

I think this "image" led us to the comment that an Ashanti drummer does not wear shoes in front of his chief.

Drum "harmony" is explained to potential drummers as a family. Big drums—father, smaller—mother, brother, sister.

Before I talk about the actual drumming lesson, here is the setting. Abdul's house is a bi-level duplex. His mother answered the door with a welcoming smile and asked if she could help me carry my drum upstairs. Abdul's whole family always makes me feel very welcome.

Upstairs is the living room on the left and the kitchen/dining room straight ahead. Beyond this, I believe, are the bedrooms and bathroom which I have never seen.

Sometimes Abdul and I go downstairs to the basement—it is not finished. However, he has his laundry facilities down there and a hide-a-bed couch which is always opened into a bed. It is a large basement and in one corner, he keeps his drums. There are odds and ends for furniture downstairs being stored. Abdul and I sit on regular kitchen chairs by the drums facing one another for our sessions.

Sometimes Abdul and I meet upstairs in the living room for our sessions. There is a long sectional couch in one corner and a break to enter the living room. Another section of the couch borders the railing of the stairs from the entrance. The couch creates a squared-off U-shape with a coffee table in the center.

The TV (big screen) and entertainment center finish the square on the last wall. The entertainment center is on wheels and can be pulled out to access patio doors behind. This leads to a balcony which I assume they seldom use.

Every time I am there, the big screen TV is on and tuned into a music channel. It looks like a satellite dish system, not cable. The music is always a popular style.

Sometimes his children are around, but sometimes not. They are very well-behaved children and never question when they are asked to do something. His oldest daughter Samira is obviously a great help around the house and is often running to get a drum or something her father needs for the lesson.

Last week I learned the rhythm da ba dun - pe—off beat. This week, Abdul asked me to alternate this rhythm with da ba dun - boom—down beat. He also suggested that this week I try to fill the gaps in the rhythm but always come back to the basic.

It was interesting to add our drumming to an African-American popular song that was playing on TV while our lesson was taking place. It was obvious to see that the African rhythm and the pop rhythm were very closely related. Abdul has commented before that a lot of the popular stuff in the United States is not new but very traditional African rhythm. He also relates Latin rhythms to African. Dance moves that you see on TV are often borrowed from traditional African dance.

We talked briefly about the talking drum—don do and the big drum—dun du and how they are pronounced slightly differently. He gave me an example of a Ghanaian word which has three different meanings depending on the pitch of the syllables.

Papa—low evenly pitched syllables—means fan or cooling '

Papa—medium evenly pitched syllables—means good

Papa—medium pitched first syllable, higher pitched second
syllable—means father

Because of these pitch variations, the language can be transferred to a drum. Different sized drums can be used, or a drum that can be tuned as it is played by tightening or loosening the ropes strung between heads, or by using a stick or hand pressure to tighten or loosen the skin of the drum while playing. This would take many hours/years of practice as it is very difficult to do. Of course you must have knowledge of the language before beginning to learn this drumming. I will be limited as to how much of this I will have time to learn.

We had a short lesson today (one hour) because of the Canada Day holiday.

Prince's Island Park

A group of women doing African drumming in the park called themselves "The Rhythm Method". I got some of this on video tape and plan to show it to Abdul to get his opinion.

I talked to one group member who explained that they had started because of Roger at One-World Drums (store in Calgary). He gave lessons to some of them and they hooked up and created this group. None of the drums were from Ghana (they were much too heavy). Some were made in Africa and some in British Columbia. The lady claimed that the rhythms they were playing were West African rhythms, but she did not attempt to name the rhythms or where they came from. This makes me wonder if they know what they are playing and if they are authentically accurate.

Appendix B: Domain Analysis

1. Music and Life Integrated
2. Community Parenting
3. Physical Etiquette
4. Master Drummer
5. Meaning of Symbols
6. Meaning of Music
7. Respect for Drums
8. Instruments and Sticks: how they are made
9. Gender Roles
10. Behaviour Management
11. Hierarchy
12. Rhythm Syllables
13. Talking Drums
14. Transmission
15. Ensembles
16. Proverbs and Superstitions
17. Drumming and Society
18. Technique of Drumming
19. Performance Etiquette
20. Western Influence on Ghanaians

Appendix C: Taxonomy

Chapter 4: Ghanaian Culture and Music

- A. Western Influence
- B. Ghanaian Customs
 - 1. Community Parenting
 - 2. Physical Etiquette
 - 3. Behaviour Management
- C. Individual Roles in Ghana
 - 1. Family
 - 2. Gender Roles
- D. Music and Life Integrated
 - 1. Meaning of Music
 - 2. Hierarchy
 - 3. Drumming and Society
- E. Communication Through Talking Drums
 - 1. Orality and History in Ghana

Chapter 5: Kpanlogo of the Ga and Adowa of the Ashanti

- A. Instruments
 - 1. Kpanlogo Ensemble
 - a. Transcriptions
 - b. Physical Descriptions
 - c. Meaning of Symbols Carved on Drums
 - 2. Adowa Ensemble
 - a. Transcriptions
 - b. Physical Descriptions
- B. Transmission
 - 1. Kpanlogo in Ghana
 - a. Social Context
 - 2. Adowa in Ghana
 - a. Social Context
 - b. Transcription of Interview about Abdul's Learning Experience
 - 3. Ghanaian Drumming in Calgary
 - a. Kpanlogo in Calgary
 - i. Technique
 - ii. Rhythm Syllables
 - iii. Performance Etiquette
 - b. Adowa in Calgary
 - i. Technique
 - ii. Cross Rhythms
 - iii. Social Context

Chapter 6: Conclusion

- A. The Value of Studying Music as Culture**
 - 1. "Meaningfulness, relevancy, and significance" of research for the past present and future.
 - 2. Recontextualizing in the classroom
- B. Teaching Ghanaian Music in Calgary**
- C. Plans for Implementation**
- D. Questions for Future Research**

Appendix D: Abdul Adams Biography

Abdul Ridwan Adams was born in Tamale, Northern Ghana. He is the great grandson of a Moshi master drummer from Burkina Fasso in West Africa. His primary, secondary and university education was received in Ghana.

Abdul's musical talent was evident at an early age. He played Ewe drums at a very tender age, then trained under Daniel Amponsah, alias Koo Nimo (a renowned Ghanaian traditionalist, guitarist, and master drummer) as a member of the Youth Cultural Ensemble.

Abdul arrived in Canada in November, 1989. He has been very active with the Ghanaian Canadian Association of Calgary and the African Community Association of Calgary. Some of his activities include playing drums, performing drum workshops in and around Alberta, and performing at various functions, schools, and institutions. He has worked with Professor Brita Heimarck and Professor Jerry Kerlin at the University of Calgary performing lectures concerning African music and culture. Abdul also co-formed the African band *Dabatram* in Calgary, and played with the Jamaican band *Activate*.

Currently, Abdul teaches drumming and is very active in the Calgary community. He is employed as Property Manager for the City of Calgary (Calhome Properties).

Appendix E: Consent Form

Research Project Title: The Transmission of Ghanaian Music by Abdul Adams in Calgary, Alberta, Canada: Teaching and Learning Kpanlogo of the Ga and Adowa of the Ashanti as Social Expression

Investigator: Lianne Burns

This consent form, a copy of which has been given to you, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this research is to study the transmission of Ghanaian music by Abdul Adams in Calgary, AB. It is expected that the transmission of the music will be primarily oral/aural and there will be explanations about culture and traditions included. Abdul is the main subject being studied as he grew up in Ghana and “lived” the music we will be discussing and performing. There will also be input from members of Abdul’s family such as his daughter, his mother, and his cousin. Any performances that take place in Calgary will also be attended and researched.

The research will be presented as a case study through participant observation.

Discomfort and inconvenience will be minimal as all arrangements have been and will be made in advance and at the convenience of the subjects.

The participation will include a weekly lesson on Saturday morning as well as attendance by the investigator of any performances. The investigator will be participating in learning to play the African drums as well as observing and questioning the subjects.

The written information collected in the form of a thesis will become public information at the University of Calgary on approval by the subjects only. This information will be stored on a personal computer disk belonging to the investigator. Video tapes and audio tapes will also belong personally to the investigator and will only be shared on approval by the subjects. If any of the information that is collected is not approved by the subjects, it will be destroyed. Subjects will be free to review any of the information collected at any time.

There will be regular communication between the investigator and the subjects at the weekly meetings (orally/aurally) and also telephone communication to inform the subjects of any new information during the course of the research.

The investigator will, as appropriate, explain to your child the research and her involvement, and will seek her ongoing cooperation throughout the project.

Abdul will receive a fee of \$20.00 per session for the weekly lesson provided.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. If you have further questions concerning matters related to this research please contact:

Lianne Burns
274 - 6910
or
Jerry Kerlin
220 - 6696

If you have any questions or issues concerning this project that are not related to the specifics of the research, you may also contact the Research Services Office at 220-3782 and ask for Mrs. Patricia Evans.

Participant's Signature

Date

Investigator's Signature

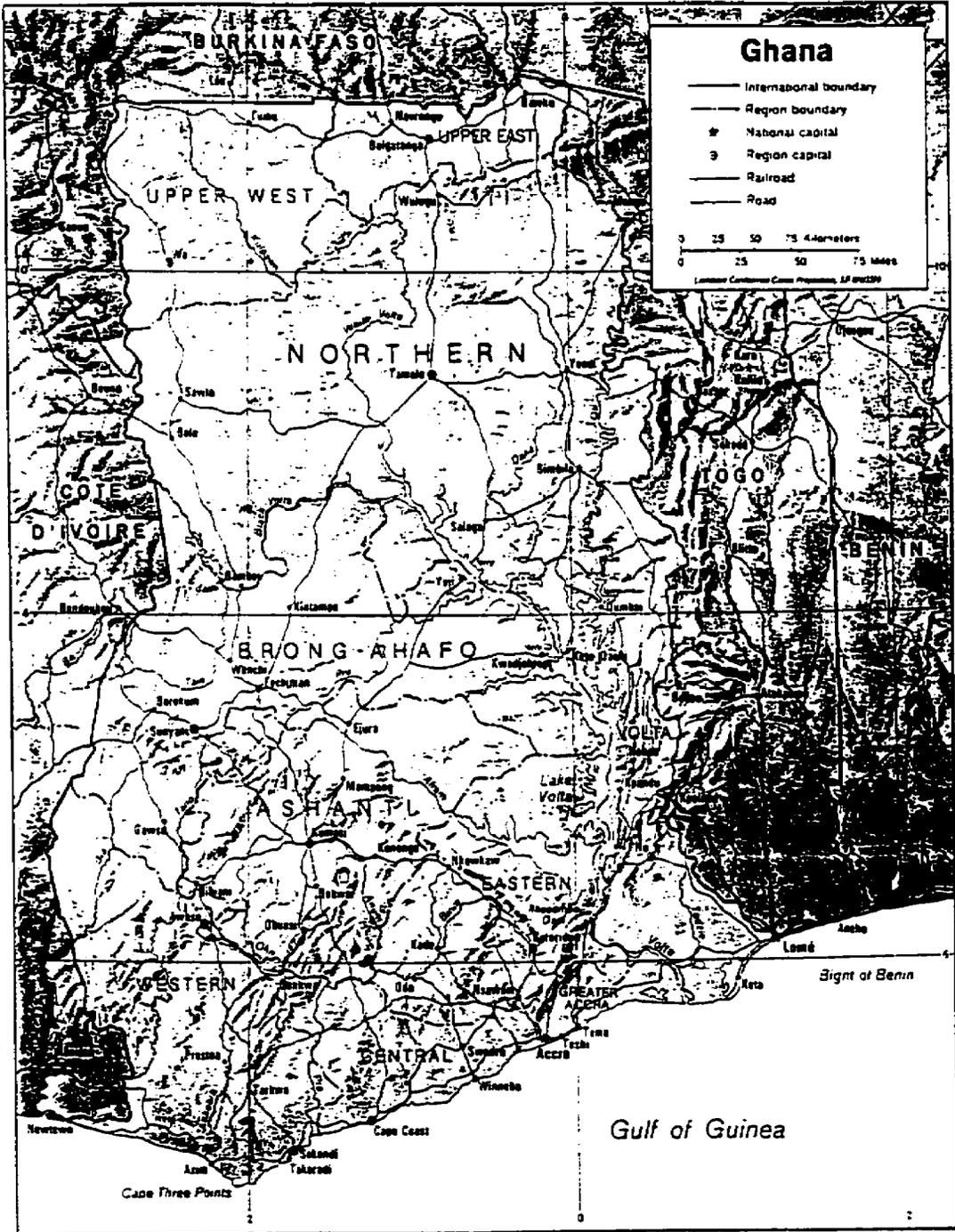
Date

Witness' Signature

Date

A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Appendix F: Map of Ghana



(U.S. Central Intelligence Agency 1996)