CREATIVE PROCESSES IN AKAN MUSICAL CULTURES: INNOVATION WITHIN
TRADITION

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CREATIVE PROCESSES IN AKAN MUSIC: INNOVATIONS WITHIN TRADITION

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The aim of this dissertation is to explain the creative processes in composition and performance of traditional music, and the subsequent innovations that emerge out of these processes in the musical traditions of the Akan people of Ghana. The study is premised on the fact that traditional musicians in the Akan culture, like most people on the surface of the earth, also have the natural capacity to consciously or unconsciously effect changes in their environments, play significant roles in most human-initiated change processes, and make contributions to both the material and institutional aspects of their culture, as their creative sensibilities or tendencies continue to bring about various forms of innovations from time to time. Based on this fact, the present study is oriented more toward the creative activities of individual composer-performers in the Akan society who are believed to be making profound contributions through their creative activities, consciously or unconsciously and directly or indirectly, to sustain the entire music traditions of Akan.

Akan traditional music is transmitted orally and musicians literally compose the music either before or during performance; the music that they produce is either entirely new or a partial re-composition of pre-existing music. Accordingly, the study investigates the processes by which new ideas are generated and added to existing ones. It examines how Akan traditional musicians, working within the constraints imposed by the artistic parameters of the culture, consciously and subconsciously generate new ideas as they reproduce, reconstruct, reorder, and reinterpret the existing musical elements through their creative processes, and as a result bring about innovation

in the tradition. These innovations are a necessary factor for sustaining the tradition, and for making it relevant to every period.

Although the primary focus of this study is the Akan culture, it, however, highlights several issues—relating to creativity, change and innovation—that may also concern many cultures of Africa. Therefore, by using the Akan culture as a premise, what the study also seeks to establish is that an approach to the study of social change in relation to African art in general cannot focus on institutions without taking into account the human creative activities. The human creative tendencies that reveal both the innate capacity (the personality) and the culturally acquired knowledge are of primary relevance in understanding both change and continuity, particularly in Africa, and generally in any oral tradition.

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PREFACE

The thought of researching into the creative processes generally among traditional African musicians has dawned on me for quite a long time now, even long before I embarked on graduate studies at the University of Ghana and the University of Pittsburgh. This thought was necessitated by the fact that much of the literature on creativity in African musical cultures—with the exception of a few—seems to have dwelt more on creative activities within performance context. In other words, creativity among African musicians seems to have been viewed as an activity that can only take place within a performance setting. And all along, I have wondered as to whether traditional musicians in the African communities do at all work on their compositions *before* they perform them; and if they do, whether it is possible for them to *explain* the processes that they go through during the creation of the songs.

However, when this thought came to me, I had no clear conception of how such a work might be if I should at all embark on a project of that sort. Secondly, I also noticed that in dealing with such issues, I would not only be dealing with music, but also with related disciplines that study the human society, ranging from anthropology to sociology, psychology, linguistics, history, philosophy and religion. By studying ethnomusicology, I became more prepared for such a venture. The reason is that, first, ethnomusicology studies non-Western music of which Africa is part. Second, it deals with issues relating to human activity of which creativity, change and innovation are part. Third, it embraces and encourages the study of most of these cognate disciplines that also study the human culture, with the exception of history and psychology, which seem to fall outside its umbrella.

Historical studies do not seem to have been encouraged because most of ethnomusicological research seems to have dwelt on the synchronic approach (how cultures are viewed today in the

life of the observer), and have explained culture more as a product and not also as a *process*. Psychology also seems to have fallen out of favor with ethnomusicology, probably because culture has been believed to take pre-eminence over the individuals whose *minds* have created (and still continue to create) their own cultures. Therefore, to embark on this study, I had to also do some readings and research in some of these cognate disciplines in addition to my ethnomusicological research. The purpose for these seemingly extensive studies is to understand every facet of the human endeavor that relates to his/her ability to *create* and *change* his/her environment.

Although I have focused on the Akan culture in this study, I have also considered those issues I raised within the broad context of Africa and even within oral cultures in general. Accordingly, I am not informed about issues of creativity only from my research among the Akan—although that is paramount—but I am also informed by what other scholars have said about other cultures with regard to these same issues. These have included African cultures such as the Mande, Ewe, Gã, Yoruba, Igbo, Shona, Venda and those of Central Africa, as well as other non-African cultures such as those of the Latin America and the Caribbean, and even India and few other areas. By this background knowledge, I have searched for parallels and have approached the work both as a study of a single group—the Akan—and also as a comparative study among several groups of people who share many similarities.

I do not, however, claim to have exhausted all that needs to be known about creativity, change and innovation, even within the Akan culture. There may be some other areas that I may not have covered probably due to the time frame within which I had to organize all the information. In view of such limitation, a few of the views, theoretical insights and concepts I have raised in the study were not adequately expounded as I would have wished them to be.

However, because I also see this venture as the beginning of many such ventures to come, I am fully confident and hopeful that a future research will adequately address those issues.

1. CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1. Aims and Objective

The aim of this dissertation is to explain the creative processes in composition and performance of traditional music, and the subsequent innovations that emerge out of these processes in the musical traditions of the Akan people of Ghana. Akan traditional music is transmitted orally and musicians literally compose the music either before or during performance;[1] the music that they produce is either entirely new or a partial re-composition of pre-existing music.[2] Accordingly, the study investigates the processes by which new ideas are generated and added to existing ones. It examines how Akan traditional musicians, working within the constraints imposed by the artistic parameters of the culture, consciously and subconsciously generate new ideas as they reproduce, reconstruct, reorder, and reinterpret the existing musical elements through their creative processes, and as a result bring about innovation in the tradition. These innovations are a necessary factor for sustaining the tradition, and for making it relevant to every period.

The choice of the Akan as the targeted population or linguistic group for the study rests on a number of reasons. First, Akan is the largest ethnic group in Ghana. Second, Akan traditional music, like most traditional music in Africa, is transmitted orally. Third, the Akan culture and traditions are somewhat similar in scope and practice to other Ghanaian cultures and traditions, especially the Gã,[3] and other cultures and traditions of the West African sub-region such as those

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[1] For a similar case in Ewe compositional processes, see G. W. K. Dor, "Tonal Resources and Compositional Processes of Ewe Traditional Vocal Music" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2001).

[2] For a similar case in Akan music, see Kwasi Ampene, "Creative Processes in Nnwonkro: A Female Song Tradition of the Akan of Ghana" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1999).

[3] I have lived and interacted with the Gã people since 1966. This has given me the privilege to consciously and unconsciously assimilate and understand their culture, and furthermore, to learn to speak, read and write their language.

of the Mende of Sierra Leone and the Ibo and Yoruba of Nigeria.[4] And fourth, as a native of Akan, my cultural background gives me an added advantage to research into the music-creative processes of the people.

The selection of the genres for the present study is based on a criterion that will be explained later in the chapter. Many of these genres are recreational types that emerged as a result of *creative* tendencies of Akan traditional composers seeking *new* musical types for "popular use"[5] within the popular culture. The term "popular culture" here is defined in the traditional sense to mean the day-to-day culture of the people, in which almost every person in the community is enculturated. According to Joseph K. Adjaye, such popular culture—in the traditional sense— "finds expression in the way we live, the things we think about, the people around us, and their activities."[6] And the major components of this popular culture, he continues, "are objects, persons, and events, but it is through the use of symbols that popular culture is mostly constructed."[7]

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[4] For the case of the Mende and Ibgo, see Kwadwo A. Okrah, *Nyansapo (The Wisdom Knot): Toward an African Philosophy of Education* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 3; and for the case of the Yoruba, see Segun Gbadegesin, "Ènìyan: The Yoruba Concept of a Person," under "Metaphysical Thinking in Africa," in *The African Philosophy Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. P. H. Coetzee and A. P. J. Roux (New York: Routledge, 2003), 175-191. The similarilties in cultures of the Yoruba and the Igbo, in addition to linguistic factors, confirm their inclusion in the Kwa language family.

[5] See J. H. Kwabena Nketia, *Folk Songs of Ghana* (Accra: Ghana Universities Press, 1963). The term "popular use" in this context means "common use."

[6] Joseph K. Adjaye, *Boundaries of Self and Other in Ghanaian Popular Culture* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2004), 3. The understanding of popular culture in the traditional sense seems to come close to the idea that popular culture is a "mass culture," see John Storey, *An Introduction to Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, 2nd ed. (Anthens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1998); Keith Negus, *Popular Music in Theory: An Introduction* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1996); and Max Paddison, *Adorno, Modernism and Mass Culture: Essays on Critical Theory and Music* (London: Kahn & Averill, 1996). However, in the traditional sense, it refers to the mass of people belonging to the same tradition, and in this case to the same ethnicity. This traditional concept, however, differs markedly from other held concepts of popular culture, which define the term as that which is "favored or well liked by many people" (Storey 1998, p.7); as that which "is left over after we have decided what is high culture" (Ibid); as that which "originates with the people" (*Ibid*., p.12); and as that which relates to the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci's concept of popular culture (Storey 1998; and Negus 1996).

[7] Adjaye 2004, p. 3.

Accordingly, these recreational songs, used within the popular culture, generally have a relatively higher rate of change than the religious or ritual music. This situation therefore, makes the songs relevant for a study of this kind that seeks to explore the creative processes in musical composition.

1.2.   Geographical Scope of Study

As one of the large linguistic groups in West Africa, the Akan people occupy that portion of southern Ghana and southeastern Ivory Coast bounded by the Volta River in the east and the Komoe (Comoe) River in the west. The Guinea Coast and the Black Volta River form the southern and northern boundaries, respectively. Although Akan are found in both Ghana and the Ivory Coast, this dissertation emphasizes the music and cultures of the Akan people of the Republic of Ghana, known as the Eastern Akan.

As the predominant group in Ghana, the Akan—with other small groups such as Ahanta, Anyin, Awutu, Nzema, Sehwi and Wasa—occupy most of the southern half of the country, an area estimated to be one-half of the 92,000 square miles of Ghana's territory.[8] Their northern boundary is the upper course of the Volta River, while the southern is the Gulf of Guinea; in the east, their boundary extends to the western part of the Volta Region, while in the west, it stretches to the southern corner of the Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire). Of the ten regions of Ghana, the Akan occupy six: they are the sole occupants of the Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, Central and Western[9] regions, and they constitute the majority ethnic group in the Eastern region and roughly

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[8] Peter Sarpong, *Girls Nubility Rites in Ashanti* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1977). For the total number of people is about 8,060,800 (the Akan is 7,000,000, Ahanta is 100,000, Anyin is 200,000, Awutu is 100,000, Nzema is 285, 800, Sehwi is 200, 000, and Wasa is 175, 000).
[9] There are, however, a number of small-scale non-Akan societies, such as the Banda, Mo, Ntwumuru (aboriginal Guan society), Badu, Ligby, and Gyaman who live in the Brong-Ahafo region. Those occupying the Western

a third of the population of the Volta region.[10] Below are three maps—an African map and two

Ghana maps, with the second showing all the Akan regions.

Region with the Akan are actually the Baule of the Anyin in the Southeastern borders of the Cote d'Ivoire—who have Akan blood and are known to exhibit Akan characteristics. See K. Nkansah Kyeremateng, *The Akan of Ghana: Their History and Culture* (Accra: Sebewie Publishers, 1996).

[10] See maps at pages 5 and 6.

Figure 1: Map of Africa, showing the country Ghana in West Africa (From Nketia 1974, p. vi).
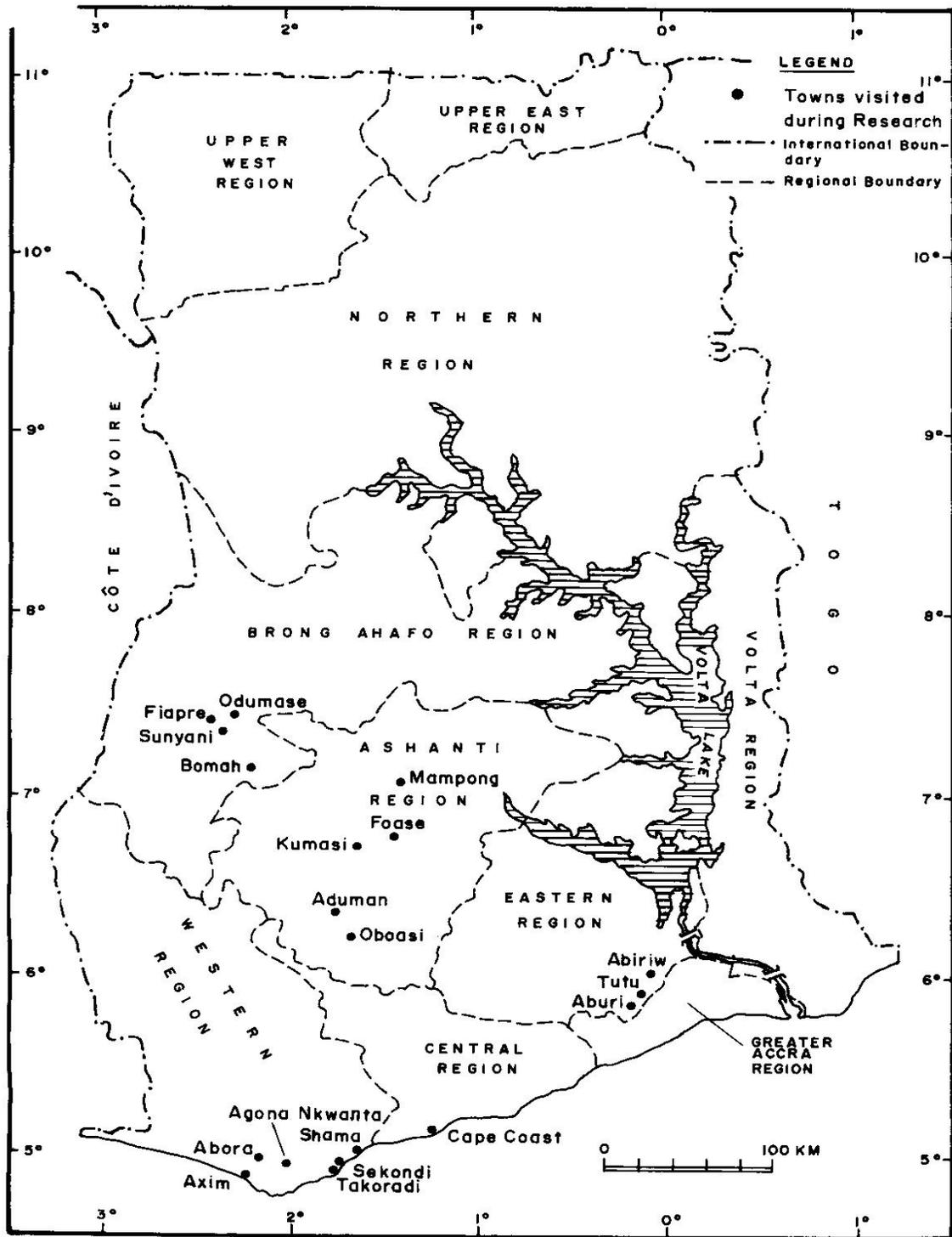
Fig. 1 Map of Ghana showing Regions and Towns visited during Research

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Figure 2: Map of Ghana showing Regions and Towns
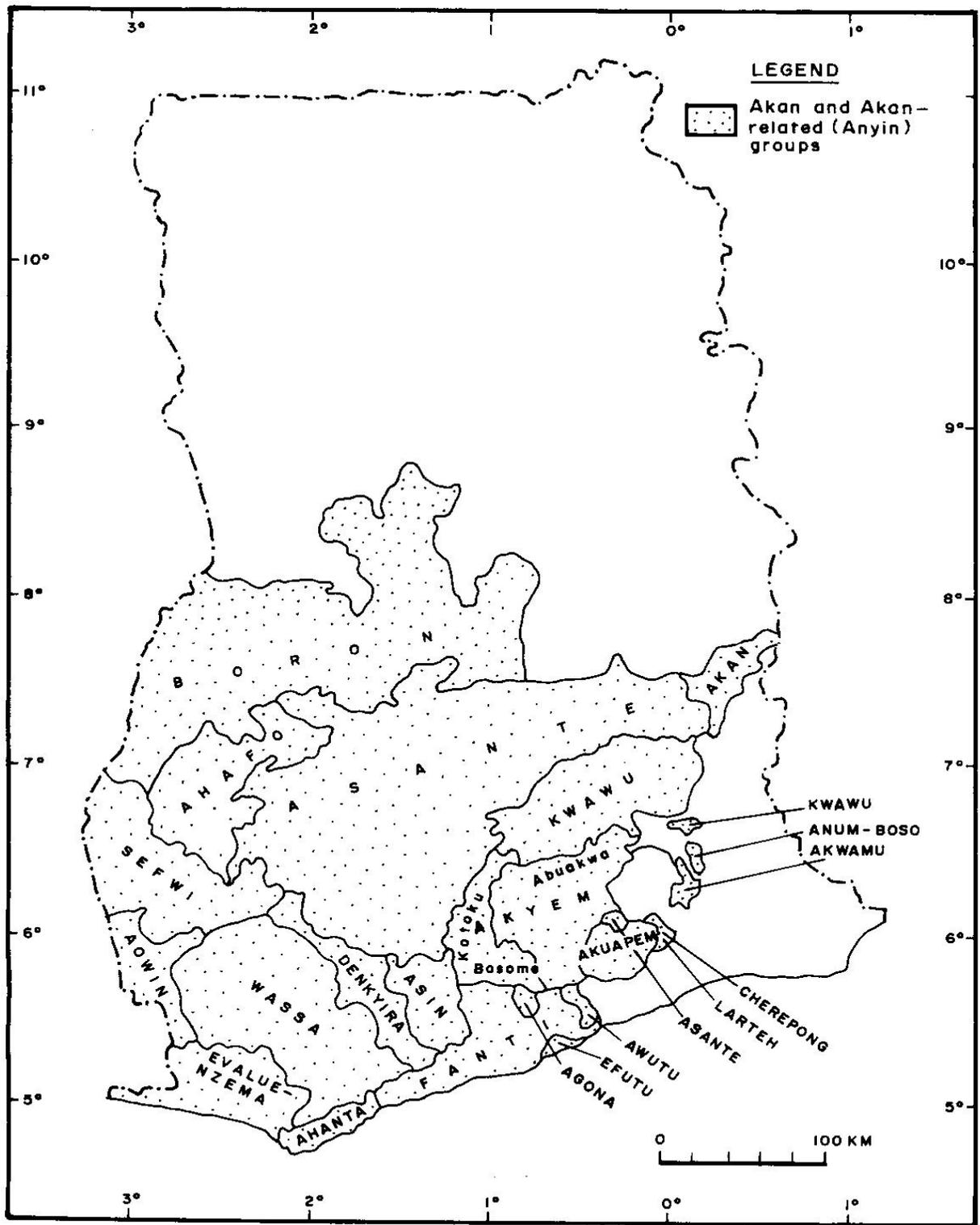
Fig. 2 Map of Ghana showing the Akan and Akan-related (Anyin) groups

Figure 3: Map of Ghana showing the Akan Groups

1.3.   Defining the Research Problem

Interest in creativity—a subject which manifests itself in every conceivable aspect of human endeavor—has spanned many centuries and almost every culture in the world, because of the general, and accepted, belief that the capacity to create and develop new ideas and solutions to old or existing problems is one of man's most critical capacities.[11] Thus, efforts to understand the creative process,[12] the creative ability and the creative individual hold a prominent place in the literature of ethnomusicology, historical musicology, systematic musicology, intercultural musicology, music theory, music psychology, and music education.[13]

Creativity investigations have sought to address[14] such questions as "what is creativity," "who is the creative person and how is such a person identified," "what individual and contextual factors or processes lead to a creative product,"[15] "how are creative achievements identified and

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[11] See Morris I. Stein, "Survey of the Psychological Literature in the Area of Creativity with a View toward Needed Research" (Research Center for Human Relations, *Report*, 1962); and Albert Rothenberg and Bette Greenberg, *The Index of Scientific Writings on Creativity: Genera, 1566-1974* (Hamden, Connecticut: The Shoe String Press, 1976).

[12] This is a process involving the cognitive, and sometimes the affective and the psychomotor, activities.

[13] As reference, see for example, J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "Generative Process in Seperewa Music, in *Africa* (1962): 112-134; "Improvisation in African Music" (paper presented at the University of Chicago, as part of the Series of Lecture/Recitals, Improvisation in Music: East and West, Spring 1969); John Blacking, "Tonal Organization in the Music of Two Venda Initiation Schools," *Ethnomusicology* 14 no.1 (1970): 1-33; *How Music is Man* (London: University of Washington Press, 1973); Bell Yung, *Cantonese Opera: Performance as Creative Process* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Akin Euba, *Yoruba Drumming: The Dundun Tradition* (Bayreuth: Bayreuth African Studies Series, 1990); V. Kofi Agawu, "Variation Procedures in Northern Ewe Song," *Ethnomusicology* 34, no.2 (1990): 221-243; Meki Nzewi, *Musical Practice and Creativity: An African Traditional Perspective* (Bayreuth: Iwalewa-Haus, University of Bayreuth, 1991); N. N. Kofie, *Contemporary African Music in World Perspectives* (Cape Coast: Ghana University Press, 1994); Fred Lerdahl, "Cognitive Constraints on Compositional Systems," in *Generative Processes in Music: The Psychology of Performance, Improvisation, and Composition*, ed., John A. Sloboda (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1988), 231-258; Leonard B. Meyer, *Style and Music: Theory, History and Ideology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989); John A. Sloboda, *The Musical Mind: The Cognitive Psychology of Music* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1985); ed., *Generative Processes in Music: The Psychology of Performance, Improvisation, and Composition* (Oxford, UK: Claredon Press, 1988).

[14] See Morris I. Stein and Shirley J. Heinze, *Creativity and the Individual: Summaries of Selected Literature in Psychology and Psychiatry* (Chicago: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1960).

[15] Robert T. Brown, "Creativity: What Are We to Measure?" in *Handbook on Creativity: Perspectives on Individual Differences*, ed., John A. Glover, Royce R. Ronning and Cecil R. Reynolds (New York: Plenum Press, 1989), 3.

assessed," and "what is the status of creativity as a concept and what implications does that status have for theory development and evaluation."[16]

Although some scholars have attempted to provide general theoretical answers to these questions without any contextual consideration or reference to any particular culture[17]—and although such general answers may be possible for some of the questions—real answers to most of these questions may still differ from one culture to the other, because of differences in concepts and definitions each culture may have for such terms as *creative personality*, *creative process* and *creative products*. Hence, there is a need to explore these issues within the context of the Akan tradition in particular and African culture in general.

Furthermore, creativity investigations have revealed two other practical yet related concerns that underlie the entire study of creativity. The first is the *change-continuity* issue with respect to tradition, that is, the changes and innovations that occur within a tradition as a result of individuals' creative activities. The second is the *nature-nurture* issue, which involves the roles played by the individual's innate capacity or *personality* versus those played by the cultural knowledge in the creative process.[18]

Since *change-continuity* and *nature-nurture* issues equally occupy an important place among the musicological and musical disciplines,[19] I treat them in the present study as sub-themes. In

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[16] See Stein and Heinze 1960; and Brown 1989, p. 4.

[17] *Ibid*.

[18] I consider these issues to be practical because our understanding and interpretation of any musical event—which is comprised of all musical processes and practices within a particular socio-cultural milieu, and a particular historical period—are affected by the definitions, philosophies, concepts, and theoretical positions we hold for the terms the issues encompass.

[19] With regard to nature-nurture issue, see for example, Willard Rhodes, "Musical Creativity of Hausa Children," *Yearbook of Traditional Music* 9 (1977): 38-49; J. H. Kwabena. Nketia, "Interaction through Music: The Dynamics of Music-Making in African Societies," *International Social Science Journal* 34, no. 4 (1982): 639-656; Meyer 1989; Sloboda 1985, 1988; J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "Tradition and Innovation in African Music, *Jamaican Journal* 11, nos. 3-4 (1978): 2-9; and ed., *A Guide for the Preparation of Primary School African Music: Teaching Manual* (Accra, Ghana: Afram Publications, 1999). With regard to change-continuity issue, see for example, J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "Changing Traditions of Folk Music in Ghana," *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 11 (1959): 31-36; "Tradition and Contemporary Idioms of African Music," *The World of Music* 5, no. 6 (1963): 132-133;

addition, because they are also central to the understanding of how the individuals' creative roles and innovations are valued and negotiated within the Akan culture, I first discuss them as they relate to the subject of creativity and, by so doing, provide working definitions of certain key terms that are important to the understanding of *creativity* in the present study.

1.3.1. The Change-Continuity Issue with Respect to Creativity

Although change in Africa came to command almost exclusive interest in assessing the African scene, some scholars viewed the changes—that is, changes occurring during the colonial and post-colonial eras—as resulting solely from external influences, that is, from the colonial intervention.[20] As much of the literature on Africa shows, investigations that concentrated for the most part on the changes in African life were said to be "centered on the changes brought about by contact with the cultures of Europe and, to a lesser degree, of the Americas and Asia."[21]

This view was encouraged by the fact that the macro changes, characterized by political, social, and economic factors—fore-grounded by strong and complex colonial apparatus, such as, the religious establishments, industrialization, urbanization, formal education, constitutional rule with the emergence of political parties, and probably a few more—came to be a striking aspect of African life, constituting a decisive factor in shaping contemporary Africa, and contributing

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"Continuity of Traditions in Contemporary Africa," *The Pan Africanist Review* 1 (1964): 59-64; Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Twenty-Nine Issues and Concepts* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1983), Yung 1989; Nzewi 1991; David B. Coplan, "Ethnomusicology and the Meaning of Tradition," in *Ethnomusicology and the Modern Music History*, ed., Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, and Daniel Neuman (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 35-48; Christopher Waterman, "*Juju* History: Toward a Theory of Sociomusical Practice," in Blum, Bohlman, and Neuman 1993, pp. 49-67.

[20] See for example, William R. Bascom and Melville J. Herskovits, ed., *Continuity and Change in African Cultures* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963); and Melville J. Herskovits, *The Human Factor in Changing Africa* (New York: Vintage House, 1962).

[21] Herskovits 1962, p.7. Herskovits makes this statement to advance his stand against the idea of considering every innovation in Africa as resulting from external influences.

immensely to what W. E. Abraham calls the "material" and "institutional" aspects of the African culture.[22]

However, as these macro changes became far more readily discernible, other phases of change within the traditional milieu seemed to lose some attraction to many observers who wanted to study change in Africa; for they were more drawn to the imposing structures pervading the contemporary scene. For example, popular music, art music, and other contemporary performing arts were viewed as the main makers of change and innovation in Africa, and were believed to be reflective of the present trend and important pointers to the future. Traditional poems and music, on the other hand, were seen only as a reflection of Africa's *stable* past, and a means by which Africans are able to remember that past.

Unfortunately, studies of African traditions conducted from this premise were considered largely to be "a-historical in nature,"[23] a situation that gives credence to the *immutability theory*, which views tradition as that which is inherently resistant to change.[24] Paradoxically, tradition is said to be surrounded by historical movements and events (the macro changes), yet not affected by them—a "timelessness in time."[25] *Change* then, became opposed, or dysfunctional, to anything *traditional*—a term that came to connote *stability* or *continuity* of a past. And problems of this nature including such general issues as "whether change is opposed to continuity or they

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[22] Material culture includes property systems and technology, while institutional culture includes customs, rituals, as well as political and social systems; the material aspect of culture never expanded without reference to the institutional culture. See W. E. Abraham, *The Mind of Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

[23] See Harold Scheub, "A Review of African Oral Traditions and Literature," (ACLS/ SSRC Overview Paper, 1984).

[24] For an elaborate account of this issue, see David B. Copland, "Ethnomusicology and the Meaning of Tradition," in *Ethnomusicology and Modern History*, ed. Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman and Daniel M. Neuman (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 35-48.

[25] See Scheub 1984.

complement each other" were discussed from several theoretical orientations including *functionalist behaviorism* and *practice theory*.[26]

But when all the above notions are weighed against the account of the Akan musical tradition, they lose their theoretical grip on the whole issue of change and innovation in relation to *tradition*. For notions such as the following, that there may not be any observable change within the traditional scene; that traditional art forms do not naturally yield to changes; that these forms are only a reflection of the past; that it is only in the 'popular music' that innovations may be observed; that if there were changes at all they would be the *imposed* ones resulting from external encounters; and so forth, become inconsistent with the underlying philosophy of Akan musical culture.

Akan oral tradition is not as static as it has been represented to be. Many of the traditional forms are susceptible to change; the traditional milieu allows for a wealth of innovations, resulting from the creative tendencies of the composer-performers; and most of the traditional art forms, even in the midst of all the macro changes, have not become extinct, but rather have developed of their own accord within local communities. As Herskovits points out, "to those who were focusing their attention on the whole way of life of African peoples it became clear that the older, pre-European patterns had by no means given way. On the contrary, the traditional patterns showed such vitality as to confound observers."[27]

I will therefore show in this study that there are observable changes within the Akan traditional scene; that traditional art forms—with the exception of those associated with religion—do naturally yield to changes; and that these forms are a reflection of both past and

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[26] For an elaborate account of these theories, see Waterman, in Blum, Bohlman and Neuman 1993, pp. 49-67.
[27] Herskovits 1962, p.7

present. Accordingly, I aim to demonstrate that the Akan music tradition is sustained by a flow of creative activities of musicians that continually shape and transform the tradition.

1.3.2.   The Nature-Nurture Issue with Respect to Creativity

The nature-nurture issue involves the roles played by both innate capacity and cultural knowledge in any creative activity. And because compositional processes are creative activities, their study explores the creative ability of the composer who is known to be, first and foremost, a product of his culture, which is believed to be the source of his ideas.[28] In this case, the process by which the musician combines his materials is said to be influenced by the patterns of both his culture and the behavioral processes, which he has learned as an individual member of that culture.[29] Thus, the musician is seen to work within a tradition in which certain stylistic features, such as musical formulas, idioms and *dialects*[30] are consciously or subconsciously learned, absorbed and stored in the memory to be called upon in certain stylistic contexts.[31] It means that the creative processes involve the need to conceive and perform a work entirely from memory,[32] and the musical items thus conceived are said to be "crystallized in the originator's mind and subsequently realized as musical events."[33] Creativity in music, then, from this perspective, becomes "a technique of spontaneous expression, or as an art whose primary aim is to bring into being a coherent body of expressions for performance in particular contexts."[34]

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[28] Willard Rhodes, "Musical Creativity in Hausa Children," *Yearbook of Traditional Music* 9 (1977): 38.
[29] John Blacking, "Tonal Organization in the Music of Two Venda Initiation Schools," *Ethnomusicology* 14, no.1 (1970): 11.
[30] "Dialect" is a linguistic term used here to mean a form of a "musical language" used by a composer or a class of musicians that may differ from other forms in the same musical culture.
[31] Raymond F. Kennedy, "Jazz Style and Improvisation Code," *Yearbook of Traditional Music* 19 (1987): 41.
[32] See Euba 1990.
[33] Nketia 1962, p. 117.
[34] *Ibid*.

On this premise, a description of compositional processes would aim at the human capacity for internalizing the culturally-structured sound materials of music by "characterizing the nature of internal processes and representations."[35] However, the issue at stake in the present dissertation is the fact that what flows from the composer-performer's mind or emerges as a "coherent body of musical expressions"[36] in the process of creativity may not be exactly the same musical idea that the composer-performer learned or absorbed from his or her culture and kept in the mind to be realized in performance. And although it is true that this composer-performer may replicate such culturally informed musical ideas, he or she is also likely to impact his or her personality upon this "coherent body of information," because there are always departures from what he or she may have committed to memory.[37]

This situation happens because, according to psychological research, all processes with which the cognitive domain—the seat of one's consciousness—are associated, and by which they are controlled, are governed by knowledge that flows from the musician's innate[38] capacity as well as from the socio-cultural institutions of which he or she is part.[39] That is, the composer's creative behavior is said to be "a result of the interaction between *innate modes of cognition* and patterning on the one hand, and ingrained, *learned habits* of discrimination and response on the other," a kind of "symbiotic relationship between *nature* and *nurture*." [40]

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[35] Carol Krumhansl, *Cognitive Foundations of Musical Pitch* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p.3.
[36] Nketia 1962.
[37] See also Isidore Okpewho, *African Oral Literature: Background, Character, and Continuity* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).
[38] The term innate is used here to mean a specific qualitative trait, present at birth, which differentiates between two individuals; such difference is not attributed to environmental influences. Innate behavior therefore, is any behavior that is inherited genetically and does not need to be learned. See Norah Rudin in *Dictionary of Modern Biology* (Hauppauge, NY: Barron's, c1997). A synonymous term is "instinct," which is defined as "unlearned pattern of behavior." See Robert C. King and William D. Stansfield, ed., *A Dictionary of Genetics*, 6th edn.). It is conceptualized as a form of behavior that is innate, elicited by internal or external stimuli-responses triggered by what early ethnologists called sign stimuli.
[39] See Sloboda 1985.
[40] Meyer 1989, p. 4. All italics are mine. It may be argued that these innate capacities are culture-specific, which would then mean that all cognitive capabilities involving *scientific* and *mathematical* knowledge, as well as other

1.3.3.   Summary of the Research Problem

Human beings by nature predate their culture; they therefore created and keep recreating their culture over time through their creative abilities. Culture, then, in the metaphor of Clifford Geertz, becomes something like a web that they have woven.[41] From time to time what has been designed may take on a new form as the designers rethink their environments anew. The choices they make may depend on many factors, but one of the most powerful ones is the intrinsic motivation, the urge or the drive toward changing their environments. And as already pointed out, the capacity to create and develop new ideas and solutions to old or existing problems is one of man's most critical capacities,[42] making the dynamics of change itself "a special case of a universal mechanism of cultural change, one that has probably been present ever since man has ever lived on earth."[43]

Thus, in the process of creating and recreating their tradition, human beings initiate, originate, adopt, or appropriate various forms of innovative ideas, ones that they think suit them and their environments.[44] The next generation which succeeds them may retain certain aspects of the institutional systems they set up, but by virtue of the fact that they may also have their creative tendencies, and also by the fact that their circumstances may differ from those of their predecessors, they are likely to add to the tradition by reconstructing, redesigning and

related knowledge, are also culture-specific, and this is a doubtful proposition. See Herder and Herder, ed. *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, vol.1 (under "Differential Psychology") and vol.2 (under "Inspiration" and "Instinct"); Carl E. Seashore, *Psychology of Music* (New York: Dover Publications, 1967); Sloboda 1985; and Krumhansl 1990.
[41] See Clifford Geertz, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretative Theory of Culture," in *The Interpretation of Cultures; Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 3-30.
[42] See Morris I. Stein, "Survey of the Psychological Literature in the Area of Creativity with a View Toward Needed Research" (A Research Report, New York University, 1962); and Albert Rothenberg and Bette Greenberg, *The Index of Scientific Writing on Creativity: General—1566-1974* (Hamden, Connecticut: The Shoe String Press, 1976).
[43] Herskovits 1962, pp.5-6.
[44] This assertion is evidenced in the early organization of the Akan people, with the subsequent economic and political changes that took place before the early construction of the Akan states. One such major change was a move from a nomadic stage, involving hunting and gathering type of economic life, to a sedentary stage where the economy shifted to that based upon crop production, and during which clans, communities, etc. were established (Ref. Chapter 2).

reinterpreting what has been laid down for them to suit their current way of life. Tradition, then, becomes "both a social and a historical process requiring active *appropriation*, *perpetuation*, and *transformation* by members of the community among whom it is shared,"[45]

The Akan, like most people on the surface of the earth, also have this natural capacity to consciously or unconsciously effect changes in their environments, play significant roles in most human-initiated change processes, and make contributions to both the material and institutional aspects of their culture, as their creative sensibilities or tendencies continue to bring about various forms of innovations from time to time. Therefore, in assessing the various forms of Akan arts, the manifestations of some traditional elements should not be interpreted as indications only of stability or reflections only of a past; they are also articulations of the present in which the performers find themselves. Most oral arts are by their nature fluid forms,[46] accommodating and adjusting to various creative ideas.

There are major global changes, which may be termed "macro changes," that have affected political, economical and religious institutions in most cultures of Africa, resulting in several innovations. However, even with such macro changes, it is convenient to see those innovations as resulting more from *appropriation* than from imposition—as resulting from a process of selection, guided by the value aspect of the Akan culture. For it is through this mode of selection that elements that are not appropriate to—or not consonant or compatible with—the overall Akan values are discarded; such a view demonstrates the pre-eminence of the value aspect of the culture in choice-making. As W. E. Abraham points out, "The value aspect of culture is well able to place sanctions and embargoes on material culture and institutional culture."[47]

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[45] Coplan 1993, p. 39. Italics are mine.
[46] This assertion is given a detailed explanation in the subsequent chapters. But for a case specifically in African oral literature, see Okpewho 1992.
[47] Abraham 1962, p.33.

Therefore, by using the Akan musical tradition as a frame of reference, I wish to point out that an approach to the study of social change in relation to African art in general cannot focus on institutions without taking into account the human creative activities, or what Herskovits describes as "current and antecedent modes of doing, behaving, and valuing, the elements that make up for cultural continuity."[48] The human creative tendencies that reveal both the innate capacity (the personality) and the culturally acquired knowledge are of primary relevance in understanding both change and continuity, particularly in Africa, and generally in any oral tradition. Based on this fact, the present study is oriented more toward the creative activities of individual composer-performers in the Akan society who are believed to be making profound contributions through their creative activities, consciously or unconsciously and directly or indirectly, to sustain the entire music traditions of Akan.

1.4.   State of Research on Compositional Processes

Most studies of Akan music have investigated and presented information observed in the musical context; they have discussed the relationships between the music and the social institutions with which they are associated, for example music and festival, music and funeral, and so on; or the role a musical type plays within a particular institution.[49] Although many of these studies have provided a few transcriptions and analyses of music, their information is limited to type of scales, the number of lines in a verse, the number of performers in an ensemble, and such other elements. No obvious effort has been made on the part of these researchers to discuss the

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[48] Herskovits 1960, p.7.
[49] See, for example, Anthony Kofi Agyemang, "Nnwonkoro" (African Music Diploma, University of Ghana, 1993); H. K. Amaning, "The Socio-Cultural Roles of Adowa Music among the Ahwenease Community in Akyem Abuakwa" (African Music Diploma, University of Ghana, 1997); M. K. Antwi, "Kete Drum Music of the Asante" (African Music Diploma, University of Ghana, 1988); and Samuel O. Bampo "Mpintin Music in Akropong Akuapem" (African Music Diploma, University of Ghana, 1990).

creative processes in the performances. As a result, the studies seem to provide more ethnographic accounts of music in their institutional contexts. On the other hand, J. H. Kwabena Nketia,[50] William Anku,[51] Kwasi Ampene,[52] and myself,[53] have consciously focused on creative processes in performance contexts in Akan music tradition.

Nketia's efforts in addressing creative processes in Akan music traditions are impressive. Undoubtedly, he has extensively reported on how musicians create their music, what they create, and when they create. However, the process of creativity so far discussed by Nketia seems to center more on how musicians or performers vary or rearrange existing musical structures to fit into performance situations. The basis of his approach probably hinged on the common notion of *continuity* of tradition, where musicians who are also performers work within a tradition in which musical information pertaining to their culture is learned, absorbed, stored in the memory and realized in performance. Much of the creative processes occurring *before* performance were not fully explored, if at all discussed.

According to Nketia,[54] his reason for focusing on creativity within performance of traditional music was probably based on the aim characterizing studies of those times.[55] And these were informed by the then trend in ethnomusicology: the desire to know how people create within performance setting. With regard to innovations, he addresses them in a number of articles where

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[50] *Ibid.*

[51] William Anku, *Structural Set Analysis of African Music 1 – Adowa: Analysis and Digital Transcription* (Accra: Sound Stage, 1992).

[52] Ampene 1999.

[53] Eric O. Beeko, "The Musical Art and Cultures of Akan" (Private Monograph, 1986); "Exploration of Procedures of Pitch Organization in Akan Traditional Songs -- The Case of Nnwonkoro: A Theoretical Perspective" (M.Phil. Thesis, University of Ghana, 2000).

[54] Personal conversation with J. H. Kwabena Nketia, (Ghana, June 2000).

[55] Although Nketia did not say what "those times" were, they may probably constitute his "hightened" research period that probably spans from the 1950s to the 1970s.

he discussed trends in contemporary music in Ghana,[56] but his accounts are general comments on changes that have taken place with apparently no detailed analysis of them.

William Anku's study discusses the creative processes in *adowa*, one of the traditional musical types of the Akan. He eschews all contextual and philosophical approaches for the sake of the music itself, with the aim of discovering "its true internal logic of organization and performance dynamics, especially from a perspective of the norms established by its practitioners."[57] He used digital interface to transcribe a whole *adowa* performance, and considers the result to be a very objective and reliable "extenso" transcription of an item from the Akan drum ensemble repertoire. His use of this process makes possible an instant playback of the transcription, and permits (with Anku's help) aural editing and 'proof reading' by the indigenous performer himself.

By using Structural Set Theory,[58] guided by Perceptual Theories,[59] Anku abstracts and analyzes the variable rhythms of the *petia* (supporting drum) and the *atumpan* (a pair of drums playing the role of a "master drum") in reference to the steady *adawuraa* (bell) pattern. His discussion of the creative processes in the master drum part is very informative and inspiring, as he demonstrates how the master drummer shifts his various rhythmic patterns to coincide with the supporting drums' and the bell's rhythmic patterns. However, Anku accounts for what exists in the *adowa* tradition in a way similar to that of Nketia, except that Anku's approach is more technical. He discusses the master drummer's reordering of rhythmic patterns that were already available to him as he performed, but he does not discuss new ideas that the drummer may have

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[56] See as examples: J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "Modern Trends in Ghanaian Music," *African Music: Journal of the African Music Society*, vol.1 no.4 (1957); and "Coping with Change and Diversity in African Music," (a keynote address delivered at the Conference on Research and Education in African Music and Dance at the University of Ghana, Legon on December 11-14, 1996).
[57] Nketia 1992, p.1.
[58] Anku might have been inspired by John Rahn, *Basic Atonal Theory*, New York: Longman, 1979, see Anku 1992.
[59] An example is the "Gestalt Theory of Perception."

added. In a nutshell, Anku does not apparently address the aspect of innovation, even though he may have been aware of it.

Kwasi Ampene's study of the *nnwonkoro* tradition is insightful, as it sought to know (1) whether there is a kind of underlying compositional theory in *nnwonkoro* that makes it intelligible to Akan listeners, (2) whether unwritten music may be considered as composition, (3) whether there are specific terms in the Akan language that describe the creative process, and (4) whether the creative process is an individual effort or a communal enterprise. However, in spite of the valid issues raised to motivate Ampene's research, the study seems to place more emphasis on the socio-cultural aspects of the *nnwonkoro* tradition, with little effort made to discuss technical matters such as the rhythmic and melodic structures, and other related features. For example, in his discussion of compositional conventions and practice in *nnwonkoro* songs, Ampene focuses on the musical organization of song units within performance, using only texts as the basis for discussion and not the music also.

Ampene further attempted to address how traditional singers transform texts into songs and to explain the "poetic and polyphonic processes" in *nnwonkoro*. However, he ends by saying that the singers' (in this case, also the composers') source of songs were dreams, without explaining further how those ideas are later processed after receiving them from dreams. And this notion, I believe, seems to give credence to the much spoken of, and accepted, notion that traditional composers, especially in Africa, cannot *theorize* on their music.

My initial study[60] was an ethnographic account of the musical practices of the Akan, and although it does not focus on creative processes as its primary objective, by providing a description of how the Akan practice their music (as Nketia, Anku and Ampene also do)

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[60] Beeko 1986.

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information on creativity is implicit. However, what is said of Nketia, Anku and Ampene can be said of my study, and that is, no conscious attention is given to the creation of new musical ideas.

My second study,[61] which is more analytical in its approach, examines the problem of establishing procedures for pitch relations and organization in *nnwonkoro*, and provides a general understanding of the Akan idiom as it pertains to tonal procedures. Since the study only reports on the "established procedures" of pitch organization in the tradition, but not on the *new* ideas that the composers may have added, it leaves much to be desired so far as innovation is concerned.

The above review, therefore, justifies the need for a substantive study that explores the length and breath of the activity called *creativity*, which, in the case of the Akan, I believe, has its origin in the subconscious and take its final form in the conscious. Accordingly, in contrast to the above mentioned literature, this present study aims at addressing how musical ideas are conceived and how they are cognitively processed in the conscious mode, before gaining their final form.

1.5.   Theoretical Framework

The following theoretical positions constitute the framework for the present study: (a) the individual-community dichotomy in Akan philosophy,[62] (b) differential psychology, (c) interpretive innovation,[63] and (d) sociomusical practice.[64] These theoretical positions may be summarized as follows: the Akan's concept of the individual and the community, as explained

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[61] Beeko 2000.
[62] See Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995).
[63] Meyer 1989.
[64] Waterman 1993.

by Gyekye,[65] can be likened to a tree in relation to the forest. There is a relationship between trees and the forest within which they exist, such that, the nature of the forest is attributed to the nature of the trees and the similarities and differences of the trees typify the forest. On the same merit, the quality of a culture, according to Akan philosophy, is attributed to the qualitative lives of the individuals who make up the culture; their similarities and differences typify the culture, thereby making the individuals in Akan culture as important as the culture itself.

This philosophical concept makes an individual creative ability pre-eminent in any creative process, a subject that is subsumed under *differential psychology*. This theory is concerned with the nature and origins of individual differences in psychological traits. The origins of these individual differences are believed to be found in "the innumerable and complex interactions between each individual's heredity and his environment."[66] Thus, the theory posits that, because each culture or subculture fosters the development of its own characteristic pattern of aptitudes and personality traits, the environment, in addition to the *inborn* trait, plays a great part in the "personality difference."

The understanding of these differences helps to explain why within the same cultural constraints some individual composers are prone to be "innovators," devising new ideas, while others tend to be only "elaborators," replicating the existing structures, a premise that underlies Meyer's theory of "interpretative innovation."[67] According to his thesis, what should count as an innovation is based on the distinction between *devising* and *replication*. Thus, what might be called *interpretative innovation* is "any performance of a piece of music that does not slavishly

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[65] See Kwame Gyekye, "Person and Community in African Thought," under "Morality in African Thought," in *The African Philosophical Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. P. H. Coetzee and A. P. J. Roux (New York: Routledge, 2003), and Gyekye 1995.
[66] *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, s. v. "differential psychology."
[67] See Meyer 1989.

parrot an earlier one,"[68] and performers in this category, according to him, are those to be considered creative artists. Such performers devise "novel realizations (interpretations)" within the constraints of the performance tradition of a musical culture and choose among the possibilities devised.[69]

These three theoretical positions—individual-community dichotomy, differential psychology and interpretative innovation—underscore the fact that, *individuals* are the center of the making of a culture, and as such, creative individuals may be considered a "think tank" of society in terms of progress and advancement. The appropriate theoretical orientation that underlies this proposition is the *socio-musical practice*, which, according to C. A. Waterman, posits that, "cultural continuity is not best thought of as statis, but as a recursive process. The reproduction of *individual representations of culture patterns* is grounded in a flow of activity continually *shaped by actors' interpretations of and reactions to* constraints and incentives encountered in the world."[70] In this case, the practice theory (socio-musical practice), unlike the functionalist approach, does not presume "cultural equilibrium" or view change as "exceptional and alternatively adaptive or dysfunctional."[71] Individuals, through a range of performance strategies, creatively make new choices that feed into the existing structure, and by so doing, they reinterpret and reconstruct styles, and reposition "genre categories,"[72] as well.

From these theoretical orientations, my study of creativity in the Akan musical culture will examine the relationship between the individual creators and their community, and how these individuals' creative activities help shape and sustain the music traditions.

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[68] *Ibid*, p.104
[69] *Ibid*.
[70] Waterman 1993, p.51; italics are mine.
[71] *Ibid*.
[72] See Waterman 1993.

1.6. Research Methodology

My research consisted of the following activities: (a) data collection (b) transcription and transliteration, and (c) analysis and interpretation.

1.6.1. Data Collection

The data collection involved fieldwork and library and archival studies. The total amount of time spent on data collection was four months, from October 2003 through January 2004. The fieldwork constituted the bulk of the research; I collected solely from oral sources. The data collected from the other two activities—library and archival studies, and examination of scholarly works—provided the documentary evidence in support of the oral.

1.6.1.1. Fieldwork

I first decided a method for the interviews, adopted a plan for the selection of the field sites, and selected my informants and collaborators before embarking on the field trips. The fieldwork was in two parts. The first involved discussions with traditional musicians and poets who might be considered to be traditional scholars in their own right,[73] and observations of their performances.[74] The second involved discussions with academic scholars and other eminent personalities, some of whom were not necessarily musicians but who were authorities in other fields relating to the Akan culture. These fields include anthropology, sociology, history, philosophy and religion.

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[73] Certain traditional musicians have, in addition to their practical knowledge, in-depth knowledge of oral history and other forms of relevant and vital knowledge regarding their culture. Incidentally, their information about traditions of a particular culture, in many cases, forms the bedrock of many studies conducted by academic scholars. Such musician-informants, I believe, must be accorded the title "scholars" in their own rights; they may be called "traditional scholars," thus, differentiating them from the "academic scholars."

[74] See appendix A for a copy of the interview format.

FIELD METHOD

The interviews conducted among the traditional musicians and poets were in three parts: (a) structured or closed-ended "one-to-one" interviews with the composer-performers before their performances; (b) semi-structured or open-ended "one-to-one" interviews with the composer-performers before their performances;[75] and (c) semi-structured or open-ended "focus-group" interviews and discussions with the performers after their musical performances. While the purpose of the "one-to-one interviews" was to explore individuals' philosophies and approaches to musical creativity, that of the "focus-group interviews" was to provide insights into group attitudes, perceptions and opinions on creativity.[76]

The observations and documentation were in three parts: (a) structured observations and documentation of the creative processes through demonstration before or after musical performances;[77] (b) structured observations and documentation of the creative processes during the musical performances.

The interviews conducted among the scholars and eminent personalities took the form of the semi-structured or open-ended "one-to-one" interviews. All interviews and performances were tape-recorded in both audio and video forms, except a few of the discussions with the scholars where I noted down points.

FIELD SITES

For Studies among Traditional Musicians

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[75] See Wanda Thomas Bernard, "Participatory Research as Emancipatory Method: Challenges and Opportunities," in *Research Training for Social Scientists,* ed., Dawn Burton (London: Sage Publications, 2000), 167-185; and Matt Stroh, "Qualitative Interviewing," in *Research Training for Social Scientists,* ed., Dawn Burton (London: Sage Publications, 2000), 196-214.

[76] *Ibid*.

[77] See Laurie J. Price, "Carrying Out a Structured Observation," in *Doing Cultural Anthropology: Projects for Ethnographic Data Collection*, ed. Michael V. Angrosino (Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, 2002), 107-114.

I adopted a plan for selecting the field sites for the research among the traditional musicians and poets in the five regions—Brong Ahafo, Ashanti, Eastern, Central and Western regions. This plan was based on the use of dialectical difference to help me to collect representative data.[78] This strategy was necessary because of the entire size of the area and population of the Akan, which I considered to be too large to cover within the stipulated time.[79] Thus, instead of working with the five and a half or so regions in mind, I relied on my five dialectical groupings for the selection of the cities, towns and villages for my interviews and performance recordings.[80]

Under the plan, I grouped the Twi dialect of the Akan into three categories: group [a] is the *Bono-Ahafo* sub-dialectic category, which subsumes the following four groups: the Bono and the Ahafo in the Brong Ahafo region, and the Denkyira and the Wasa in the western region; group [b] is the *Asante-Akyem* sub-dialectic category, subsuming the Asante in the Ashanti region, and the Kwawu and Akyem in the Eastern region; group [c] is the *Akuapem* category, which covers the Akuapem in the eastern region, and the Akwamu in the Volta region. Group [d] is the Fante dialect of the Akan, subsuming the Fante, Agona and Gomoa, all in the central region; group [e] is the Anyin groups of dialects, which cover the Ahanta, Evalue, Nzema, Aowin and Sefwi, all in the Western region.

The following sites or towns were therefore selected based on this categorization: for group [a] are Bomaa in the *Ahafo*, and Sunyani, Fiapre and Odumasi in the *Bono* areas, where data collected are also representative of *Wasa* and *Denkyira*. For group [b] are Kumasi, Obuasi, Aduman, Foase, Akyawkrom and Asante Mampong, all in the *Asante* areas, where data collected

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[78] The dialectical structure of the Akan language is discussed fully at chapter two.
[79] The size of the area is one-half of the 92,000 square miles of the surface area of Ghana, and that of the population is a little more than half of the estimated twenty million of Ghana population.
[80] The regions where the Akans are found are the Borong Ahafo, Ashanti, Eastern, Central and Western regions, and part of the Volta region. Ghana has ten regions, so the rest are the Greater Accra, Northern, Upper East, and Upper West regions.

are also representative of *Kwawu* and *Akyem*.[81] For group [c], are Aburi, Tutu and Abirew,[82] all in the *Akuapem* areas, where data collected are also representative of *Akwamu*. For group [d] are Shama and Cape Coast, both in the *Fante* areas, where data collected are also representative of *Agona* and *Gomoa*. Finally, for group [e], are Egyam, Agona Nkwanta and Agona Fie in the *Ahanta*, and Axim and Abora in the *Evalue*, where data collected are also representative of *Nzema*, *Aowin* and *Sefwi*.

For Studies among Academic Scholars

Although I had an interview and discussion with one prominent scholar in the Western region, for the field site for most of my studies with scholars and eminent personalities I chose the University of Ghana, Legon in the Greater Accra Region. The reason for the choice is that the University of Ghana is the country's premier university founded in 1948 by the British government. Since then, it has served as a place for numerous major scholarly researches in several disciplines, both sciences and arts. The establishment of the Institute of African Studies (I. A. S.), the subsequent founding of the *Journal of African Studies*, and the promotion of scholarly studies whose results were published in the journal, came to boost and enhance research efforts, especially in the Humanities.

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[81] Although one may observe some few musical types among the Kwawu and Akyem, which may not necessarily be found among the Asante, and vice versa, there are more similarities than differences among these three groups of people in song types, performances, and many cultural and musical behaviors. Furthermore, among these three groups, the people of Asante have developed the major musical types more than any of the two groups, thus, making a study among the Asante a representative one.

[82] The people of Abirew are Guans who had lived with the Akwamu for years before the war and the coming in of the Akyem who now constitute the present Akwapem (Ref. Chapter two). Therefore, by virtue of having lived with and under the Akwamu's socio-political domination, and now living with and under the Akwapem's socio-political and cultural domination, the Guan's musical behaviors reflect very much of those of their two superior powers, and undoubtedly more of the Akwamu's.

Since the establishment of the I. A. S.—which runs in conjunction with related departments such as History, Sociology, Philosophy, Religion, and the Performing Arts—the University has had eminent scholars who have ranked among Africa's best. These scholars have specialized and provided authentic accounts of the various ethnic groups in Africa, especially those found in Ghana. As such, there are scholars who are authorities in the area of history, philosophy, religion, customs, music and dance-theater of the Akan tradition. Therefore, my decision to have formal and informal discussions and interactions with some of these scholars was, to me, very timely and rewarding.

1.6.1.2. *Library and Archival Studies*

The second aspect of my data collection consisted of library and archival studies. These aspects constitute the documentary material that provides second-hand information to complement the primary sources, as well as to support the primary evidence. I actually began the library work at the University of Pittsburgh about a year before leaving for Ghana. These libraries included the Music Library, Hillman Library, Langley Library, School of Law Library, GSPIA/Economics Library and Western Psychiatry Library. In Ghana the libraries in which I worked included the I. C. A. M. D. Library, School of Performing Arts Library, the Balme Library, and I. A. S. Library, all at the University of Ghana. The rest were Ghana Central Library and Don Padmore Research Library, both in Accra, and the Regional Library in Sekondi in the central region.

The purpose of my research in the libraries was to explore written information by other scholars on the various themes of my dissertation, such as creativity, change and continuity, innovation, musical change, culture and tradition, music and identity, and related topics, as well as on the geocultural area—Africa, and the ethnic group—the Akan. Documents used in these

libraries ranged from books to articles in journals and magazines, and a whole host of information gathered from wherever they could be found. They reflected the various subjects of the Humanities such as ethnomusicology, musicology, anthropology, sociology, religion, history, archaeology, linguistics and psychology.

In addition to the published works, I examined some unpublished works such as dissertations, theses and major essays of students, as well as monographs of faculty members of the music department of the School of Performing Arts of the University of Ghana and the Institute of African Studies. These were solely on Akan music genres, music composition and performance, the Akan culture and traditions, and other related topics on Akan culture and people. All these documents are well cited in both the footnotes and the bibliographical sections of this dissertation.

I conducted the archival studies at the joint audio-visual library and archives of the Institute of African Studies (I. A. S.) and International Center for African Music and Dance (I. C. A. M. D.). The purpose of examining these audio and visual recordings in the archives was to conduct a comparative study, and a kind of cultural and historical analysis of musical performances recorded at different times and from different areas. The aim was to examine the process of musical change and the subsequent innovations that emerged out of this change. Accordingly, the recordings include those recorded from the 1950s to the present.

Although I selected several representative songs (which are discussed in chapter 3), the only difficulty encountered was the fact that I was not able to get recordings of a particular genre, say *adowa*, that could represent about four or five consecutive decades, for instance, from the 1950s through the 1990s. This is because some of the recordings made between the 1940s and 1970s by the I. A. S. were not too audible due to scratches on the old tapes. This condition brought some

limitation, and I had to go by what I could lay hands on. For example, I had three recordings of *adenkum* performed in 1957, 1962 and 1970; three recordings of *adowa*, performed in 1952, 1962 and 1972; four recordings of *bomma*, with two performed in 1956 and 1962, and two with no dates.

I discovered that there were not enough recordings from the 1980s and 1990s of some of the old genres; they were only recorded between the 1950s and 1960s. The genres I found recorded in the 1980s and 1990s did not have recorded examples from the 1950-1960s which are audible enough to be used in my case. It is not because the archive did not have them. The recordings were there, which any one could simply listen to for mere pleasure. But where, in my case, they are needed for both music and textual analyses, their clarity and audibility were of utmost importance, and anything short of that would derail the purpose for which the recorded music was meant.

Notwithstanding the above problem, I was able to find recordings that, although not always adequate for the in-depth historical analysis I wished to make, are fairly representative for the work.

1.6.2. Data Transliteration and Transcription

All the recorded interviews, both on the audio and video, were transliterated from the Twi-Fante-Anyin dialects of the Akan language into English, and the songs were transcribed. The purpose of these methods is to, on the one hand, effect easy analysis and interpretation, and, on the other hand, to make the information accessible to the entire English readership. Although I examined few transcribed songs for the purpose of analyzing the compositional processes, the most part of this study is advanced by the oral information and demonstrations my informants provided me.

1.6.3.   Data Analysis and Interpretation

This section explains the methods I used for the analysis and the interpretation of the transcriptions of the verbal interviews and the tape-recorded music.

1.6.3.1.   Analysis of Verbal Interview

For the verbal interviews, I have used an inductive approach as my analytical method with the use of "grounded" approach in which codes are allowed to emerge from the data.[83] This approach proceeds from the identification of the salient concepts and categories, such as common terminologies, usages, and so on, through the development of these concepts and categories. The idea here was to monitor consistency in the flow of information, and to cross-examine each composer or performer's thought, concept and opinion with regard to both old and new ideas inherent in the music.

With this approach, common terminologies and concepts, which the composers commonly used to explain their compositional processes, were identified and analyzed from the Akan etymology, as well as from their philosophical perspective. Accordingly, the information on concepts and practices of creativity came more from what the people say, performed and demonstrated to me, than what I analyzed from the music. Musical analysis for the purpose of knowing Akan music such as rhythm, melody, harmony, and so forth, was not so much the emphasis for this study, because such studies have been well conducted by many scholars. It is the day-to- day *compositional processes*, and what the composers themselves think and say they do in the *act of composing*, whether within performance or outside of performance, that were the bedrock of the present study.

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[83] See A. Strauss, *Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), discussed in Stroh 2000, pp. 210-212.

1.6.3.2. *Analysis of Music*

Because the study was grounded more on the information the composers gave about what they think they do in the creative processes—which the one-to-one interviews provided—only a few musical analyses were used. And in this case their use was for the purpose of describing the creative processes to the readership. I employed both inductive and deductive methods. The results obtained from the musical analysis were correlated with those obtained from the verbal analysis, with the aim of understanding the creative processes involved in music composition.

1.6.3.3. *Interpretation of Sources*

The use of both diachronic approach and synchronic approach in this work is very appropriate to a study of this kind that seeks to discuss both the *processes* and the *systems* of change, respectively. Such historical and ethnographic methods provided me with the understanding of the dynamics of change, development and transformation of the Akan music tradition. In "pulling out" these ethnographic facts about the Akan, I am informed by the recent trend in African historiography,[84] and the problems associated with the migration theory.[85] With regard to the historiography, the emphasis has tended towards two important concepts: multivocality and dissonance (although, as Reid and Lain point out, the latter has not gained wide recognition).[86]

The concept of multivocality, or "multiple voices," stems from the fact that, "in history it is accepted that different versions of the past are produced by different elements in society and by

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[84] See Andrew M. Reid and Pual J. Lane, ed., *African Historical Archaeologies* (New York: Plenum Publishers, 2004).
[85] See Robert O. Collins, James McDonald Burns, and Erik Kristofer Ching, ed. *Problems in African History: The Precolonial Centuries* (New York: Markus Weiner Publishing, 1993); and K. Nkansa Kyeremanteng, *The Akan of Ghana: Their History and Culture* (Accra: Sebewie Publishers, 1996).
[86] See Reid and Lane 2004.

different societies."[87] As a result, in assembling facts about a people's history, that is, a people's past (and even present), one needs to think "in terms of multiple histories rather than history," an approach that provides us with "the opportuniy to contrast voices that combine in creating a society." [88] The concept of dissonance, which refers to "the notion that different information will be provided by the same source depending on the context or setting of the source at the time of interview,"[89] is said to build on the notion of multivocality.

Although these concepts relate primarily to oral sources I, however, use them in a broad sense to embrace both documentary and oral sources; the former, which I consider to be alternative voices (although secondary), represent others' impressions and interpretations on historical events. Therefore, the historical account provided in this study is generated from the broad multiple voices: for the documentary sources, facts are drawn from archaeological, anthropological, botanical, historical, linguistic and sociological perspectives. And for the oral, facts are drawn from what J. Vansina lists as poems (including song texts), formulae (such as proverbs, riddles, genealogies, philosophical sayings), epic poetry (example, story telling, etc.), and narratives (that is, oral messages provided by interviewees).[90]

The archaeological and botanical sources provided accounts of both historic and prehistorical events that the other sources, including even oral narratives, seem to lack. Anthropological, linguistical, and sociological sources, on the other hand, have most often provided a synchronic view of the Akan culture (as if nothing actually did change over time), thus, lacking accounts on

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[87] *Ibid.*, p. 9

[88] *Ibid.*, p. 10

[89] See J. Willis, "Two Lives of Mpamizo: Understanding dissonance in Oral History," *History in Africa* 23 (1996): 319-332, discussed in Reid and Lane 2004, p. 10.

[90] J. Vansina, "Oral Tradition and its Methodology," in *General History of Africa* I: *Methodology and African Prehistory*, ed. J. Ki-Zerbo (Berkeley: UNESCO and University of California Press, 1981), 142-165.

such concepts as "growth," "development," and "processes," that may have occurred within the Akan musical culture.

Oral accounts do not seem to have temporal frames of reference. The different forms of poems (including song texts) and the formulae I recorded do tell about the experiences of the Akan, but are silent on the times those experiences occurred. Most of the oral narratives, that is, the accounts given by my interviewees, provide information about the experiences of the various Akan groups and the geographical locations where these experiences did occur. Although occasionally they made a few temporal references, these were not so precise or definite enough to provide a smooth mental passage into the past.

Finally, I wish to say that my interpretation of concepts and practices was derived from other angles such as the Akan philosophical and religious beliefs and generally how these concepts, terminologies and practices are understood within the culture.

2. CHAPTER TWO: THE SOCIO-CULTURAL DYNAMICS OF THE AKAN TRADITIONS

2.1. Introduction

This chapter, first, provides the ethnological account of the Akan and, second, discusses the socio-cultural dynamics of the Akan traditions. The socio-cultural dynamics concern, on the one hand, processes of developments, and on the other hand, structures arising from such developments. The two key words that are the focus of the chapter, then, are *process* and *structure*, which are said to be two aspects of the same phenomenon, displayed by all socio-political phenomena.[91] The Akan society now is the structure, or complex of structures, which has been produced and reproduced—established and developed—through processes that have occurred over time. Therefore, by analyzing the Akan socio-cultural dynamics, I wish to explore both social processes of (gradual) development on the one hand and the relevant social structures or social systems, on the other hand. And by so doing, I will address the structural, functional and developmental aspects of the society. For such an approach, Peter Skalník notes, forms a basis for the understanding of a state as representing "a process whose developmental dynamics possess certain universal features."[92]

Accordingly, I discuss first the socio-cultural processes within the Akan traditions, which include the development, expansion, and the attainment of relative maturity over several centuries, and second, the socio-cultural systems—the structures or the traditions—which were realized through the processes. The purpose here is to set the foundation and provide the evidence for the claim that the Akan have for a long time been committed to change and

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[91] Peter Skalník, "The Early State as a Process," in *The Early State,* ed. Henri J. M. Claessen and Peter Skalník (The Hague: Mouton Publishers, 1978), 597-618.
[92] *Ibid*.

innovation in all spheres of their lives. And most of these changes and innovations may not be accidental, but might have been initiated through the *creative* efforts of individuals within the community who were committed to making their environments habitable, defensible and peaceful. Accordingly, musical change and musical innovation could not be accidental, but were initiated through the creative efforts of the Akan people (I discuss this music aspect in chapter three).

2.2.   Ethnological Account of the Akan

2.2.1.   Akan Linguistic Structure

2.2.1.1.   *The Akan and the Kwa Family*

Linguistically, the Akan belong to the Kwa language family, which is one of the six main language groups[93] under the "Niger-Congo"[94] branch of the Niger-Kordofonian linguistic family in Africa.[95] This Kwa language family, which stretches along the coast of West Africa from Liberia to eastern Nigeria,[96] is further divided into eastern and western Kwa sub-families.[97] And

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[93] The other five of the six groups of which Kwa is part are the West Atlantic, Mande, Gur or Voltaic, Benue-Congo and Adamawa-Eastern (*The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed., s. v. "African Language."). According to Elizabeth Isichei, many lingusts doubt the distinction between Kwa and Benue-Congo, and they are sometimes grouped together. See Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of African Societies to 1870* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). In Ghana, the Kwa and Gur form two main linguistic groups; while the Gur occupy the northern sector of the country, the Kwa occupy the southern sector.

[94] A term adopted by Joseph Greenberg to describe the entire linguistic family consisting of the West Sudanic nucleus inclusive of Bantu, and extending eastward to include well-known languages such as Mbum, Gbaya, Zande, Sango and Banda. See Joseph Greenberg, "The Languages of Africa," in *Problems in African History: The Precolonial Centuries*, ed., Robert O. Collins, James McDonald Burns and Erik Kristofer Ching (New York: Markus Weiner Publishing, 1993); and "Languages of Africa," *International Journal of American Linguistics* XXIX, no.1 (1963): 6-38.

[95] African languages are categorized into six principal linguistic families, which are *Hamito-Semitic*, *Niger-Kordofonian*, *Nilo-Saharan*, *Khoisan*, *Indo-European* and *Malayo-Polynesian* (Greenberg 1993).

[96] See Isichei 1997.

[97] See B. Wai Andah and J. Anquandah, "The Guinea Belt: the Peoples between Mount Cameroon and the Ivory Coast," in *General History of Africa* III: *Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*, ed. M. Elfasi and I. Hrbek (Berkeley: UNESCO and University of California Press, 1988), 488-529.

it was from the western Kwa that the Volta-Comoe sub-linguistic group emerged,[98] which embraces other groups such as those in the Central Togo, the Ewe, Ga-Adangme, and so forth.[99]

The three major languages that developed among this Volta-Comoe group, therefore, were the Ono, Tano and Guan. While the Ono language gave rise to Abure and Betibe, and the Guan gave rise to Awutu-Larteh and Krachi-Nkonya groups, the Tano linguistic sub-family, which is said to have developed near the Tano River, gave rise to the Akan and the Bia languages. And under these two language groups—the Akan and the Bia—further came the Twi-Fante, and the Anyin-Bawule (or Baule) categories, respectively.[100] Other sources, on the other hand, claim that the Tano rather gave rise to Betiyebo-Ono,[101] Bia and Guan, and from the Bia came the Akan and the Anyin-Bawule.[102] The possible conclusion this option seems to suggest is that the Volta-Comoe might have metamorphosed first into the Tano before splitting into the three languages.

But whether the Akan language emerged separately from the Tano, or it emerged from the Bia with the Anyin-Bawule categories, what is certain is that these two groups had been one large language family, with the split probably occurring either after the Tano-linguistic form (as the first option indicates), or after the Bia-linguistic form (as the second option shows).

2.2.1.2. *The Akan Language Groups*

The Akan of the present-day Ghana constitute 45 per cent of the country's population, and they include the Bono, Asante, Kwawu, Akyem, Akuapem, Wasa, Twifo, Assini, Akwamu, Buem, Sefwi, Aowin, Nzima, Ahanta, Fanti, Gomwa (Gomoa) and the Azona. Those who occupy the present-day Ivory Coast constitute 33 per cent of the country's population. They are

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[98] It is very likely this group of languages probably must have inhabited between the Volta and the Komoé Rivers, hence, the name "Volta-Comoe."

[99] See H. M. J. Trutenau, ed. "Languages of the Akan Area: Papers in Western Kwa Linguistics and on the Linguistic Geography of the Area of Ancient Begho," *Mitteilungen der Basler Afrika Bibliographien* 14 (1976).

[100] *Ibid*.

[101] "Betiyebo" could probably be the same as "Betibe."

[102] This second option was given to me by Francis Quansah (2004).

the Abron (Bron), Anyin, Sanwi, Baule, Attie (Akye), Abe, Abidji, Adiukru, Ebire, Ega (Dra), Eotile, Ebure, Agwa, Avikam and the Alladian.[103] However, because my study is limited to the Akan of Ghana, I will, henceforth, concentrate my discussion on those in Ghana.

Adu Boahen divides the Akan of Ghana into two broad groups: the eastern Akan and the western Akan. The eastern Akan are the Twi-Fante group, while the western Akan constitute the Anyin group. Linguistically, while the dialects of the eastern Akan are always immediately intelligible to the western Akan group, those of the latter are not intelligible to the former, a situation that suggests that before the Anyin people migrated towards the west from Adansi and got their language mixed up with those occupants, the sole language used might have been probably close to the Twi-Fante dialects (although not as it is today). Furthermore, the Twi-Fante dialects seem to be "colonizing" dialects that almost every Anyin person aspires to speak and understand, thus making the Twi-Fante dialects a kind of all-embracing language.

The western Akan, or the Anyin group, whose four dialects are mutually intelligible to one another, include the Ahanta, Aowin, Nzema and Sefwi, which are further divided into other subdialects. For example, under the Ahanta are Apowa, Asakɛ, Busua and Dixcove; under the Aowin are the Aowin "proper"[104] and Suaman; under the Sefwi are Awiōso and Bekwae; and under the Nzima are Nzima "proper" and Evalue (a mixture of Nzema and Ahanta).[105]

The eastern Akan, or the Twi-Fante group, whose nineteen dialects and sub-dialects are also mutually intelligible to one another, includes the Asante, Akyem, Akuapem, Akwamu, Asen,

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[103] See A. Adu Boahen, "Who are the Akan?" (Bonduku Seminar Papers, Q. V. 1974); and P. Kipre, "From the Ivory Coast Lagoons to the Volta," in *General History of Africa* IV: *Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century*, ed. D. T. Niane (Berkeley: UNESCO and University of California Press, 1984), 324-338.

[104] The word "proper' was used by my informants to describe those who speak the original dialects, such as the Aowin and Nzima, to differentiate them from their counterparts—the Suaman and Evalue, respectively—who although they speak the same dialects, have great variations.

[105] The people of Evalue live in between the Ahanta and the Nzema, but consider themselves to be Nzema, although the people of the Nzema "proper" do not accept them entirely as Nzema. Even the land on which they live was given to them by the Ahanta when they migrated to the place (personal conversation with Francis Quansah, 2004).

Ahafo, Bono, Denkyira, Kwawu, Twifo and Wassa under the Twi category, and Abora, Akumfi, Agyimako, Agona, Anomabo, Edena, Gomoa, Mowure and Oguaa under the Fante category. These are further divided into sub-dialects: for example, the Asante subdialect has *Asante* and *Asante-Akyem*; the Akyem has *Abuakwa*, *Kotoku* and *Bosome*; Bono has *Bono* and *Abron*;[106] Wassa has *Amanfi* and *Fiase*;[107] These subdialects within each dialectic category, however, do not differ so much from one another as to prevent their being mutually understood. And especially the differences within the sub-subdialects are only local with dialectical variations in tone.

2.2.2.   Akan Family Structure

The Akan, as well as the African, concept of the "family" is an extended one, constituting a social unit. It is said to be "a universal, social phenomenon and the basic centre of emotional expression and of social organization. It is the main source of perpetuation of the race, and the first point of contact in the process of socialization."[108] Generally in African thought, the family is that center from which a person derives his or her sense of identity; it is that in which he or she is able to have a sense of belonging; and it is that through which he or she is able to connect to an ancestral root. The family phenomenon is, therefore, a decisive factor in African culture.

As a result, the Akan family is fundamentally a social structure, governed by a system—a kinship system—that defines lineage relations: each person lives in a relationship with kin, connected to an ancestral root, which crosses over several generations back into history. In Akan

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[106] Abron is spoken along the central-eastern border of the Ivory Coast and has elements of both Boron of the Akan and the Bia languages. This situation has occurred because the Abron developed in the midst of the Bia linguistc group. See Florence A. Dolphyne, "Delafosse's Abron Wordlist in the Light of a Brong Dialect Survey," *Mitteilungen der Basler Afrika Bibliogrphien* 14 (1976): 35-154.

[107] While the Wassa Amafi sub-subdialect is close to the Twi dialect with regard to intonation, the Wassa Fiase is close to the Fante dialect; (personal conversation with Francis Quansah, 2004).

[108] Max Assimeng, *Social Structure of Ghana: A Study of Persistence and Change* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1981), 61.

"thought," a person is not born alone, or to him- or herself, but into a relationship with others who constitute his or her extended family.

Generally in Akan thought, a person has two other physical elements in addition to the spiritual or immortal part—the *ōkra* (the platonic soul) with the *sunsum* (spirit), which is believed to come from the Creator (I discuss this immortal aspect in relations to creativity in chapter four). These physical elements are the *mogya* (the blood), transmitted by the mother, and the *ntorō* (the hormone), which is transmitted by the father. While the *mogya* is believed to principally give rise to the person's biological body (*honam*), the *ntorō* appears to be, as Gyekye points out, "the basis of 'sperm-transmitted characteristic,'"[109] which is believed to give rise to the person's character (*suban*). Both the *mogya* and the *ntorō*, which constitute the physical entity or the material part of the individual, are mundane in origin, comprising all genetic factors responsible for "inherited characteristics."[110]

Accordingly, each person relates the mother and her lineage by virtue of the *mogya*, the blood. And this lineage is the matrilineal grouping known as the *abusua* or the clan. On the same merit, the person relates the father and his lineage by virtue of the *ntorō*, the hormone, which is the patrilineal grouping known as the *ntōn* or *akra*. There are eight matrilineal groups and eight patrilineal groups among the Akan. The eight matrilineal subgroups are Aduana, Agona, Asakyiri, Aseneε (or Abrade), Asona, Bretuo, Ēkoōna and Ōyōkō, and the eight patrilineal subgroups are Abankwaade, Afram, Bosommram, Bosompra, Bosomtwe, Busumuru, Nkatia and Poakwa.[111]

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[109] Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*, rev. ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 94.
[110] *Ibid*.
[111] Personal conversations with Kwame Nsia (2003) and Boakye Agyemang (2003). Also see A. Adu Boahen, *Topics in West African History* (London: Longman Group, 1966); Osafo K. Osei, *African Heritage of the Akan*, 1979; K. Nkansah Kyeremanteng, *The Akans of Ghana: Their History and Culture* (Accra: Sebewie Publishers, 1996).

The eight patrilineal groups do not constitute a "family" to which an Akan person would belong. They only constitute the ntōn system, which according to Kyeremanteng, "is regarded as the cult of the begetter and implies that it is the divine semen discharged (by the father) in the sexual act, symbolized in the relevant water-body, which is believed to give substance to the baby."[112] Among these eight ntōn divisions, five are active, which are named after the major water bodies—Bosomuru, Bosomtwi, Bosompra, Bosompo, and Bosomafram—relevant to the various geographical areas. The father, therefore, is believed to transmit this *nsu* (water), which provide the *nsu(ban)* (water body) that constitutes all genetic factors responsible for the inherited characteristics or nature—*(n)suban*, or *'suban*—of the person.

The *abusua* is, therefore, the more powerful than the *ntōn*, because in Akan "thought," *mogya mu yɛ duru…* referring to the fact that "blood is thicker than water." Accordingly, the concept of *abusua* is the basis for the structure of the Akan society, as well as for the founding of all early Akan city-states, towns, villages, and all social organizations. Each clan is placed under the leadership of a family belonging to such a clan, with the leader known as *abusuapanyin* (family leader).

2.2.3. Akan Philosophical Thought

By definition, Akan philosophical thought is that reflective-mental activity that corresponds to the people's concepts, expression and customs; that is, an activity that has its source and foundation in the very heart of the structure of the Akan's mental life. As a result, Akan philosophy may be defined as a synthesis of knowledge, concepts and attitudes that have come to constitute the Akan "thought," rooted in the historical—past and present—experiences vis-à-vis

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[112] K. Nkansa Kyeremanteng, 1996, p. 80

the worldview of the Akan people, which are treated as the embodiment of the wisdoms of the community.

Expressed in words and actions of the people, Akan philosophical thought constitutes the collective wisdom of the people, known as *nyansapō*, the "wisdom knot."[113] It is a *tradition*, embodying the basic ideological principles, moral values, and religious beliefs of the people,[114] because a tradition, Kwasi Wiredu posits, "presupposes a certain minimum of organic relationship among (at least some of) its members."[115] The beliefs, values and ideological propositions so expressed are, to the Akan, "truth-claims" that have been tested through experience and found valuable and reliable, taking their meaning within the Akan cultural context. This context, Odera Oruka claims, "usually is a given cultural system or consciousness – a cultural domain," and according to him, "it is on the basis of (this) cultural domain that ideological and other socio-political beliefs acquire meaning and truth-value."[116]

Examples of these philosophical sayings include the following: *ōba nyansa fo yebu no bɛ na yɛnka no asɛm* ("a wise child is spoken to in proverbs, and not in plain words"); *woamma wo yōnko antwa nkron a, wonso wonntwa edu* ("if you do not let your neighbor cross nine, you would never cross ten"); and *wotiatia obi deɛ so hwehwɛ wo de a, wonhu* ("if you trample on another's own to seek yours, you would not succeed"); and *wofro dua pa a, na yepia wo* (if you climb a good tree, you would be helped).

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[113] *Nyansapō*, the "wisdom knot," suggests that, when the wise ties a knot it takes an intelligent mind to untie it. This saying implies that there are underlying meanings behind all symbols, figure of speech and activities of the Akan people, which would take one with an insight and intelligent to understand them (Kwadwo Okrah, 2003).
[114] See also Kwame Gyekye, 1995, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme*; and Safro Kwame, ed., *Readings in African Philosophy: An Akan Collection* (Lanham: Universiy Press of America, 1995).
[115] Wiredu to Safro Kwame, 8 November 1994, *Readings in African Philosophy: An Akan Collection*, ed. Safro Kwame, 1995, p.xxxvii, New York: University Press of America, Inc.
[116] H. Odera Oruka, "Ideology and Culture: The African Experience," under "Discourses on Africa," in *The African Philosophy Reader*, 2nd ed., ed., P. H. Coetzee and A. P. J. Roux (New York: Routledge, 2003), 58.

Akan "thought" evolved as a conceptual response to the basic human problems and conditions, experienced by the Akan people at different epochs of their lives.[117] And as a result, it constitutes the guiding principles on which the people's faith and hopes rest. As I. M. Osuagwu points out, "African history of philosophy (in the present case, Akan history of philosophy) is an existential…memorial of the ways our scholarly ancestors thought and lived life through, the way they attempted to understand and master themselves and their world."[118]

This "thought" forms the intellectual aspect of the culture, constituting what are called the "intellectual lights"[119] of the society, which may be unique to the Akan. Unique in the sense that, because philosophy by its nature is considered to be a body of thoughts and beliefs produced by a people's unique way of thinking, talking about Akan philosophy, then, is grounded on the assumption that there is a way of thinking or a conceptual framework that is *uniquely* Akan. And although Akan philosophy may not exist as a peculiar phenomenon (as it may exhibits some elements that transcend cultural or racial confines), it still exists as a corpus of authentic, and identifiable ideas that derive their meanings only within the context of the Akan culture.

These ideas have arisen out of the different cultural experiences encountered over a long period in the course of the Akan's historical development. The ideas, therefore, may take their uniqueness by virtue of the fact that they originated from, or were produced as a result of, those *unique* experiences that might be peculiar to the Akan people. And even if they have shared some of these experiences with any other culture at all (even outside the continent), the emotional and psychological reactions to such experiences—which give birth to some of these

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[117] See Kwame Gyekye, "The Concept of a Person," in Safro Kwame (1995), 155-167.
[118] I. M. Osuagwu, *African Historical Reconstruction* (Imo State, Nigeria: Amamihe Publications, 1999, p. 22), quoted in Mogobe B. Ramose, "The Struggle for Reason in Africa," under "Discourses on Africa," in Coetzee and Roux, ed., 2003, p. 5.
[119] Odera Oruka, in Coetzee and Roux 2003.

philosophical ideas—may still differ. Furthermore, one characteristic feature of Akan "thought is that, it is also a moral one, having a purely humanistic orientation, and grounded on human values and interests. It is inherently doctrinal on ethical issues, repudiating any urge towards egoism.**120**

These wise sayings admonish individuals in the community to respect others as themselves and to wish everyone the best of life. These wise sayings and similar others are meant to regulate the various individual interests, actions and behaviors within the community, with the aim of promoting respect, peace and harmony in the community. As a result, the characteristic feature of most of the sayings that emanate from the Akan thought is very didactic, with the aim of educating members of the community to be able to conform to the *status quo*.

Finally, I would like to point out that these wise sayings were not produced, however, by all members of the community; their initial creation was by individuals—the sages within the community—whose creative ideas emanated from the Creator through inspiration. Although they were "birthed" from natural experiences, these wise sayings are in no way reckoned to be mundane in origin, but divine, given to the past and present sages by the Creator for the purpose of the smooth and perfect running of the community (This aspect is given special attention in chapter four).[121]

Having provided accounts of the Akan linguistic structure, family structure and philosophical thought, I now discuss the socio-cultural processes and systems found in the culture.

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[120] Gyekye 1995.
[121] See Gyekye 1995 and Wiredu 1995.

2.3.   Akan Socio-Cultural Processes

The processes discussed in this section constitute the dynamic aspects of the whole Akan socio-cultural phenomenon, comprising the changes and transformations that occurred in Akan socio-cultural organization once the state came into existence.[122] The aim here is to discuss the evolution of the entire Akan traditions for the purpose of establishing the fact that the Akan, like most people on the surface of the earth, have had the natural capacity to consciously or unconsciously effect changes in their environments, to play significant roles in most human-initiated change processes, and to make contributions to both the material and institutional aspects of their culture, as their creative sensibilities or tendencies continue to bring about various forms of innovations from time to time.

The term "evolution," which implies "structural modification,"[123] is defined as "the *process* by which a structural reorganization is effected through time, eventually producing a form or *structure* which is qualitatively different from the ancestral form."[124] Accordingly, Claessen and Van de Velde define social evolution as "the process of the qualitative reorganization of a

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[122] I use the term "state" here to mean a society in which a particular level of cultural development has been reached, and there is a centralized and specialized institution of government. See Jonathan Haas, *The Evolution of the Prehistoric State* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).

[123] Thomas Bargatzky, "Upward Evolution, Suprasystem Dominance and the Mature State," in *Early State Dynamics*, ed. Henri, J. M. Claessen and Pieter van de Velde (New York: E. J. Brill, 1987).

[124] F. W. Voget, *A History of Ethnology* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1975), 862; Henri J. M. Claessen and Pieter van de Velde, "Another Shot of the Moon," *Research* 1 (1982):11, and "The Evolution of Sociopolitical Organization," in *Development and Decline*, ed. H. J. M. Claessen *et al.* (South Hadley: Bergin and Garvey, 1985), 6. The italics are mine. Although the term "evolution," used in this study, may have the same conceptual meaning as the widely accepted one set forth simultaneously by A. R. Wallace and Charles Robert Darwin in the nineteenth century, its emphasis and perspective may be slightly different. For the Darwinian concept of evolution embodies the belief that existing species—human, animal and plants—developed by a process of gradual, continuous change from previously existing forms. The tenet of this theory hinges on the concept of "natural selection" by which inheritable variations among individuals of given types of organism continually arise in nature, so that those variations that prove advantageous under prevailing conditions continue to live while those that do not become extinct (*The Columbia Encyclopedia*, 6th ed., s. v. "Darwinism"). As much as this may be true in some sense, it emphasizes the fact that developments, progress, etc., occur by *natural* means, without involving actors, agents or creators. However, the main focus in this study hinges rather on the initiators and agents of change, that is, actors and creators of the cultural systems. Accordingly, the major claim made in the present study is that, although cultures evolve, they evolve with actors who are primarily the sole agents of those social changes. The changes that do not fall within the scope of this study are those non-human-initiated changes such as the ecological changes, etc.

society."[125] The Akan culture therefore, had evolved as a result of the people's conscious effort to creatively organize and reorganize their environments, thus emphasizing the fact that creativity in general has been part and parcel of the culture.

2.3.1. Processes of Change and Transformation

In the process of creating and recreating their tradition, the Akan have initiated, originated, and developed various forms of innovative ideas, especially those they thought suited them and their environments.[126] And at every time, the succeeding generations have had the chance of also adding to the tradition. They had done this by reconstructing, redesigning and reinterpreting what had been laid down for them with the purpose of making those inherited traditions relevant and meaningful to their current way of life.

Historically, the earliest known homelands of the Akan had been the forest regions, referred to as the lagoon country and lying within the areas bounded by the Komoé River to the west and the Volta to the east[127] or between the Volta and the basin of the Pra and its tributaries.[128] In these areas, they had built for themselves a complex of settlements. They had first inhabited in prehistoric village complexes and had later developed a known complex on the high ground around Kintampo.[129] This complex was situated in the forest and savanna environment,

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[125] Claessen and van de Velde 1987, p.3.

[126] This assertion is evidenced in the early organization of the Akan people, with the subsequent economic and political changes that took place before the early construction of the Akan states. One of such major changes was a move from a nomadic stage, involving hunting and gathering type of economic life, to a sedentary stage where the economy shifted to that based upon crop production, and during which clans, communities, etc., were established (Ref. Chapter 2).

[127] See Ivor Wilks, "The Mossi and the Akan States, 1400 to 1800," in *History of West Africa*, vol 1, 3rd ed., J. F. A. Ajayi and Michael Crowder (New York: Londman Group, 1985), 344-386.

[128] A. Adu Boahen, *Topics in West African History* (London: Longman Group, 1966).

[129] According to Wai Andah, archaeological findings indicating the existence of a Negroid group practicing food production at least as early as -1300 to -1400 has so far been found in four areas of Ghana, which are east of the Banda hills, the high ground around Kintampo, riverine sites scattered among the open woodlands of the inner Volta basin, and the Accra plains to the far south. See B. Wai Andah, "West Africa before the Seventh Century," in *General History of Africa* II: *Ancient Civilizations of Africa*, ed., G. Mokhtar (Berkeley: UNESCO and University of

straddling the middle and southern parts of the present-day Ivory Coast and the Gold Coast. And scattered over this large stretch of land was this complex, comprising several large village sites, and refered to as the "Kintampo complex" or "Kintampo sites."

The period from the seventh to the eleventh century in the Gold Coast is said to be a transitional period between "the prehistoric village complexes" that pre-dated the seventh century, and "the urban commercial, high-level technology complexes" that characterized the early thirteenth century. This transitional period is described as essentially a formative one, because it was during this time that the Akan started and developed the infrastructure of complex societies.[130] And by these developments, they had laid the foundation and actively prepared for the era that was to mark the Akan civilization.

Around the twelfth century or the thirteen century, the Akan established autonomous kinship societies that were independent of each other and had developed political kingdoms and city-states. By the fifteenth century they had well established social, economic and political structures, and had consolidated distinct state systems within the Akan communities.[131] And by the sixteenth century, they had fully structured most of their kingdoms. Some of their notable changes in the sixteenth to the eighteenth century—a period described as one of the most revolutionary periods in the history of the Akans[132]—were the gradual centralization of states and the establishment of larger political entities or kingdoms and empires. All these

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California Press, 1981). The people of this large Negro stock were said to be speaking languages that were a kind of proto-Akan and proto-Guan (See Andah and Anquandah, in Elfasi and Hrbek 1988). Probably those in the far south might be the proto-Guan people, but circumstantial evidence shows that those around the Kintampo ground, and probably the other areas, were the proto-Akan.

[130] *Ibid*., p. 493.

[131] See Ivor Wilks, in Ajayi and Crowder 1985, and Boahen 1966.

[132] See A. Adu Boahen, "The States and Cultures of the Lower Guinea Coast," in *General History of Africa* V: *Africa from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century*, ed., B. A. Ogot (Berkeley: UNESCO and University of California Press, 1992).

developments went hand in hand with the introduction of sophistication into art, craft and sculpture.

Such creative changes had characterized the Akan culture, as change itself, with its concomitant innovations, had not been considered accidental by the Akan, but a necessary cultural tool for advancing the Akan nation.

2.3.2.   Processes of Appropriation and Reinterpretation

I would like to further point out that Akan, apart from initiating, originating, and developing their own forms of innovative ideas, had appropriated and reinterpreted or redefined several novel ideas brought to them from other foreign cultures. And although this impact from external stimuli is clearly exemplified by the Akan's encounter with colonial rule, it is also marked by their interaction with other nations as well. Generally, before colonial rule, Africa was interacting with other foreign nations through trade. That is, apart from the internal trade among African nations themselves—such as the trans-Saharan trade—Africa had economic relations with nations such as the Arab nations and later with the European nations.[133]

It was rather from the nineteenth century onward, and precisely the period 1880-1935, when the Akan witnessed some drastic changes within a relatively short span of time. It was a period of colonization generally in most parts of Africa. But it was also a period of appropriation and reinterpretation of many cultural systems from these foreign nations by Akan. Some of the notable changes included the major global changes, which may be termed "macro changes," that have affected political, economical and religious institutions in most cultures of Africa, resulting

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[133] Examples of Akan trade with the Wangara of Africa and the Portuguese are well documented; see Ivor Wilks, *Forests of Gold: Essays on the Akan and the Kingdom of Asante* (Anthens: Ohio University Press, 1993).

in several innovations, such as the democratic and the governmental systems, the banking systems and the Christian and Isam religious systems, among others.

However, even with such macro changes, it is convenient to see those innovations as resulting more from *appropriation* than from imposition—as resulting from a process of selection, guided by the value aspect of the Akan culture. For it is through this mode of selection that elements that are not appropriate to—or not consonant or compatible with—the overall Akan values are discarded; such a view demonstrates the pre-eminence of the value aspect of the culture in choice-making. As W. E. Abraham points out, "The value aspect of culture is well able to place sanctions and embargoes on material culture and institutional culture."[134]

The result of this process of appropriation is the infusion or integration of selected foreign elements with traditional elements that gave birth to novel structures or systems. And although some of these new structures may appear foreign, the internal systems governing them are integration of both traditional and foreign elements. Examples are the school and church systems. Although these were brought down to Africa during the colonial periods, they were reinstituted during the post-colonial and independence eras.

The school systems were restructured and localized to suit the African aspirations and identity. The new educational curricula are not as they were in the colonial days. They have been replanned to articulate the philosophies of the African people. For instances, there have been the introduction of more traditional information, such as the history of Africa, Ghana, and so forth. Ghanain method of farming, fishing and many traditional way of doing things are all incorporated.

With regard to the religious institutions, Christianity and Islam were brought down by the European missionaries and the Arabs, respectively. However, the churches, as well as the

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[134] W. E. Abraham, *The Mind of Africa* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), 33.

mosques, do incorporate a lot of traditional elements. These include the singing of tradition songs in some of the churches and the new way of singing even the European hymns and anthems. Drums and other traditional instruments are played side by side, or combined, with the foreign ones. Even the Bible and the Quaran are reinterpreted by preachers and imams to reflect the African situations; they are made relevant to the African. And the Akan people who also embraced both Christianity and Islam have recreated and reinterpreted many foreign elements and practices. I will, at this point, discuss the socio-cultural systems.

2.4. Akan Socio-Cultural Systems

By defining a system as "a (bounded) set of interrelated components,"[135] the Akan society, in its basic traditional form, may be said to reveal four different, but related, types of systems, namely, value systems, institutional systems, technological systems, and textual systems.[136] The value systems produce religious and moral values, which monitor thoughts, words and behaviors and disseminate cultural information on what is good-bad, right-wrong, appropriate-inappropriate and acceptable-unacceptable within the society. In other words, they constitute the value aspect

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[135] Kenneth D. Bailey, "System Theory," in *Handbook of Sociological Theory*, ed., Jonathan H. Turner (New York: Plenum Publishers, 2001), 383.

[136] Apart from the term "institutional systems," the other three terms—value, technological, and textual systems—were borrowed from Turner and Boyns' terminology—values, technologies and textual (See Jonathan H. Turner and David E. Boyns, "Return of Grand Theory," in Turner 2001, pp. 353-378). According to their theory, society or systems of societies reveal several different types of symbol systems. These systems are categorized into at least three types of systems, which are values, technologies and texts of lore. The values and evaluational symbols concern what is right-wrong, good-bad, appropriate-inappropriate; the technologies concern how to manipulate the environment; and texts of lore constitutes the aesthetics, philosophy, history, and other symbolically stored information. They also point out that these socio-cultural elements, which are generated by macro-, meso-, and microdynamics, constrain what occurs in "institutional domains" at the macro level, "corporate and categorical units" at the meso level, and individual "encounters" at the micro level. The macro-meso-micro concept is used here to explain the three structural levels in a society's formal structure. Furthermore, they define "corporate units" as those embracing complex organizations, kinship systems, towns and larger communities, and even groups, while the "categorical units," according to them, are structures created when individuals are placed into distinct categories and then differentially responded to by virtue of this placement; examples of these categories are age, gender, ethnicity, and social class (*Ibid*., pp.362-363).

of the culture.[137] These value orientations are developed and translated into various forms of beliefs that constitute a religious faith; rules, norms and ethics that form a moral law; and wise sayings that constitute a philosophical thought.

The institutional systems govern all identifiable units within the Akan society that define a certain kind of relationship, for example, political system, kinship system, marital system, and so forth. The technological systems produce technical information on how to handle, on the one hand, ecological and environmental issues pertaining to, for example, farming or fishing, and on the other hand, other technical information relating to, for example, building of houses and structures, construction of instruments and weaving. The textual systems monitor all artistic forms of expression found in all verbal and musical forms such as poems (including song texts), formulae (that is, proverbs, riddles, genealogies), epic poetry (such as story telling) and narratives (that is, oral messages).

These socio-cultural systems constitute the broader culture of the entire Akan society; they control, as well as constrain, all functions within the societal structure. And because they are abstract in form and inherently embodied in the *thought* system of the people, they are transmitted into the culture through various "corporate and categorical units."[138] That is, the contents of the cultural systems are disseminated to individual members of the community at a lower level. But for the purpose of disseminating these cultural contents, specific social institutions are established at an upper level (the *macro*) to transmit these cultural contents through various social organizations and groups at a middle level (the *meso*) where individuals interact with each other. And because the individuals who are associated with these organizations

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[137] See Abraham 1962.
[138] In this study, I limit the corporate units to organizations—simple and complex, small and large.

represent the community, the cultural contents eventually reach all individuals at the lower level (the *micro*).

The macro-level organizational structures are the political, religious and economic bodies that provide contexts such as festivals, religious ceremonies, rituals and initiation rites for the transmission of values, technologies, and texts of lore. The meso-level "corporate and categorical units" (known in Akan as *ekuo*) include the male and female organizations, associations of occupational bodies such as the hunters and fishermen, and units such as families and other informal groups. Such social organizations are formidable units, showing or revealing role distributions within the society. Through such structures, the community is reached at the micro level.

What usually happens is that, while the cultural contents are being transmitted for their application or use by the community, they may go through further translations—or sometimes re-interpretation or perhaps change as the needs arise—at any of these intermediary levels. And this is where creativity becomes evident, beginning first from the creation of the systems themselves in thought, then down the line along the macro-, meso-, and micro levels; it is also through these translations that innovations are realized. The cultural materials so translated ultimately become the standards or criteria by which all the corresponding units, such as the various organizations and groups, are defined.

2.5.   Conclusion

I have provided the ethnological accounts of Akan. I have also discussed the socio-cultural dynamics of their traditions, which concern both social processes and social systems. I have

discussed how the Akan established political kingdoms, city-states, and confederations of states, and developed social institutions and social systems. In addition, I have discussed how the encounter between Africans and Europeans (and other nations) led to creative appropriation and reinterpretation of foreign cultural elements values. I have also discussed the four socio-cultural systems—the value systems, institutional systems, technological systems, and the textual systems. Accordingly, I have explored the structural, functional and developmental aspects of the Akan society.

Several factors did, undoubtedly, influence the course of these processes of development and the subsequent realization of the traditional systems. But one of these, which I deem important, is the people's own intrinsic motivation to effect change in their environment and to bring about innovation. And because change is conceived by the Akan as a necessary cultural tool, they did not only receive elements, concepts, values and systems that came to them from foreign cultures. They also selectively adopted and appropriated these elements, and reinterpreted and redefined them to suit their own values, philosophy and way of life.

The foregoing, therefore, supports the claim that throughout the history of the Akan, creativity has been manifested, even during the colonial era, and has been one of Akan's most critical capacities. They have developed new ideas and solutions to old problems, and have seized on various opportunities to bring about novel ideas. They, like any other people on earth, have gone through the gradual process of developing their own traditions, which have required the initiation, origination and appropriation of various forms of innovative ideas.

The Akan socio-cultural dynamics may, therefore, be seen as being both "a social and a historical process requiring active appropriation, perpetuation, and transformation" by members of the Akan community. Such dynamics have revealed social *processes* of gradual development,

expansion, and the attainment of relative maturity, on the one hand, and a seemingly basic stability of the relevant *structures* of social systems, on the other hand. And this creative tendency has revealed both the innate capacity (the personality) and the culturally acquired knowledge, which are of primary relevance in understanding both continuity and change among the Akan.

Therefore, from this context, it is legitimate to see the music traditions also as resulting from, first, processes of initiation and origination of indigenous musical elements; second, processes of appropriation and selection of foreign elements; and third, infusion and integration of some of these elements into novel musical elements. These processes of initiation, origination, appropriation, integration, among others, are the characteristic features of musical creativity within the Akan musical culture. The subsequent chapters expound more on these processes and structures within the Akan culture.

3. CHAPTER THREE: THE DYNAMICS OF THE AKAN MUSIC TRADITIONS

3.1. Introduction

By exploring the structural, functional and developmental nature of the Akan society in the previous chapter, I have provided the background for the discussion of the dynamic nature of the Akan musical traditions. As we have already discovered, the society clearly reveals, on the one hand, the social and historical processes of transformation (the dynamic aspects of the traditions), and, on the other hand, the relevant structures of social systems or social forms (the synchronic aspects of the traditions). And it is these processes of transformation and the relevant structures that make the Akan socio-cultural dynamics both a social and a historical process.

Accordingly, the music traditions—which form part of the various traditions in the culture—also reveal musical processes of transformation and relevant structures of musical forms. And it is both the musical processes and the musical forms, and the symbiotic relationship between them, which constitute the music traditions of the Akan society. The musical processes include, but are not limited to, the various forms of musical interactions, activities and events that are embedded in the overall social interactions, activities and events, which duly provide appropriate contexts for the creation of a variety of musical forms.

What govern the music traditions are the textual systems (one of the four interrelated types of socio-cultural systems discussed in the previous chapter), which monitor all artistic forms and symbols of expression contained in the vast oral literature. This oral literature also embodies, in addition to the forms and symbols, the belief systems, rituals, traditions and customs, and socio-political institutions and practices that are transmitted orally from generation to generation. Furthermore, the artistic forms and symbols of expression, which articulate the philosophical

thought, ideas and actions of Akan, also include, in addition to music, all forms of art and craft such as sculpture and weaving.

In this chapter, however, I limit my discussion of artistic forms and symbols of expression to those forms and symbols relating to music. My aim is to discuss the interplay between processes of music and products or forms of music, and how their symbiotic relationship becomes the basis of the Akan music traditions and brings about the vitality and the dynamism associated with the musical culture.

3.2.   Processes of Creativity: Development and Transformation of the Music Traditions

3.2.1.   The Institution of the Music Traditions

The music traditions of the Akan are as old as the Akan culture itself because they evolved gradually with the growth of the Akan society[139] and emerged as a result of the formalization and institutionalization of certain interpersonal discourses and social interactions within the culture.[140] Throughout history, the Akan have developed their own story and habits of storytelling, the legends of their traditions or groups of stories about their heroes, and myths of the origin of the "Akan world." All these became possible because within the traditional milieu, people found context for various forms of exchange and communication—contexts in which they could express and share their thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences. My aim here is to

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[139] For archaeological evidence, see B. Wai Andah and J. Anquandah, "The Guinea Belt: The People between Mount Cameroon and the Ivory Coast," in *General History of Africa* III: *Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*, ed., M. Elfasi and I. Hrbek (Berkeley: UNESCO and University of California Press, 1988), and for historical evidence, see A. Adu Boahen, *Topics in West African History* (London: Longman Group, 1966).
[140] This assertion is a deduction from the fact that social interactions, which encouraged interpersonal discourses, had been part and parcel of the Akan culture. See Max Assimeng, *Social Structure of Ghana: A Study of Persistence and Change* (Accra: Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1981), and J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "Interaction through Music: The Dynamic of Music-Making in African Societies," *International Social Science Journal, Makings of Music* 94 (UNESCO) 34, no. 4 (1982): 639-656.

discuss how Akan communal orientation encouraged many social interactions to develop into what I call "socio-musical events," and how these, in turn, gave birth to the musical traditions.

3.2.1.1. *The Social Interactions*

Akan society, like any African society, is a communal traditional setting where contexts are created for the sharing of experiences, as well as the expression of sentiments. Accordingly, various informal gatherings in the past encouraged various forms of social interactions that ranged from interactions within small groups to those within the community. With the small-group interactions, people belonging to various categories, such as gender, age, profession and class came together to share their experiences with others in the group. Here, men gathered after a hard day's work, such as fishing, farming, blacksmithing, or any other form of occupation and told stories of their experiences; women gathered after work such as farming or any form of occupation and told stories about their domestic and outdoor experiences; and children gathered after work such as helping their parents at home, on the farms, or in any kind of occupation, and told their stories. Various professional groups also shared their experiences even while at work.

With regard to the community interactions, people of all categories in the community came together informally to share their experiences, and in this case, the stories also included the recounting of genealogies and life histories relating to the society as a whole. These stories were either factual or fictional. The factual ones were stories relating to Akan people's daily experiences, and these included the stories of their origin, which were told through various forms. Fictional stories constituted the folktales known in Akan as *anansesɛm*, which were entertaining, but didactic in nature and carried moral values. Both factual and fictional stories were also used beyond their entertainment functions. Moments like these, such as the group and community interactions, also provided the opportunity for all social vices and anti-social

behaviors to be reprimanded and discouraged, as well as for praising and encouraging all social virtues and good behaviors.

These informal gatherings and social interactions, in turn, encouraged various forms of interpersonal discourses. So as these informal gatherings intensified and the social interactions developed, especially at the community level, all such related *discourses*—that is, kinds of "language use"[141]—gradually became formalized. Accordingly, stories and the habits of telling them, legends of traditions and heroes and the habits of reciting them, and myths about the society and the habits of recounting them, also became formalized. And the result is the emergence of artistic products comprising, on the one hand, certain *narrative forms*, such as poems, proverbs and folktales, that had a plot, character, setting and diction and, on the other hand, different *symbolic forms*, such as singing, drumming and dancing, that became the modes for conveying messages.

3.2.1.2. The Socio-Musical Events

The presentation of these narrative and symbolic forms—forms that are interactive or dialogic discourses in their own right—eventually developed into a kind of "conversation" which Kwesi Yankah describes as "a megagenre that embraces related modes of interaction…"[142] This kind of "conversation" involved a speaker/singer, known as the cantor, who always had something to say—a story to tell. This cantor either told the whole story by him/herself alone, or shared the story line with a chorus of people whose role was to repeatedly highlight the passages in the story that carried the theme of the message. And in each case, there were listeners who

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[141] See Paul A. Bové, "Discourse," in *Critical Terms for Literary Studies*, 2nd ed., ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995), 50-65.

[142] Kwesi Yankah, "Nana Ampadu, the Sung-Tale Metaphor, and Protest Discourse in Contemporary Ghana," in *Language, Rhythm, and Sound: Black Popular Cultures into the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Joseph K. Adjaye and Adrianne R. Andrews (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), 55.

responded with various forms of expression, such as clapping, shouting, yelling, gesturing, clapping and stamping of feet to correspond to the rhythm, dancing, or in certain cases, joining in with the simple chorus lines.

This kind of cantor-chorus delivery within the conversational structure took the form of an "oratory," that is, a kind of "utterance"—aural or visual,[143]—that employed elegant rhetorical devices.[144] And it came with its own performance rules that, among other things, required especially the cantor, the deliverer, to possess some histrionic temperament. As these highly patterned or structured forms of interactive discourse developed over the years—especially during the formative years of the society—they gradually became highly formalized, and subsequently became institutionalized as official events. Along with all the different narrative and symbolic forms in their various combinations of presentation, these events became constituted, as a matter of course, into some form of traditions, which came to be known as the *music traditions*.

AGORŌ: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR MUSIC-MAKING

Semantically, the term "music" in Akan thought is conceptualized as a constitution of different, but highly interrelated, forms and modes of artistic expressions that together form part of the "music-making" process. Accordingly, the music-making process is understood within the

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[143] The term "utterance" primarily denotes an expression of "sound" and its verb form, to "utter," means "to express or give out as speech or a sound" (*Chambers Combined Dictionary Thesaurus*, s. v. "utter"). However, in this study, I extend its meaning to cover both aural and visual devices. The reason for this broad use of the term is that, if utterance can also mean to say, articulate, deliver, state, declare, tell, and reveal (*Ibid*.), and in oral traditions such as the Akan tradition, gestures and movements can also be seen as conveying a message, as "saying" something, as "articulating" individual or group sentiments, as "delivering" a message, and as "telling" a story, then dances and all related forms of movements that carry messages are all "utterances."

[144] "Rhetorical devices," may be defined in this study as an artful, skillful and eloquent way of expressing one's thoughts, idea and sentiments. And this connotes *eloquence in expression*. It shares the same meaning with the term *elocutionary*, which denotes clarity of speech, or the art of speaking clearly and effectively (see *Roget's International Thesaurus*, 5th ed., s. v. "rhetoric"). It does not in any way take on the negative meaning attributed to it in literary and cultural studies, which goes with terms such as "grandiloquence" and "lexiphanicism" to mean an overelaboration or insincerity in style. In such cases, "rhetoric" is seen as "language that is infected by partisan agendas and desire; and therefore colors and distorts the facts which it purports to reflect" (Stanley Fish, "Rhetoric," in Lentricchia and McLaughlin 1995, p. 205).

culture as a *musical event*, conceptualized by the Akan as *agorō* (a play). Etymologically, *agorō*

primarily denotes a kind of activity that provides some form of entertainment, and this is obvious

in all its manifestations. In its first meaning, it refers to a kind of game, and an example is, *yɛredi*

agorō, meaning "we are playing," (such as children playing a game). Secondly, *agorō* may also

mean a joke, depending on the context, and in such a sentence, it will mean "we are joking," that

is, not being serious, probably about what we said.

However, at a third level, *agorō* takes on the meaning of "music" and refers to the activity of

"music-making." And in its verb form, *goro*, it appears in sentences such as the following:

yɛbɛ́goro (we will make music), *yɛrebɛgoro* (we are coming to make music), *yɛrekōgoro* (we are

going to make music), and *yɛregoro* (we are making music). It is, therefore, with this third

meaning—"music-making"—that *agorō* is defined in this study. And it is in the *agorō* context

that the narrative forms and the symbolic forms find, in all their various modes of presentation, a

fitting social niche within the culture.

J. H. Kwabena Nketia also discusses the relevance of the play-concept in African music,

saying that, as a noun, the term *agorō* "refers to a music event in its own right in a particular

context as play."[145] And as a verb, the term *goro* refers to "the process of engaging in a music

activity or the process of realizing a particular musical type in a play mood."[146] Accordingly, a

musician is called *gofoō* (a player), because, as Nketia says, "the play character of a music event

depends on his art and musical competence." Other terms are derived from this root word such as

the following: *gofomma* or *agorōmma* (play group or play children); *ahengorō* (the play of chiefs

or kings, collectively referring to the musical types of the royal court); *mmarimagorō* (the play of

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[145] J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Play-Concept in African Music," [N.D.]
[146] *Ibid*.

men, collectively referring to the warrior music organization); and *tete agorō* (an ancient or old play).[147]

Because of the play concept, socio-musical events have become a highly relevant and significant cultural tool for all social interactions. The musical traditions, on the other hand, have provided the needed contexts for various forms of cultural expression, and accordingly, many social events have come to constitute musical events and vice versa. The final results have been the emergence of various musical types for the numerous social occasions that ranged from ceremonies such as festivals and funerals to ceremonies such as marriage, child-naming, and communal labor. I now discuss the emergence of musical groups and association within the Akan community.

3.2.2. The Emergence of Music Groups and Associations

The institutionalization of the music traditions and the formalization of socio-musical events gave rise also to the emergence of various splinter groups such as musical organizations and associations. These groups emerged as social groups, organized on a community basis, or sometimes on descent lines. Some of them groups were organized on an informal basis and these comprised the small recreational music groups and spontaneous groups. Others constituted some kind of associations, organized on a formal basis, such as those associated with traditional establishments such as the religious cults, royal courts and other political organizations.

Accordingly, two main categories of musical groups may be said to have emerged—the unofficial groups, organized by individuals within the community, and official groups which were associations attached to traditional establishments. The unofficial groups, also known as "free-lance" groups, performed for their own enjoyment. But sometimes they performed for

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[147] *Ibid*.

occasions such as marriage ceremonies, naming ceremonies and other minor occasions. Those attached to the cults and courts performed solely for those large bodies and on major occasions,

3.2.2.1. *Emergence of Unofficial Music Groups*

This category of music groups emerged as spontaneous groups,[148] organized as autonomous groups which were not associated with, or belonged to, any formal organizations. There emerged several kinds of unofficial groups: first, there were the very informal splinter groups, such as voluntary groups, which were not permanent groups and only gathered to perform at their own leisure and for their own enjoyment, either in the evening or during work or at holidays. This kind resembled the early form of social interactive groups who would meet only for pleasure.

The second category comprised those groups organized on the broader societal classifications of age, sex, interest, or occupation. The formation of groups such as these might have arisen out of a situation where the communities had begun to ascribe specific musical roles to some of these classified groups. For example, there emerged roles solely for women who sang, say, dirges at funerals. Within each organized group, roles and responsibilities were distributed among members. This practice further gave rise to the emergence of small performing groups who became permanent units within the social organization, specializing in specific musical genres. In such a case, when these groups performed in public, only those who were members could participate fully in their activities.

3.2.2.2. *Formation of Official Music Groups*

This category consisted of well-organized groups which emerged as permanent groups solely for the performance of music. Two types of this category emerged. First was the emergence of

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[148] See J. H. Kwabena Nketia, *The Music of Africa* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974).

music groups that were attached to traditional establishments, such as royal musicians attached to royal courts who performed to entertain guests of the palaces of the kings; an example of such groups is *bomaa* music group. Others emerged from the religious cults, which perfomed at religious occasions and for ritual ceremonies.

There also emerged a second type of this category, some of which were later developments that might have emerged with reasons other than those of the other two. These were permanent groups which received invitations to perform at occasions such as marriage ceremonies, naming ceremonies and sometimes major occasions such as festivals. These were "paid" groups which acquired special names and had patrons who monitored them. In most cases, their patrons belonged to the senior citizens level or sometimes could be the chief of the town or village. I discuss the musical types in the music traditions.

3.2.3.   The Emergence of Musical Types

The growth of musical traditions within Akan communities gave rise to the emergence of many musical types. With the organization of socio-musical events, contexts were provided for musicians to produce and reproduce musical genres, to create and recreate a variety of musical types. Therefore, nowhere have the Akan musicians played more significant roles in human-initiated change processes, have they made more contributions to both the material and institutional aspects of their culture and have their creative endeavors been more fruitful than in the creation and development of musical types. The reason is that, by responding to the contemporary demands of their times, the musicians effected several changes within the traditions to bring about innovation, both in the creation and in the development of the musical types. I therefore, discuss the creation and development of these musical types below.

3.2.3.1.   *The Creation and Development of the Musical Types*

J. H. Kwabena Nketia, in providing an overview of the arts in contemporary contexts, discusses the creative continuum, where he points out that there are two primary contexts of creativity in Africa today: the traditional context and the contemporary context.[149] According to Nketia, the traditional context is "defined by the way of life and norms of groups established on the basis of ethnicity, kinship, language and well defined social institutions."[150] The contemporary context, on the other hand, is "defined by the cultural life of new social formations established by linkages beyond ethnicity and kinship, such as membership in political institutions, trade unions, sports clubs and specialized professions."[151]

Although Nketia is directly referring to changes occurring within the post-colonial contemporary world of African societies—where Africa has been challenged by a wealth of foreign ideas—it is quite obvious that this continuum of creativity had existed, although to a lesser degree, for most African societies since time immemorial. And in the case of the Akan societies, it is well recorded that ever since their inception there had been contacts with the outside world in various ways over the years.[152] As Nketia also points out, "what is happening now is not an entirely new phenomenon. It is but a continuation, though in an accentuated form, of an old process of change."[153]

Accordingly, at each time in the life of the Akan people, musicians had to face tensions between continuity and change; they had to face both the traditional and the contemporary pressures of their times and had to negotiate between the two forces. Furthermore, composers at

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[149] J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Arts in Contemporary Contexts: An Overview," [N.D.]
[150] *Ibid*, p.2.
[151] *Ibid*, p.3.
[152] See Boahen 1966.
[153] J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "Changing Traditions of Folk Music in Ghana," *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 11 (1959): 31.

each time had to face the dilemma between conformation and transformation, or perpetuation of the *status quo* or departure from it for the sake of innovation. And in the case of the latter, their motivation is either intrinsic—that is, by their own desire for change, or extrinsic—that is, by the contemporary pressures of their time. As a result, while—for Akan composers—the community, on the one hand, "constitutes a distinct community of taste that creates and maintains its own art forms,"[154] it also embraces, on the other hand, new social formations, new ideologies and new ways of life that come not to displace it but to complement and enrich it.

Therefore, in the creation of musical types, Akan composers have, in most cases, perpetuated and sustained their own art forms, while, at the same time, they provided innovations to enhance the same tradition. The context, then, becomes a contested field where concepts and values of musicians are reproduced and transformed,[155] and it is, therefore, in this context that many recreational musical types were (and are still being) created.   The changes that occurred may be seen in four major areas: changes that result in a complete creation of entirely new musical types that come with new dance forms; changes that affect certain parameters or some aspects of existing musical types; changes that result in new instrumental combinations; and changes that result in new organization. The rest of the section is devoted to the discussion of all these changes.

The creation of new musical types for "popular" use is much encouraged in Akan culture (and generally in African cultures). These new musical types, after becoming very popular for a few years, are abandoned by creative individuals for new ones. But the emergence of new popular creations has also depended on the extent to which existing forms were entrenched in the

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[154] Nketia, "The Arts in Contemporary Contexts: An Overview," [N.D.] p. 2
[155] Christopher A. Waterman, "*Juju* History: Toward a Theory of Sociomusical Practice," in *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*, ed., Stephen Blum, Philip Bohlman, and Daniel Neuman (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 49-67.

culture, that is, how they were admired and used within the community. Accordingly, although many new forms may emerge as a result of composers' desire to bring about innovations, their acceptance by the community is also of utmost importance to the composers. And when the composers' desire corresponds to social demands the likelyhood for the acceptance of the new genres is undeniable.

A case in point is during the late 1920s, when the music and dance type called *utan*, which was performed among the Asante, was replaced by *sika-rebɛwu-ōperɛ*. Later, this genre was also replaced by *adakam*, then, followed by *kɛnkɛma*.[156] *Asaadua* came into vogue after *kɛnkɛma*, and later, *Akosua Tuntum* (as known among the Asante) or *ahyewa* (as known among the Kwawu and Akuapem) came to replace *asaadua*. Dances such as *ōmpɛ*, *dwae*, *sobom*, and *osoode* were also at one time popular among the Akan, but are now found in just a few areas,[157] having been replaced by other types in the areas where they are not performed today. *Osoode* is now performed only in the Akuapem and Fante areas, while *ōmpɛ* is found mostly among the Fante.

Sometimes the new types do not necessarily come to supplant or replace the old ones but live side by side with them. A case in point is the *owumpɛsika*, performed among the Guan people of the Akuapem, which emerged roughly between the 1920s and the 1930s when *adenkum* was in vogue. It lived side by side with the *adenkum*, and when a band came to be named after the *owumpɛsika*, that band continued to specialize in both *adenkum* and *owumpɛsika*. Another type known as *ntoboase*, which had the same characteristics as the other two genres, was later created by the women of the same band. And this type also came to live side by side with the *adenkum* and *owumpɛsika*.

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[156] Nketia 1959, p.31
[157] J. H. Kwabena Nketia, *Folk Songs of Ghana* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963b).

Composers may also decide to create new genres from old ones by creating either new bell lines, drum rhythms or other new elements that may appear interesting. In such a case, the newly created types would bear almost all the features of the old ones, except those parameters that the change affected. New genres also emerge as a result of adding or removing one or two instruments from the existing ensemble. For example, the absence of the *atumpan* (the talking drum) in the *adowa* resulted in a new genre called *mprɛ*, whose basic sound configuration is that of *adowa*, except that the *atumpan* rhythmic lines are missing. As a result, the dance-form for the *mprɛ* is different from the *adowa* dance because of the absence of the *atumpan*, which directs the dance movements in the *adowa*. Furthermore, the *kɛnkɛma* and *asaadua* genres that came to replace *adakam* and the other older ones introduced the *tamalin* (the frame drum) as well as a new technique of drumming, to make them new genres.[158]

The introduction of instruments from other neighboring cultures into Akan music traditions also enhanced performances of the musical types. The Akan have throughout history interacted first with other composite groups both in the north and in the south within the African continent.[159] These neighboring ethnic groups and their interaction had resulted in an interchange of musical instruments, such as the *donno* (the hourglass drum) and the *mpintintoa* (the gourd drum), all borrowed from the Dangomba of northern Ghana. However, in such interactions, their neighboring groups also gained from the Akan people. This is seen from the prevalent use of the Akan drum, the *atumpan*, among the Gã on the coast, among the Ewe and Adangme in the northeast, and among the Dagomba, Mamprusi, Wala and Gonja in the north.[160] And according

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[158] Nketia 1959.
[159] *Ibid*.
[160] *Ibid*.

to Nketia, the language of the *atumpan* (talking) drums remained largely Akan in these non-Akan areas.[161]

Many ensembles were enhanced by borrowed instruments, especially the *donnon*, and the result is the enrichment of the existing musical types that used them, as well as the creation of new sound formations alltogether. Sometimes new instrumental arrangements may also arise as a result of ecological factors. For example, the ensemble of the Twi type of *adowa* comprises a castanet, two bells, two or three supporting drums, an hourglass drum and a talking drum, while the Fante type, *adzewa*, uses only one single drum and a number of gourds, and it is likely the difference in the environments—the Twi are in the forest areas while the Fante are in the coastal areas—may have contributed to this difference in instrumental organization. Another example is the *awlɛbɛndōm* musical type, performed by the Evalue people of the Anyin group. Because the people live in a coastal environment, which is predominated by bamboo and coconut trees, the ensemble for the genre is comprised of bamboo sticks, cut in different sizes.

Apart from the above reasons for the creation of new musical types, in certain cases, entirely new genres—completely different in idiom and feature—have emerged as a result of intensive interactions with non-Akan musical groups whose idioms were different from those of the Akan. And this factor has contributed to the emergence of certain musical types, for example, the *sanga* dance from among the Dangomba, which features the *mpintintoa* (a gourd drum). There were times also where this situation had arisen as a result of the different historical conditions, which certain Akan groups encountered, as well as the different environmental conditions under which they developed. An example is the case of the Anyin-Baule people of the Akan stock, where their encounter with different cultures resulted in the emergence of, for example, the *sayɛ* musical genre.

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[161] *Ibid.*

Historically this group had left Adansi for the west and south-west into lagoon areas around the now Ivory Coast-Ghana borders, which were already populated by people of different languages, cultures and institutions,[162] and possibly different musical forms. Although they maintained most of their Akan culture and institutions, they inevitably developed some forms of music, such as the *sayɛ*, *awlɛbɛndōm* and *kundum*—as a result of these interactions, the styles of which are different idiomatically from those found with the genres in Twi-Fante areas.

Furthermore, there have been changes that have occurred in dance movements and gestures rather than song types or ensembles. These changes have further brought about a shift in the modes of communication in dance performances. It is a strong indication of Akan musicians' constant desire for avenues to bring new meanings and relevance into the traditional forms. One example is the *adowa* dance, in which master drummers usually deliver non-verbal messages to direct dancers' patterns of movements. However, within current trends, dancers are just as frequently seen influencing drumming styles by creating new impressive gestures and movements within the dance for master drummers to reciprocate spontaneously with appropriate drum patterns. And I believe this kind of change may be occurring in some of the other dance forms as well.

In conclusion, it is worth pointing out that most of the musical types have developed within their local communities on their own accord; for example *osoode* and *owumpɛsika*. But sometimes too the changes may have come as a result of influences from other areas or cultures through external interactions; for example *sanga*. Furthermore, while some of the new creations have embodied features of the older ones from which they have emerged, others have come with their own stylistic features. In other words, while some musical types have developed from other older ones, some have also emerged as new compositions altogether. And some of the new

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[162] See "Linguistc Setting" in chapter two.

musical types, as Nketia points out, "may be simply a further application of the concepts underlying the folk music tradition, while others may be further elaboration or slight departures from the tradition as established by the previous creations."[163] All these innovations are clear evidence of the creative activities of the musicians within the Akan culture.

3.3.   Products of Creativity: Structures in the Music Traditions

3.3.1.   Musical Groups

Under this subsection, I provide brief information about selected musical groups, classified into three main categories according to their specialties and emphases on any of the three elements of musical performance—singing, drumming and dancing. Category A comprises groups that emphasize singing with little or no drumming and dancing. Category B comprises groups that emphasize both singing and drumming with sporadic dancing, or no dancing at all. And category C comprises groups that emphasize all three.

3.3.1.1.   *Category "A" Groups*

This category comprises groups that emphasize singing with little or no drumming and dancing. In other words, singing is the most characteristic feature of their performances, but they may use bells, castanets and rattles with clapping and bodily movements. They may range from individuals to large groups. The following are some of such groups:

KOO NIMO

Koo Nimo, born and christened as Daniel Amposah, is a composer and a singer from Foase in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. He was born into a musical family; the father was a trumpeter and a guitarist, and the mother a singer. His grandparents were traditional singers of *adowa* and

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[163] Nketia 1959, p.32

nnwonkoro; some of his relatives were traditional poets and historians; and almost all his relatives could play the traditional drums. He was also raised in the chief's palace where he learned much about everything pertaining to the Akan tradition, ranging from customs and history to music, drumming and dancing. Koo Nimo, therefore, grew up in these rich traditional settings, being exposed to all facets of the traditional music culture of the Akan, especially that of the Asante.

Although he is a lone performer who accompanies himself on the guitar, he may also beseen with one or two other performers accompanying him with the *frikyiwa* (the castanet). Although he plays in the style of *ntwiiwi*, as a composer, has developed the *ōdōnsōn* genre, a guitar-based traditional song. The guitar, although an appropriated instrument from the West, has been given a new technique and style of playing by Koo Nimo, which make it sound close to any other African string instrument, such as he *seperewa*. Because of this background, his texts are always derived from traditional folklore, such as proverbs, riddles and deep philosophical sayings that reflect the tenets of the culture. Some of his compositions include "Owu tō Adeɛ *a* tō bi" (When death is selling something, buy some).

In his performance, he places emphasis on singing with no drumming and dancing at all. His singing is combined with recitation or speech; in other words, he switches back and forth from singing to speaking as he narrates issues of social importance.

Figure 4: Koo Nimo, accompanying himself on the guitar at his residence at Kumasi in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. (Picture was taken on November 23, 2003)

AMA OFORIWA AND CHILDREN

Ama Oforiwa is an *nwonkoro* and *adowa* composer and singer of Odumasi in the Sunyani district of the Brong Ahafo Region. She developed an interest in *nnwonkoro* and *adowa* music traditions at an early age, when she was singing with many *adowa* groups at that age. She had been with the tradition throughout her life, and as a result has developed the compositional gift. She has her own *nnwonkoro* group, but can also perform with her children as we can see from the following picture. In her performance, even with her *nnwonkoro* group, the emphasis is placed on singing with no drumming and dancing, except hand clapping and little bodily movements.

Figure 5: Ama Oforiwa of Odumasi performing with her children at Odumasi in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. (Picture was taken on November 11, 2003)

NKONTONKYI NNWONKORO

Nkontonkyi Nnwonkoro group is an old group whose founder, Afia Adusa, is deceased. The group was founded, and is based, in Asante Mampong in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. All the members hail from that town. The group is comprised mainly of elderly women with three men accompanying them on two cowbells (*dawuro*) and a castanet (*afrikyiwa*). Whereas most of their repertoire consists of their own *nnwonkoro* compositions, they also sing other well-known songs composed by others outside the group.

Their performances emphasize singing with no drumming and dancing, except clapping of hands and swerving of the body on the rhythm of the songs. Unlike other performance arrangements where drummers sit in front of the singers, the Nkontonkyi group's performance

arrangement is always to have the accompanists sit behind the singers, probably to emphasize the importance of singing in their performance.

Figure 6: Kontonkyi Nnwonkoro group, performing at one of the member's residence at Asante Mampong in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. (Picture was taken on November 29, 2003)

3.3.1.2. *Category "B" Groups*

This category comprises groups that emphasize singing and drumming with sporadic dancing, or no dancing at all, that is, singing and drumming are the characteristic features of their performances. They may range from small groups to large ones. The following are some of such groups:

<div align="center">

SU WO WUDA

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Su Wo Wuda[164] is an old group whose founders are all deceased, and it had existed for over sixty years at the time I went to see them in 2004. It was founded, and is based, in Aburi, a town

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[164] "Su Wo Wuda" literally means "ponder over the day of your death"

on the Akuapem Mountains in the Eastern Region of Ghana. All the members hailed from that town. The group is comprised typically of elderly women with three men accompanying them on *tamalin* (a frame drum), *apentema* (a medium-sized drum) and *donno* (hourglass drum). The rest of the instruments are *afrikyiwa* (castanet)*, akasae* (rattle) and a pair of sticks, played by a woman. Their repertoire consists solely of *suwohoda*, a musical genre, which the group created. However, this musical type is also now performed as a funeral musical type of the people of Adoagiri in the Akyem-Kotoku traditional area in the Eastern Region.[165]

Their performances emphasize singing and drumming. Dancing is very minimal and sporadic; individual singers come in occasionally to the front to dance out of excitement.

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[165] Steven D. Darko, "Su Wo Wuda: A Traditional Funeral Musical Type of the People of Adoagyiri in the Akyem Kotoku Traditional Area" (Diploma in African Music Long Essay, University of Ghana, Legon, 1993).

Figure 7: "Su Wo Wuda" group, performing at the chief's palace at Aburi in the Eastern Region of Ghana. From left to right in the first row is a woman playing the *akasae*, and three men playing the *tamalin*, *apentema* and *donno*, respectively. (Picture was taken on January 11, 2004)

OWU MPE SIKA

The "Owu Mpɛ Sika"[166] group was founded, and is based, in Abrew, a town on the Akuapem Mountains in the Eastern Region of Ghana. All the members hailed from that town. The group is comprised typically of women with a male leader and three men accompanying them on *tamalin* (a framed drum), *apentema* and *petia* (drums). Some of the women play the *afrikyiwa* (castanet). In addition to performing other genres, such as the *adenkum*, the group's repertoire typically consists of the *Owumpɛsika*, a genre which the group created and seems to be prevalent only in that town.

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[166] "Owu Mpɛ Sika" literary means "Death does not need money."

Their performances emphasize singing and drumming. And like the "Su Wo Wuda" group, dancing is very minimal and comes in sporadically as individual singers come occasionally to the front to dance out of excitement.

Figure 8: "Owu Mpɛ Sika" group performing at the residence of the leader, Okyeame Ofosu, who is seen standing, at Abrew in the Eastern Region of Ghana. On the front row, and from left to right, are the accompanists with the *apentema*, *tamalin* and *petia* drums, respectively. (Picture was taken on January 13, 2004)

BENTSIL ADZEWA

The Bentsil Adzewa was founded, and is based, in Cape Coast, the capital city of the Central Region of Ghana. All the members hailed from that town. The group is comprised typically of elderly women with one male drummer. Their ensemble consists of a drum, played by a male, and *afrikyiwa* (castanet) and *akasae* (rattle), played by some of the women. Their repertoire

consists of genres such as *adzewa* (a Fante variant of the *adowa*, and a genre after which the group is named), *asafo* and *ompe*, which are typically characteristic of the Fante area.

Their performances emphasize singing and drumming (although they use only one drum). And like the previous two groups, dancing comes in sporadically as individual singers come occasionally to the front to dance out of excitement.

Figure 9: The Bentsil Adzewa, performing at a beach in Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana. On the first row, a man is seen playing a drum with two women (first and fifth from the left) carrying rattles. (Picture taken on January 24, 2004)

3.3.1.3. *Category "C" Groups*

This category comprises groups that emphasize all three activities—singing, drumming and dancing. During performances all these three activities are given emphasis. Unlike the category B groups, the dancing with category C is not sporadic, but a well-structured form of dancing,

which is learned. Acordingly, only those who know how to dance those particular dances enter the arena to dance. The following are some of such groups:

SEWURADA GROUP

The Sewurada group was founded, and is based, in Shama, a town in the Western Region of Ghana. All the members hail from that town. Typically, the *sewurada* group only performs at marriage ceremonies, by accompanying the groom with music, drinks, clothes and any form of dowry to the bride's house. Members perform by moving through the town as they head towards the bride's house. The group's ensemble consists of one drum and *dawuro* (a bell), played by young men.

The group performs only the *sewurada* genre (after which the group was named), a genre which is typical of the Shama area. Their performances emphasize singing, drumming and dancing (although in their case, only one woman dances).

Figure 10: Sewurada group, marching through the town from one end to the other—that is, the bride's house—where the marriage ceremony is supposed to take place. The picture shows the women carrying drinks, clothes and money meant for the bride's family, and being followed with singing, drumming and dancing. (Picture taken on January 19, 2004)

Figure 11: The Sewurada group, performing in an open-air arena at Shama in the Western Region of Ghana. The woman in front is dancing; the young man and the boy are playing the drum and a bell, respectively, while the women behind them sing. In front of the group are the drinks and the clothes.

AWLEBENDOM GROUP

The Awlɛbɛndōm Group was founded, and is based, in Abora, a small town in the Western Region of Ghana. Typically, the Awlɛbɛndōm Group consists of young girls in their teens and led by a woman. What is characteristic of this group is that, unlike other groups, such as *adowa* or *sikyi* groups, which sing several songs but to the same dances, the Awlɛbɛndōm Group has different dance movements to every song. The group's ensemble consists of only bamboo sticks in different sizes, played by boys of the same age group as the girls.

The group performs only the *awlɛbɛndōm* genre (after which the group was named), a genre which is typical of the Ahanta and Evalue areas of the Western Region. Their performances emphasize singing, drumming and dancing.

Figure 12: A small section of the Awlɛbɛndōm Group, performing in the open air in the night at Abora in the Western Region of Ghana. (Picture was taken on January 21, 2004)

Figure 13: The accompanists of the Awlɛbɛndōm Group, accompanying with the bamboo sticks. The sizes of the bamboo sticks range from small ones of about 12 inches (as seen with the boy sitting in front) to the big ones of about 4 feet (as seen with the boy standing in the extreme left). The small ones are cut in two halves and played in pairs, while the medium- and the big-sized ones are hit vertically against big stones to accentuate main beats. There are holes in the big bamboo sticks, which help the players in producing two or three pitches. The *donno* (hourglass drum) seen was not originally part of the ensemble, but only brought in on that day just for experiment.

TANOKROM AGORŌMMA

The Tanokrom Agorōmma is a resident group of the Center for National Culture in Sunyani in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. Members of the group are drawn from the community, most of whom had grown up in the music tradition. The group performs several Akan genres such as *fōntōmfrōm*, *adowa*, *kete* and many others, and uses several ensembles relating to the different genres they perform.

Its performances emphasize singing, drumming and dancing, with dancing sometimes becoming the major characteristic feature of its performances.

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Figure 14: The Tanokrom Agorɔmma, performing one of the *adowa* dances at the Center for National Culture in Sunyani in the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana. The *adowa* instruments are, from left to right, a pair of *atumpan* drums (master drums), petia, and apentema. The other instrument on the right is occasionally brought in. (Picture taken on November 11, 2003)

Figure 15: Two dancers of the Tanokrom Agorōmma, dancing the *adowa* dance. Note the performance arrangement: dancers in front, drummers sit behind them with singers standing behind the drummers.

3.3.2.   Artistic Forms

Artistic forms comprise narrative and symbolic forms, whose combinations constitute musical genres. Artistic forms are products that emerged as a result of the creative processes within the Akan musical traditions

3.3.2.1.   *Narrative and Symbolic Forms*

Artistic forms are *narrative* and *symbolic forms* that emerged as a result of the development and formalization of certain interpersonal *discourses*, that is, kinds of "language use" in storytelling and reciting of legends and myths. These forms have a plot, structure, character or

style, setting and diction in their construction and employ a kind of rhetorical devices in their delivery.

The narrative forms include, but are not limited to, (1) poems, such as *anwonsɛm* (verse, poetry); (2) formulae, such as *kasakoa* (idioms), *kasatōmɛ* (aphorisms and riddles), *mmɛbusɛm* or *mmɛ* (proverbs), and *mpɛnyinsɛm* (wise sayings); (3) epic poetry, such as *anansesɛm* (folktales, or story telling); and (4) historical narratives such as *abakōsɛm* (genealogies and historical myths), *abusuasɛm* (messages relating to the clans), *afutuo* (advice), or *ɛmmraneɛ* (appellations). The symbolic forms,[167] which are found within the culture, exist as aural or visual. The aural symbols comprise such modes as *kasa* (speech) and *nteɛmu* (shouts and cries); *nwontoō* (singing) and *nwonbō* (playing of songs on instruments), which subsume *mmɛnhyɛn* (blowing of horns or flutes) and *sankubō* (playing of harps); *twenebō* (drumming); and *nsamubō* (clapping). The visual symbols comprise such modes as *ahosɛpɛ* (movements and gestures) and *asa* (dancing).

While the narrative forms are the format by which the musical texts are constructed or patterned, the symbolic forms, on the other hand, are the modes or media through which the narrative forms—the messages—are delivered, or conveyed. The symbolic forms convey both aural and visual impressions; those that convey aural impressions are speech, shouts, singing and playing of songs, drumming, and clapping, and those that convey visual impressions are movements, gestures and dancing.

However, depending on the song type and the prevailing circumstance, clapping can sometimes be made to convey both aural and visual impressions. And examples of performances,

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[167] These modes are considered to be symbols because, although they primarily served as forms of media, in their institutionalized forms, they carried in themselves forms of coded messages that needed to be deciphered. In this case, all discourses in any of the narrative forms would also take a certain symbolic form. For example, a narrative may be either a poem (*anwonsɛm*) or a proverb (*mmɛm*) and would be expressed in the form of a drum language or a dance; or a narrative may be either a wise saying (*mmpɛnyinsɛm*) or a genealogy (*abakōsɛm*) and would be expressed in the form of speech or a song.

that I observed where clapping conveyed both aural and visual impressions were those of the Kontonkyi Nnwonkro group of Asante Mampong in the Ashanti region of Ghana, and the Su Wo Wuda group of Aburi Akwapem in the Eastern region. In the case of the Kontokyi Nnwonkro, the singers' clapping alternated with the clenching of the fists, and this was combined with the swaying of the arms and the upper part of the body. The Su Wo Wuda group used wooden clappers, and played vigorously with the hands moving up and down alternatively, which were exciting to watch.

From the above, the musical tradition may be conceptualized as a two-dimensional entity, with its musical structures apparently dividing roughly into what I term the four quadrants. I discuss this theoretical insight briefly.

MUSIC-MAKING AS A TWO-DIMENSIONAL ENTITY

From the Akan point of view, and what have been shown so far, music making exists both as sound and movements. From this perspective, the music-making can be thought of as a two-dimensional symbolic entity, having the *aural* part and the *visual* part. Each of these two dimensions—the aural and the visual—may again be seen as comprising an axis: the aural being the horizontal, while the visual being the vertical. On the *aural*-horizontal axis (the *x*-axis) lie speech (*kasa*)[168] at one end and singing (*nwontoō*)[169] at the other, constituting a continuum on which various musical types are found. And as one moves toward right from speech to singing on the continuum, one goes through musical types that range from those that are close to speech in nature to the purely song-like types, as the following figure shows:

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[168] The use of the term "speech" here goes beyond just the normal vocal speech. I use the term here to mean both vocal and instrumental "speech," and by instrumental "speech," I mean the use of speech surrogates such as the horns, harps, drums to convey messages.
[169] The use of the term "singing" here goes beyond just the normal vocal singing. I use the term to mean both vocal and instrumental "singing," and by instrumental "singing" I mean any instruments such as the horns, flutes, and harp that are used to play melodies.

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┌──────────┐                                    ┌──────────┐
│ Speech   │ ◄─────────────────────────────────►│ Singing  │
│ (kasa)   │                                    │(nwomtoō) │
└──────────┘                                    └──────────┘
```

Figure 16: The Aural Dimension of the Music-Making

In the same way, on the *visual*-vertical axis (the *y*-axis) lie simple movements or gestures (*ahosɛpɛ*) at one end and dance (*asa*) at the other end, also constituting a continuum on which the various dance types are found. And as one moves upward from movement/gestures to dancing, one goes through musical types ranging from those that employ simple gestures and movements to those that involve elaborate dancing, as the following figure shows:

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┌─────────┐
│  Dance  │
│  (asa)  │
└─────────┘
     ▲
     │
     │
     │
     ▼
┌─────────────┐
│ Movements/  │
│  Gestures   │
│  (ahosɛpɛ)  │
└─────────────┘
```
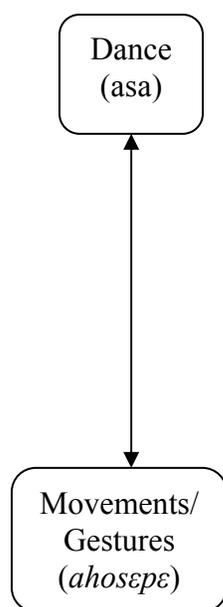
Figure 17: The Visual Dimension of the Music-Making

As the horizontal-*aural* axis is placed against the vertical-*visual* axis, they form the *x-y* axes, with both axes stretching from negative to positive and crossing at 0, as shown in figure 18. Subsequently, the four quadrants that are formed correspond to my four major categories of Akan musical traditions. Quadrant A is bounded by speech (*-x*) and dance (*+y*), and comprises those musical types that are recitative in nature and involve dancing. Quandrant B is bounded by singing (*+x*) and dancing (*+y*), and comprises those musical types that involve singing and dancing; for example, *adowa*. Quandrant C is bounded by singing (*+x*) and movement/gestures (*-y*), and comprises those musical types that involve singing but with only movements and gestures; for example, *adenkum*. Quadrant D is bounded by speech (*-x*) and movement/gestures (*-y*), and comprises those musical types that are recitative in nature and involve only simple movements and gestures. Examples of this category are songs of laments or dirges, such as *sayɛ*

of the Ahanta people of the Anyin dialectic group. The following is a chart drawn to explain this musical concept:
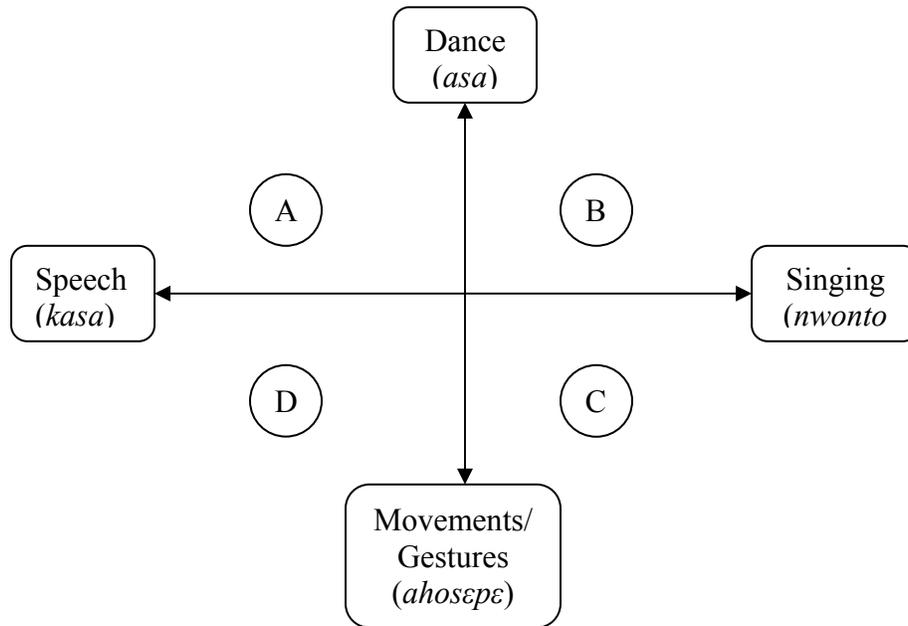
Figure 18: The Four-Quadrant Conceptualization of the Akan Music-Making—*Agorō*

Musical types in one quadrant may vary in ratio between their components, depending on where each lies in the quandrant. In other words, if we have three musical types in, let's say, quandrant B, they would not all have the same ratio between singing and dancing. They would, depending on where each lies in the quandrant, have different degrees of singing as well as of dancing. This means that there are certain musical types that would involve more singing than dancing, for example, the *suwowuda*, performed by the Akuapem, which involves a very large group singing but with little dancing. Vice versa, there are other musical types, where the concentration may be more on the dancing than the singing.

The other musically related activities—*nteɛmu* (shouts), *mmɛnhyɛn* (horn/flute blowing), *twenebō* (drumming), *nsamubō* (clapping)—lie within the quandrants. For example, shouts lie more toward speech, that is, more in quadrants A and D. Furthermore, heightened speech or speech-song may lie in the middle of the horizontal-*aural* axis, and may probably be close to movements/gestures.

3.3.2.2. *Narrative-Symbolic Forms Used in their Social Context*

I provide five examples of the narrative-symbolic forms that were (and are still being) employed in their social contexts. They are verbal texts of songs, which carry stories relating to particular groups of people among the Akan. The first example is a song, sung by the Takyiman Bono, whose narrative form is *anwonsɛm* (a verse/poem). Oral information suggests that before the founding of the Bono site by a certain group of Akan, a rock shelter, referred to as Amuowi, was their habitation, perhaps around the fifth century of the Christian era.[170] The Brong of Bono Manso and Takyiman whose ethnohistorical traditions suggest a local origin from the "Amuowi sacred hole" or rock shelter do recall their traditions of origin every year at their *Apoō* festival in such a historic song, whose text is quoted below:

> *Yɛfiri Amuowi,*
> *Ōbōōadeɛ dada;*
> *Yɛyɛ Asaase kokoo mma,*
> *Yɛfiri Amuowi.*

> We came from Amuowi,
> Creator of old;
> We are children of Red Mother Earth,
> We came from Amuowi.[171]

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[170] See B. W. Andah and J. Anquandah, "The Guinea Belt: the Peoples between Mount Cameroon and the Ivory Coast," in *General History of Africa III: Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*, edited by M. Elfasi, 1988.
[171] *Ibid.*, p. 496

The second example is also a song whose narrative form is *ɛmmrane* (appellation) that recounts the Fante's experience and praises their three founding leaders, Obunumankoma, Ōdapagyan and Ōsono, who were fetish priests. Oral information has it that these priests led the Fante group when they separated from the other Akan people, and left the region of the confluence of the Pra and Ofin for the coastal areas in the region of Mankessim.[172] The text of the song is as follows:

> *Obunumankoma, Obunumankoma,*
> *Obunumankoma, Obunumankoma,*
> *Obunumankoma, Ōdapagyan eeh!*
> *Obunumankoma, Ōdapagyan eeh!*
> *Ōsono, Ōsono akyi nnyi aboa.*

> Obunumankoma, Obunumankoma,
> Obunumankoma, Obunumankoma,
> Obunumankoma, Ōdapagyan eeh!
> Obunumankoma, Ōdapagyan eeh!
> Ōson, behind Ōson there is no animal.

Although Ōsono in the last line is the name of the third priest, it is also a name for an elephant in Akan language. Symbolically, the elephant is considered the greatest animal in the forest, because of its size and probably its strength. Therefore, the sentence "Ōsono akyi nnyi aboa," has a double meaning: at one level it refers to the fact that "there is no great animal behind the elephant," that is, no animal can be compared with it. At another level, it also means no one can be compared with either the priest called Ōsono or probably all the three priests who led the Fante through their journey.

The third example is the immemorial drum language among the Akim-Abuakwa of Kyebi, and its form is *anwonsɛm* (a verse/poem). Oral, as well as circumstantial, evidence has it that the reign of Bra Kwante (1727-1742) is the period of the actual foundation of the Kyebi settlement.

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[172] See Boahen 1966.

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As a result, a drum-poetry, performed to herald the Adae festival at Kyebi, showers praises on him, and accordingly singles him out as a "native" of Kyebi who is seen to be more closely associated with the founding of Kyebi than any other Abuakwa king.[173] The drum language is as follows:

Wofiri Kotoko, wie Kotoko
Wofiri Kyebi, Bra Kwante Brempon ba Brempon
Sekyere Bonti Brempon ba Brempon kokuroko
Ma wo ho mmere so!

You hail from the land of the brave, and are worthy of it,
You hail from Kyebi, Bra Kwante the Great son of the Great King;
Mighty King, son of Great Bonti of Sekyere,
Assert yourself![174]

In addition to "singing" their history or genealogy (*abakōsɛm*) through the use of verse-poetry (*anwonsɛm*) and appellations (*ɛmmraneɛ*), Akan have narrated factual stories by the use of indirection or allusion, which, according to Kwesi Yanka, is essentially expressed in "verbal disguises, such as circumlocution and the use of metaphors, proverbs, folktales, and other modes of cultural representation."[175] The Akan have used indirection to express their sentiments about life, wealth, poverty, health, sickness and death. And at each time, the use of such narrative forms as *kasatōmɛ* (aphorisms and riddles), *kasakoa* (idioms) and *mmɛ* (proverbial sayings) have become appropriate tools for such life situations.

An example of this indirection, containing proverbs and riddles, can be found in the following excerpt from a *sayɛ* song of the Ahanta people:

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[173] Robert Addo-Fening, *Akyem Abuakwa 1700-1943: From Ofori Panin to Sir Ofori Atta* (Trondheim: Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 1997).
[174] *Ibid*., pp. 6-7.
[175] Yankah, in Adjaye and Andrews 1997, p. 56.

Kazɛle burōfulō,
Kɛ́ miyɛli wʋ a?
Mise mʋkōō Tarkwa
Mikɛbɛɛ zukua mikɛ ɣa.
Akʋ́ kakɛ adisʋwa
Yɛe mivali mi ɣali a;
Muluwaluwa numō,
Mánwʋ́ dika mō mʋkōō.

Castilian white man,
What have I to do for you?
I said I was going to Tarkwa
To look for money and return.
But lo! It was a burden of debt
With which I returned [home];
I am now a wanderer,
I do not know where I am going.[176]

Most of these narrations almost always conclude with proverbial sayings. And an example is how the concluding lines of the above *sayɛ* song end:

Na máfɑ́ zukua miba
Mō mivali wuro mi ɣali ni,
Bèziyè mi ma mʋwō;
"Mi zi Abu Kofi,
Duo wʋ munli be;
Na owuro di kɛɛ mbazin ɣã,
ɣida mmenii munwada zʋ."

Now then, because I did not return with money
But I returned with sickness [death],
Do bury me for me to go;
"My father Abu Kofi,
Have your peace of mind;
Death is like a short mat,
It covers everybody."[177]

The subjects of the above examples are all historical facts, based on experiences. But the fictional ones known to the Akan as *anansesɛm* (folktales), come with their own design, character, and message. They incorporate proverbs (*mmɛ*), idioms (*kasakoa*), aphorisms and

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[176] Translated into English by Francis Quansah, 2004.
[177] *Ibid.*

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riddles (*kasatɔmɛ*), and wise sayings (*mpɛnyinsɛm*). The principal actor in *anansesɛm* is *ananse* (the spider) who, in Akan myth, is thought of as crafty and very wise. And in *anansesɛm*, *ananse* is seen applying wisdom and wit to overcome many adverse conditions, which otherwise would have ended him in trouble, or sometimes in death. Although there are many other folktales that do not really have *ananse* as their principal actor, yet they all go by the generic name *anansesɛm*. Because *anansesɛm* are embedded with riddles, idioms, proverbs and wise sayings, they have become day-to-day pedagogical and moral tools in the life of the Akan, and by them both the elderly and the young are admonished.

Storytelling, be it for folktales, mythical tales, historical experiences, or any form of interactive discourses, therefore, shows how the Akan, like other Africans, are endowed with what Kwame Gyekye describes as "mythopoeic imagination,"[178] employing myths and tales as vehicles for abstract thought. The myths and tales, or any form of a message, almost always appear as poems, proverbs/riddle, histories, appellations, or any of the *narrative* forms. They are delivered as speech, song, drum language, movements, dances, or any of the *symbolic* forms.

The creation of the narratives and symbolic forms demonstrates a high level of creativity among the Akan musicians. As these forms are creatively combined, several musical genres emerge within the musical culture. I discuss some of these musical genres in the following section.

3.3.2.3. *Musical Genres*

The discussion of musical genres is limited to the recreational type. The reason is that, these genres have emerged as a result of the creative tendencies of the traditional composers to create

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[178] Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 14.

new musical types for "popular use"[179] within the popular culture.[180] And, moreover, they have a relatively higher rate of change than most of the occasional-type genres, especially the religious or ritual ones that have a relatively lower rate of change. Accordingly, I have only added a few musical genres, which belonged originally to occasional category but are now considered to be part of the recreational genres. They are considered to be part of the recreational, because they provide some form of entertainment, one example is *adowa*.

I have selected a few, because with such a huge number of recreational-type genres found within the entire Akan music community, it would be an arduous task to attempt to list all the types. I discuss first those genres that are widely performed in most of the Akan regions or, at least, by more than one dialectal group, for example *Adowa* and *adenkum*; second, those genres that, although popular, are confined only to one particular dialectal group, for example, *awlɛbɛndōm* by the Evalue; third, those that are performed only by a particular band, for example, *suwowuda* by a band in Aburi-Akuapem, and *asibiri* by a band in Egyam among the Ahanta; and fourth, those that have been created by an individual, for example, *ōdōnsōn* by Koo Nimo.

Adowa was originally a graceful funeral dance, which eventually became part of the recreational tradition. But it still maintains its original status, except that at such ceremonies the music provides a form of entertainment. The *adowa* is used as a social and artistic medium of communication, conveying matters of personal or social relevance through movements and facial expressions. There are two varieties of it: one type is known as *adzewa* (or *adewa*), commonly found among the Fante and it is performed by just one single drum and a number of gourd

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[179] See Nketia 1963b. The term, "popular use," in this context means "common use."
[180] See Adjaye 2004; John Storey, *An Introduction to Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, 2nd ed. (Anthens: The University of Georgia Press, 1998); Keith Negus, *Popular Music in Theory: An Introduction* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1996); and Max Paddison, *Adorno, Modernism and Mass Culture: Essays on Critical Theory and Music* (London: Kahn and Averill, 1996).

rattles. The other type of *adowa* is found in the Twi-speaking area such as the Bono, Ahafo, Asante, Akyem, and Kwawu. The ensemble for this type comprises the *adawuraa* (a bell), donno (hourglass drum), *atumpan* (a master drum) and two supporting drums, *apentemma* and *petia*.[181]

Adenkum is typically performed by women for entertainment at leisure hours, which are mostly in the evenings. It is also performed as a form of entertainment during occasions of a festive and social nature. Etymologically, the name *adenkum* refers to one of the instruments of the ensemble—the gourd. There are three sub-types of *adenkum* music found among three Akan dialectal groups—Asante, Akuapem (especially the Larteh and Kyerepong) and Fante. The Asante type uses empty *adenkum* gourds with *firikyiwa* (iron castanet). The Akuapem type uses *adenkum* gourds, *koraa* (hemispherical gourds) and *donno* (hourglass drums). The Fante type uses *adenkum* gourds (the enmeshed type of gourd rattle, filled with dry beads) and *donno*.[182]

Sikyi is a recreational music and dance type, performed predominantly among the Twi-speaking people, and especially in the Asante areas. Its ensemble includes *dawuro* (a bell), one master drum and two supporting drums, and three of the *tamalin* (frame) drums.

Nnwonkro is typically a musical type performed mainly by adult women as is the *adenkum*. It is generally sung for entertainment especially at leisure times, but it also forms a very important song type for funeral occasions where it is performed for entertainment. The genre is performed more among the Asante, the Bono and the Ahafo people of the Akan. There are two types: the traditional type, which does not use drums but only handclapping and *afirikyiwa* (castanet), and the contemporary type, where men provide the instrumental accompaniment.[183]

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[181] Nketia 1973.
[182] See B. A. Aning, "Melodic Analysis of Adenkum," *Papers in African Studies* 3: Institute of African Studies, Legon, 1968.
[183] See Nketia 1973, and Kwasi Ampene, "Creative Processes in Nnwonkoro: A Female Song Tradition of the Akan of Ghana," (Ph.D. Diss., University of Ghana, Legon, 1999).

Ntwiisi is a relatively modern recreational type, performed among the Asante, the Bono and the Ahafo people of the Akan. It apparently shares some resemblance with highlife music by its 2/4 time. This idea is confirmed by the fact that those who play this music (especially some of those who performed the music for me) do also perform highlife music.[184] Apart from the drums and bells, some add the guitar to the *ntwisi* ensemble, thus making it more of a contemporary genre. Koo Nimo, although does not really use drums, uses the guitar, *afirikyiwa* (castanet) and some rattles to play *ntwiisi*.

Osoode is a recreational music performed by the youth of the Akuapem-Twi and the Fante speaking people. It is performed for entertainment at leisure times, especially in the evening, more frequently at funerals where it is used to entertain people. Among the Fante, the ensemble consists of *dawuruta* (a cowbell), *firikyiwa* (a castanet), a pair of sticks (played by the singers), *donno* (hourglass drum), a small drum played with sticks, a medium-sized drum, a pair of drums that plays the role of a master drummer, and a large rectangular box with a round hole on one side (the player hits different sides of the box with the hand to produce various shades of sound).

Ahyewa is a recreational music and dance type, performed by groups comprising both adult and youth. Etymologically, the term *ahyewa* in Akan language connotes "money." This musical type originated in Kwawu, but can now be found typically among the Akuapem, or generally in the Twi-speaking areas (It is known as *Akosua tuntum* among the Asante). It is performed for entertainment, especially at occasions, such as funerals, marriage and child-naming ceremonies. Its ensemble is comprised of *dawuro* (the bell), *firikiwa* (castanet), tin lids, played with a stick, *ahyewa* box, *pati* (a conical drum) and *tamalin* (a frame drum).

Apatampa is a recreational genre typically performed by the Fante solely for entertainment. Like the *osoode*, the ensemble of *apatampa* consists of *dawuruta* (a cowbell), *firikyiwa* (a

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[184] For example, Odie Yaw Bour's group at Fiapre in the Brong Ahafo Region.

castanet), pair of sticks, *donno* (the hourglass drum), a small drum played with sticks, a medium-sized drum, a pair of drums that plays the role of a master drummer, and a large rectangular box.

Ompe is a recreational genre, with a very stately dance, typically performed by Fante women. It is performed solely for entertainment. Its small ensemble comprises *dawuruta* (a cowbell) and *firikyiwa* (a castanet), both played by the singers, and a medium-sized drum, played by a man.

Brɛwohoase is a recreational music found among the Akuapem, and is especially performed by the Larteh Akuapem people who, although they are Guan-speakers, have been assimilated into the Twi culture for over three centuries now. *Brɛwohoase* is performed at leisure hours, especially in the night for entertainment. Its ensemble is comprised of two *dawuro*, *firikyiwa*, and four drums, *petia*, *pati* and two *tamalin* (tenor and bass).

Asibiri is a musical genre performed by the people of Egyam, a small Ahanta town. Etymologically, the word *asibiri* is an Ahanta term for *yeedzi agor* in Fante and *yeedi agorō* in Twi, meaning "we are playing." The band that performs this genre was named after the genre, Asibiri, and it consists predominantly of men, with their small ensemble comprising *dawuruta* (two cowbells) and a medium-sized drum. According to the oral history of the people of Egyam, their ancestors migrated with the musical genre from the Fante area to their present Ahanta land. As a result, they are the sole performers of the *asibiri* genre.

Awlɛbɛndōm is a recreational musical type performed by the youth of the Evalue areas. Typically, it originated in the Ahanta area but is now performed by the Evalue people, and probably because of its origin, the words of the songs are in the Ahanta dialect. The group that normally performs the genre is comprised of a large number of female youth in their teens, and in the case of the band in Abora—a small town of the Evalue people—it was led by a female adult. What is interesting about this musical genre is that each song has an entirely different

dance form or movement. The ensemble consists of several bamboo sticks, cut into different sizes, ranging from the very short and tiny stick to the long and large-sized bamboo sticks. They also included small horizontal boards placed on the ground and hit with sticks. During performance, the bamboo sticks are held upright and stamped against the ground to create drum-like sounds. And because of their different sizes, their overall sounds effect is like several drums of different sizes sounding together.

Suwowuda is typically performed by a band in Aburi, a town of the Akuapem. The band was named after the genre, "Su wo Wuda," and it consists of a large number of adult women with three or four men providing the percussion accompaniment. The ensemble comprises *dawuruta* (a cowbell), *afirikyiwa* (a castanet), a pair of sticks (played by all the singers), *akasae* (two rattles played by the same person), *donno*, *tamalin* and *apentemma* (a medium-sized drum). These days the genre is also performed as a funeral musical type by the people of Adoagyiri in the Akyem-Kotoku traditional area in the Eastern Region.[185]

Owumpɛsika is performed by a band in Abrew, a town of the Guan-speaking people of Akuapem. Like the *suwowuda*, it consists of adult women with three or four men providing the percussion accompaniment. The band was also named after the genre—"Owu mpɛ sika." The only difference is that, unlike the *suwowoda*, the *owumpɛsika* has a male cantor who is the leader of the group. Their ensemble comprises *dawuruta*, *afirikyiwa*, *apentema* (but slightly different in shape from the normal one), *pati* (played with one stick and a hand) and *tamalin*.

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[185] Darko 1993.

3.4.   Conclusion

I have discussed the processes of musical creativity by looking at the development and transformation of the Akan music traditions. And under this broad topic, I have discussed how the music traditions were instituted through continuing social interactions and the consequent socio-musical events that came to be conceptualized as *agorō*. I have also provided accounts of the emergence of musical types by discussing the creation and development of these types. In addition to the processes of musical creativity, I have also discussed the products of musical creativity by looking at the Akan musical genres. And under this broad topic, I have discussed the artistic forms and provided a brief account of selected recreational musical types. My aim, therefore, has been to discuss the interplay between processes of music and products or forms of music, and how their symbiotic relationship becomes the basis for the Akan music traditions and brings about the vitality and the dynamism associated with the musical culture.

I would, therefore, like to emphasize in conclusion that within the Akan music traditions, there are musical processes and musical forms. And it is both these processes and forms, which constitute the musical traditions of the Akan society. The symbiotic relationship between these musical processes and the musical products is that, while the processes provided appropriate contexts for the creation of the products, it is also the performance of the products or the forms that make the processes necessary social events. Accordingly, these contexts have become the contested fields where concepts and values of musicians are reproduced and transformed;[186] where conventional schemes are creatively reconsidered to bring about historical alteration in

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[186] See Waterman, in Blum, Bohlman and Neuman 1993.

culture; and where meanings are altered to bring about changes in "positional relations among the cultural categories."[187]

The keyword governing these musical processes and their resultant musical forms, then, is "social relevance," because through these musical processes, the musical traditions are adjusted and adapted to the changing social order to make them relevant to the society, thus, confirming the social fact that, "traditional music inevitably changes in response to encompassing social and cultural movements…"[188] Accordingly, both musical processes and musical products—musical forms—become very important in the Akan musical culture.

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[187] Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985), quoted in Waterman 1993.

[188] David B. Coplan, "Ethnomusicology and the Meaning of Tradition," in *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*, ed., Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, and Daniel Neuman, 1993, p. 36

4. CHAPTER FOUR: THE AKAN CONCEPT OF MUSICAL CREATIVITY

4.1. Introduction

In chapter one, I raised some vital issues in connection with creativity investigations that constitute the underlying tenet of this study. These issues border on what is one's view about musical creativity, what constitutes musical creativity for a particular society, who is considered to be the musically creative person, and how such a person is identified, what individual and/ or contextual factors or processes lead to a creative musical product, and how are these creative achievements identified and assessed. I then promised to discuss these issues in the light of the Akan culture, stating categorically that, in my own view, real answers to these issues lie within specific cultural contexts.

My position regarding these issues is that concepts regarding creativity and its accompanying factors such as the creative person, creative ability, and the creative products are also cultural attributes. Accordingly, apart from the psychological attributes that form part of all creative endeavors, there are also the cultural attributes that go hand in hand with the psychological, a case that leads us to consider the nature-nurture issue.

My aim in this chapter, therefore, is to look broadly at the conceptual framework that underlies Akan musical creativity. By that, I examine the Akan concepts of the musically creative person; the creative musical ability—its characteristics and source as underlaid by the Akan cosmology; the creative processes in music—the two levels and four modes of creative events; and the creative parameters in music. I further examine the nature-nurture interaction as it pertained to the Akan musical creativity and conclude with my own theoretical deduction. This is to enforce the fact that the compositional practices in the Akan music culture constitute "never-ending" creative processes.

While most part of what to be discussed in this chapter was informed by musicians with whom I interacted, and whom I have duly cited, other parts were informed by my own background knowledge as a member of the Akan tradition. And these areas include, among others, the ethnological account of Akan concept of a person. This knowledge, acquired from Akan philosophical and wise sayings, proverbs, tales and everyday conversations, automatically form part of the average Akan who grows up in the tradition. It was my utmost duty then to integrate and synthesize what the musicians said about their musical concepts and processes and what I know already as a member of the tradition about the Akan beliefs.

4.2. Akan Musical Creativity: A Conceptual Framework

Musical creativity, as viewed or conceptualized by Akan musicians, is the capacity to produce musical ideas, which may be entirely whole or may constitute an aspect of a whole. And the criteria for assessing these *new* ideas, as well as accepting them to be *new*, are that they should be *original* and should not have been heard before, at least within the community.[189] Thus, the musicians, as well as the community, believe that the ideas should transcend traditional ones and bring some sort of excitement and refreshment into the system. Furthermore, the new musical ideas must, of a necessity, be of spiritual, aesthetic and socio-cultural value, and must be of benefit to the community.[190]

Under this broad concept of "musical creativity" are subsumed certain factors: the first is the musically *creative person* who should possess certain qualitative traits, both spiritual and

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[189] Ataa Agyeiwaa, interview by author, Bomaa, Ghana, 9 November, 2003; Ama Oforiwaa, interview by author, Odumasi (Sunyani), Ghana, 11 November, 2003; Ōpanyin Odie Yaw Bour, interview by author, Fiapri, Ghana, 11 November, 2003; Adwoa Kumi, Dina Mensah, Julius Yaw Quansah, Solomon Mintah, Charles Osei and Alfred Ata Ansu, interviews by author, Sunyani, Ghana, 11 November, 2003; Rita Barfour Amoah and Sofia Appia-Kubi, interviews by author, Obuasi, Ghana, 14 November, 2003.
[190] *Ibid*.

physical, and should manifest certain tendencies that lead to the creation of musical ideas.* The second is the *creative potential* or ability of the person, which must manifest certain culturally agreeable features.* The third is the *created product*, which must also have certain culturally acceptable characteristics.*

But there is one other area that may not directly form part of the above observable factors, but is fundamental to our understanding of the Akan concept of creativity in general. This area is the creative process, which is not directly observable, but constitutes a key factor in creativity. My discussion in this section, therefore, centers on the following: the creative person, the creative potential or ability, the creative process, and the creative products; all are discussed from the Akan point of view.

4.2.1. The Creative Person in Music

Because creativity is connected with certain personality traits, it behooves us to duly consider first the "personality factor" in our discussion of the Akan concept of musical creativity. As Colin Martindale points out, "creative cognition tends to occur only within a certain configuration of personality traits."[191] However, in my attempt to explore this personality factor, I would like to begin by providing a brief ethnological account of the Akan's concept of a *person*. This approach is necessary because our understanding of the Akan view of a *person*, in general, is fundamental to our understanding of their concept of the creative person. It is also fundamental to our understanding of why creative people, in Akan thought, are generally reckoned as mediators, intermediary figures, and are seen to be accountable to both the Creator (*Ōbōadeɛ*) and the community in which they live.

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[191] Colin Martindale, "Personality, Situation, and Creativity," in *Handbook of Creativity: Perspectives on Individual Differences*, ed., John A. Glover, Royce R. Ronning, and Cecil R. Reynolds (New York: Plenum Press, 1989), 213.

Generally, the Akan concept of a person is dualistic: a person is considered to be both spiritual entity—the immaterial, or immortal part, and a physical entity—the material, mortal part.[192] Although the spiritual component is highly complex, Akan believe that there is an interaction between the two entities, with each having a causal influence on the other.[193] From this dualistic view, the Akan believe that a person consists of three substances or elements. The first element is the *ōkra* (the platonic soul) with the *sunsum* (spirit), which is believed to come from the Creator and, as a result, considered to be divine in origin, constituting the spiritual entity—the immortal or immaterial part—of the person.[194] The second element is the *mogya* (the blood), transmitted by the mother, and believed to principally give rise to the person's biological body.[195] The third is the *ntorō* (the hormone), which is transmitted by the father and, according to Gyekye, "appears to be the basis of 'sperm-transmitted characteristic.'"[196]

The *ōkra* and the *sunsum* are believed to constitute the basis of a person's membership with the spirit world, connecting him or her to the Supreme Being (*Ōdomankoma*).[197] The *mogya* and the *ntorō*, comprising the physical or material part of the individual, are mundane in origin and constitute all genetic factors responsible for "inherited characteristics."[198] Accordingly, there is the belief that the person has a spiritual orientation, which commits him or her to a Supreme

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[192] I have known about the Akan dualistic concept of a person long before I embarked on my research in the years 2003 and 2004. And I credit this information about the duality to some of the elderly people with whom I associated at the time I was growing up (almost all of them are now deceased). They were, among others, Datte Duodu, Ama Ohenewa and Ama Amponsah.

[193] The causal influence of the spiritual entity over the physical, and vice versa, is evidenced in Akan belief in certain illnesses believed to be the result of one's spiritual condition.

[194] Kwame Nsia, interview by author, Kumasi, 21 November, 2003. Basically, the Akan believe that a person is first and foremost an *ōkra* (a soul) "who" comes with a *sunsum* (a spirit) from the Creator into the world at physical birth and goes back after death. The *ōkra*, by nature, is conceived of as an indwelling sport of the Creator and as such, "he" or "she" (considered as a person) does not die, but lives on.

[195] Boakye Agyemang, interview by author, Kumasi, 24 November, 2003.

[196] Kwame Gyekye, *An Essay on African Philosophical Thought: The Akan Conceptual Scheme* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995), 94.

[197] For example, the Akan say, *nipa nyinaa firi Nyame hō* (all human beings are from God), and *nipa nyinaa yɛ Nyame mma* (all human beings are children of God), which underlies the fact that the person is a spirit being.

[198] Gyekye 1995, p. 24.

Being (*Ōdomankoma*), as well as a social orientation, which commits him or her to the community. However, although the *ōkra* and the *sunsum* come from the same spiritual source, their roles are markedly different, and in matters of creativity, it is rather the *sunsum*, which is considered the sole factor.[199]

In Akan psychology, the *sunsum* constitutes an innate faculty, which is not inherited but possessed by the person at birth,[200] and it is believed that it is in this *sunsum* that the person's "mental faculty" (*adwen*) lives.[201] This *adwen* (the mental faculty or the mind) is understood to be the capacity for all conscious and mental activities—from the more cognitive to the less cognitive—such as thinking, reflecting, knowing, discerning, perceiving, feeling, and experiencing, as well as the pursuance of all intellectual and moral desires.[202] In addition to the conscious level, the *sunsum* is also operational at the subconscious level where it is believed to control all related activities such as dreams and trance, as well as behaviors that are associated with the subconscious faculties.[203] The *sunsum* is, therefore, believed to possess all capabilities, as well as control all activities, that are associated with both the conscious and subconscious domains.

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[199] The ontological distinction between the *ōkra* and the *sunsum* is that the *ōkra* is constitutive of the individual's life, that is, the life principle—"the life force" (Gyekye 1995, p.88)—of the person. Its function is to provide life (*nkwa*) and to produce the breath (*honhom*) that is needed to sustain such life. The *sunsum*, on the other hand, constitutes an innate faculty, which is not inherited but possessed by the person at birth. See W. E. Abraham, *The Mind of Africa* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962) and Gyekye 1995.

[200] See Abraham 1962 and Gyekye 1995.

[201] The Akan say *adwen no wō sunsum no mu* (the mind, that is, the mental faculty, is in the spirit).

[202] Because the *adwen* inhabits the *sunsum* and its activities are controlled by the *sunsum*, the Akan also believe that all philosophical thinking or reflection that produces what is referred to as *nyansa* (wisdom)—which is in-born and not acquired (compare with *nimdeɛ*, "knowledge," that is acquired)—emanates from the *sunsum*. And it is, therefore, the person's *sunsum* that makes *nyansa* possible. For example, the Akan say *sunsum no na ɛma nyansa* (it is the spirit that gives wisdom).

[203] For the logic of Akan metaphysics is that, when a person sleeps, his or her entire body is suspended and inactive. As a result, it is the immaterial part of the person—in this case it is the *sunsum*—that is believed to remain active, and leave the body and roam in an act of dreaming. Therefore, the *sunsum* is, as Gyekye puts it, "the subject of the psychical activity of dreaming" (Gyekye 1995, p.93), and dreaming itself becomes a unique sort of activity controlled by the *sunsum*. The reason why it is the *sunsum* and not the *ōkra* is that, an aspect of this spiritual entity is further believed to leave the body and "roams about." What leaves the body, then, during dreaming would be the *sunsum* (the spirit) and not, of course, the *okra* (the soul) whose absence from the body means death.

We can conclude from this ethnological background that the musically creative person would also be the one whose *sunsum* possesses creative abilities. And such *sunsum* seems to be operational in all creative activities in the subconscious domain and the conscious domain, from the more cognitive to the less cognitive. This notion is substantiated by the fact that many of the musicians showed the ability to receive musical sounds in a dream, or perceive and conceive musical sounds while awake,[204] which, as has been explained earlier, lies within the control of the *sunsum*.[205] Furthermore, when these sounds are received or conceived, according to them, they are able to remember and recall these sounds within what may be the conscious domain. They claim to be able to feel and experience musical sounds; to be able to think and reflect on these sounds; to be able to generate variations from these sonic ideas, whether during performance or outside performance; and finally to be able to organize these sounds into a culturally acceptable music.[206]

There are other behavioral traits that are characteristics of the musicians, which from our earlier discussion, may be attributed to their sunsum which is the source of dynamism and inspiration. According to the musicians, they always look ahead and pursue all novel desires. And this is true because they appear daring and forceful, and show every tendency to override all kinds of cultural inhibitions and rigidly established conventions of the society. They are able to express and integrate aspects of themselves into the whole cultural scene.

From the foregoing, it becomes clear that the musically creative person, from the Akan perspective, is not one who is only talented, but the one who is also *divinely gifted* with musically creative prowess. He/she may be said to possess peculiarly qualitative traits, both

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[204] Yaa Asentewaa, interview by author, Foase-Kumasi, Ghana, 27 November, 2003; Agyeiwaa, interview; Bour, interview; Oforiwa, interview; and Kumi, interview.
[205] See Gyekye 1995.
[206] Yaa Afrakoma, interview by author, Kumasi, Ghana, 27 November, 2003; Asantewaa, interview; Barfour-Amoah, interview; Boakye, interview; Agyeiwaa Oforiwa, interview; and Odie Yaw Bour, interview.

spiritual and physical, and manifests certain tendencies that point to the production of a culturally accepted music.

4.2.2. The Creative Ability in Music

Akan musicians seem to agree on the fact that the creative ability is both a "divine gift" and an "inherited talent."[207] That is, they consider the creative ability to be, at a higher level, a "divine gift" (*adom akyɛde*) and spiritual, and at a lower level, an inherited talent in the sense of a natural skill, which is physical. This is logical because the creative person is reckoned to be both spiritual and physical. And this makes the source of the ability equally important as the characteristics. I therefore, begin by discussing the source of the creative ability from the Akan perspective, and then follow it up with its characteristic features.

4.2.2.1. Source of the Creative Ability

According to Akan metaphysics, *Ōdomankoma* (the Almighty God) gives various forms of gifts to the Akan society or the community, which are channeled through individuals believed to have been endowed with special grace from God.[208] But in actual fact, the individuals who possess such gifts (*akyɛde*) do not consider themselves to merit them, but rather see those gifts (*akyɛde*) as coming to them out of God's own grace (*adom*), hence, the term *adom akyɛde*, an

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[207] Agyeiwaa, interview; Afrakoma, interview; Bour, interview; Oforiwa, interview; Kumi, Mensah, Quansah, Mintah, Osei and Atta Ansu, interviews;

[208] This situation is best evidenced in ritual performances that involve, for example, healing, where the traditonal healer is believed to possess a gift of healing from the *Ōdomankoma*. This gift of healing, according to the Akan belief, is given to the traditional priest not necessarily for his personal benefit, but for the full benefit of the society to which he or she belongs, hence, the Akan saying, *ōsafo ɛnsa no ho* (a healer does not heal him- or herself). Accordingly, any person in Akan community who is identified with any special gift—which the society judges to be beneficial—automatically takes the responsibility as a mediator, responsible for availing such a gift to the full benefit, welfare and development of the community.

"unmerited favor."[209] Accordingly, the traditional composers would always ascribe to the spiritual nature and origin of the creative ability in their day-to-day conversation by the use of the following ethnosemantic expression (and almost all the musicians I interviewed used the expression): *efiri Nyame hō* (it is from God).[210] The word *efiri* (meaning "it is from") indicates where something originates, so that in this context, the gift is reckoned to be *coming from* no one else, as well as nowhere else, other than the Almighty God (*Ōdomankoma*).

At a lower level, the creative potential is reckoned to be an inherited talent in the sense of a "natural skill." Accordingly, traditional composers would also ascribe to the physical and social nature of the creative ability in their day-to-day conversation by the use of the following ethnosemantic expression: *εwō mogya mu* (it is in the blood).[211] But although it is here described also as a natural skill, it is not so much reckoned to be lying within the realm of intelligence, but rather in the blood as an "inherited skill." Furthermore, there are times when the creative ability is seen as something, which is fairly distributed (but in different degrees) among a particular family, hence, the following expression in reference to the creative gift, *efiri abusua no mu* (it is from the family) or *εwō abusua no mu* (it is in the family).[212]

But one may wonder why at one level, the creative ability is considered to be a "divine gift," which is "given," while at another level, it is considered to be a "natural talent," which is "inherited." And the question is, how do the Akan, with this dual-conceptual framework for the creative ability, reconcile this supposed discrepancy? In Akan metaphysics, certain abilities, be they spiritual or physical, are believed to be gifts *coming from* the Creator, but *stored* or housed

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[209] The Akan community holds to this view, and living in the Akan community, it is easy to hear people making expressions such as, "it is not by my strength but by the grace of God that I have this or that."
[210] Among the many musicians who used this expression are Ōkyeame Ofosu, Afua Oye, Taubea Kwarfo, Yaa Adubea, Agyeiwaa, Afrakoma, Asantewa, and Bour.
[211] Among the many musicians who made this statement, the most articulate on this issue is Kofi Opoku, interview by author, Agona Nkwanta, 16 January, 2004; Afrakoma, interview; and Kumi, interview.
[212] Opoku, interview; Afrakoma, interview; and Kumi, interview.

in the individual's bodily system. These abilities include, on the one hand, spiritual abilities such as healing, seeing of visions, and prediction of the future, and on the other hand, artistic gifts such as composing, drawing and carving.[213]

However, while the spiritual gifts are reckoned to be housed only in the *sunsum* (the spirit), the artistic gifts, and any such related abilities, are reckoned to be lying in the *sunsum* as a "divine gift," and at the same time, in the *mogya* (the blood) as a "natural skill."[214] That is, at a higher level, the ability is a "divine gift" housed in, and controlled by, the *sunsum*, and, at a lower level, it is a "natural skill" stored in the blood, even though it is said to still maintains its divine origin.

Accordingly, while the spiritual gifts are believed to be imparted from one person to the other *at any time* by a spiritual means at ritual ceremonies, the artistic gifts, on the other hand, are believed to be transferred or transmitted naturally from, say, a parent to a child through the *mogya* (the blood)—or at certain cases through the *ntorō* (the hormone)—*only at birth*. And in this case, the creative ability, which may have been given to a parent from God, can, in certain cases, be transmitted to a child in a form of a skill by virtue of the fact that it is also stored in the parent's blood as a natural skill. The transmission here, then, may not constitute a spirit-to-spirit divine transferance, but a blood-to-blood natural transferance.

I now discuss the characteristic features of the creative ability, beginning first with the general characteristic, that is, what the creative ability generally denotes, and then examine it also from the Akan conceptual frame work.

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[213] As a member of the Akan culture, I have been involved in various conversations with elderly people within the Akan community in different times and at different occasions on this topic; they include Amene Duodu (1977), Ama Ohenewa (1985), and Yaw Duodu (1990).

[214] In conversation with Amene Duodu, Ama Ohenewa, Yaw Duodu, Datte Duodu, among others.

4.2.2.2.   Characteristics of the Creative Ability

Generally, musical ability manifests itself in behaviors such as listening, performing, composing or creating, analyzing and recalling.[215] It subsumes three potentials. The first potential is *aptitude*, which refers to "the part of ability resulting from a combination of genetic endowments and environmental experiences with music."[216] It is also used to indicate potential for learning music especially where the development of musical skills comes in.[217] The second potential is *capacity*, which is an inborn trait,[218] referring to "a part of a person's ability that he or she possesses as a result of genetic endowment and maturation."[219] It is a biological potential that serves as a framework within which one develops musical actions. And it refers to something with which a person is born that enables him or her to develop fine musicianship.[220] The third potential is *achievement*, which refers to "specific musical accomplishment, often the result of specific instruction."[221]

From these broad definitions of musical ability, the *creative ability* in music, which may be subsumed under musical ability, may then be seen as something that embodies the above three potentials—aptitude, capacity and achievement. However, as a process that leads to the *production* of music, the creative ability goes further to embrace such factors as fluency, flexibility, originality,[222] and other evaluative factors, which are important for a creative artist.[223]

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[215] See Rudolf E. Radocy and J. David Boyle, *Psychological Foundations of Musial Behavior*, 3rd ed. (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1997); and Rosamund Shuter-Dyson, "Musical Ability," in *The Psychology of Music*, 2nd ed., ed., Diana Deutsch (San Diego: Academic Press, 1999), 627-651.
[216] Radocy and Boyle 1997, p. 335.
[217] Shuter-Dyson 1999, p. 627.
[218] C. E. Seashore, *Psychology of Music* (New York: Dover Publications, 1967).
[219] Radocy and Boyle 1997, p. 335.
[220] See Robert. W. Lundin, *An Objective Psychology of Music*, 3rd ed. (Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing, 1985).
[221] Racody and Boyle 1997, p. 335.
[222] J. P. Guilford, "Creative Abilities in the Arts," *Psychological Review* 64 (1957): 110-118.
[223] Radocy and Boyle 1997, p. 339.

Granted that the creative abilities possessed by all composers cross-culturally manifest the same characteristics as described above—although in different degrees—then the Akan composer-performers' creative abilities would also manifest almost all such factors necessary and sufficient for the production of music. And these would include musical aptitude, musical capacity, musical achievement, as well as fluency, flexibility, originality and other music-related factors.

The difference, however, will not be the actual characteristics of the ability, or what the ability itself denotes, but what it connotes, what it stands for, or what it symbolizes in the culture. That is, how it is conceptualized within the Akan cultural framework. For while the creative ability, in Akan's view, is reckoned to manifest all the above natural features, it is also reckoned to manifest certain *divine* attributes. And in such case, it is reckoned to be perceptive and receptive to sound emanating from the "spiritual world."[224] Therefore, from the Akan conceptual framework, the creative ability is considered, at a higher level, to be a "divine gift" that is "given," and, at a lower level, a "natural talent" that is "inherited." It is this creative ability, which manifests itself as both overt and covert behaviors during the creative process. I discuss this process below.

4.2.3. The Creative Process in Music

A creative process here is defined as a series of well-ordered actions whose end is the achievement of creative products. And the musical abilities that have been discussed so far manifest themselves, during these creative processes, in certain kinds of covert and overt

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[224] Odie Yaw Bour, interview by author, Fiapre (Ghana), 11 November, 2003; Boakye Agyemang, interview by author, 24 November, 2003; Okyeme Ofosu, interview by author, Abrew (Ghana), 13 January, 2004.

behaviors.[225] The information gathered from the musicians show that the creative behaviors include, among others, the springing forth, the generating, the moulding, and the refining of musical ideas within certain recognizable domains, lying in, as well as controlled by, the *sunsum*. According to them, musical ideas may come through dreams or even while awake (the springing-forth); the composer may also create ideas from what he/she has (generating); and these ideas are developed into a complete music (moulding and refining).[226]

All these behaviors may be categorized under four modes of operation, which, from my observation, seem to constitute four *creative events* among the musicians. They are, what I call, the *revelational mode*, the *inspirational mode*, the *ideational mode* and the *psychomotor mode*. These are, in turn, subsumed under two major levels of operation, which I also call the *transcendental level* and the *performative level*. I discuss these levels and their corresponding modes of operation.

4.2.3.1.   The Transcendental Level of the Creative Behavior

The transcendental level comprises what the musicians consider to be the *sunsum'mu* (the spiritual realm). And from their account, it seems it is the person's *sunsum*, which is believed to tap into another "world"—a spirit world—during dreaming, where ideas are believed to be revealed through the *sunsum* to the individual. Accordingly, the ability to receive musical ideas from this realm is believed to be God-given, which does not seem to directly involve the effort of the composer. The major unobservable activity here, then, is the springing forth of musical ideas, which appears to occur in either the subconscious or the conscious domain, and may be

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[225] "Behavior" is defined here from a psychological perspective as "a response to a stimulus" (*Chambers Combined Dictionary Thesaurus*, s. v. "Behavior"). It is synonymous with terms such as "reaction" or "tendency." Therefore, "creative behaviors" will also mean "creative tendencies."

[226] Agyeiwaa, interview; Afrakoma, interview; Oforiwaa, interview; Asantewaa, interview; Bour, interview; Kumi, interview; Mensah, interview; Quansah, interview; Mintah, interview; Osei, interview; Ansu, interview; Barfour-Amoah, interview; and Appia-Kubi, interview.

described as a covert behavior. The creative behavior at this level may, therefore, be described as an innate behavior, that is, a specific qualitative trait that is not learned or attributed to environmental influences. This innate behavior may be synonymous with the term "instinct," defined as an "unlearned pattern of behavior."[227] Accordingly, two modes of operation may be recognized at this level, which I call the *revelatory* and *inspirational modes*, both of which are believed to be divinely motivated.

THE REVELATORY MODE

I use the term *revelatory mode* to refer to the springing forth of musical ideas in the subconscious domain, which, as has been mentioned earlier, is synonymous with a spiritual domain in the musicians' thought. All processes or activities take place in dreams (*nnaeε*, singular is *daeε*). Normally, the composers claim to be asleep or half-asleep—in this case, their bodies are suspended and inactive—when the ideas come to their minds.[228] And from our earlier discussion it is legitimate to say that the *sunsum* of the composers are very active and seem to be open to *another world* beyond the individual. The musical ideas that flow into the composers' subconscious, then, come by what would appear as a "revelation" through the *sunsum*. And, according to most of them, the ideas come in most cases in a fragmented form, and not so much in an organized manner or in a complete form as would be culturally acceptable.[229]

Dreams, therefore, may be said to provide the context for the reception of the initial *musical ideas*, which are normally referred to by the musicians as *adwene*. When asked as to how they received their musical ideas, the musicians' answers included the following: *menyaa adwene no*

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[227] See *A Dictionary of Genetics*, 6th ed., s. v. "instinct."
[228] Oforiwaa, interview; Kumi, interview; and Agyeiwaa, interview; among others.
[229] Agyeiwaa, interview; Afrakoma, interview; Oforiwaa, interview; Asantewaa, interview; Bour, interview; Kumi, interview; Mensah, interview; Quansah, interview; Mintah, interview; Osei, interview; Ansu, interview; Barfour-Amoah, interview; and Appia-Kubi, interview.

wō daeɛ mu (I received the idea from the dream),[230] *menyaa no wō daeɛ mu* (I received it from the dream),[231] *Nyame na ōde maa me* (God gave it to me),[232] or *Efiri Nyame hō* (It is from God);[233] all suggesting that the ideas that they received were believed to be divinely motivated.

THE INSPIRATIONAL MODE

I use the term *inspirational mode* to refer to the appearance of the sudden illumination or the springing forth of an idea that emerges in the conscious domain and occurs while the individual is fully awake. This action is conceptualized as a form of behavior that is also innate, controlled by the *sunsum*, and it is elicited by internal or external stimuli-responses and triggered by sign stimuli. Such sign stimuli are "hypothesized" to trigger innate releasing mechanisms to generate action, and the end result is the emergence of a musical idea in the conscious domain through *inspiration*.[234]

The context for this mode of reception is not a dream, and it seems it does not really have any specified context or period during which it occurs: according to the musicians, it occurs at anytime. When asked as to how they received their musical ideas, those musicians who received their ideas through this mode provide the following answers among others: *Na meda hō a na adwene no besi me tiri mu* (While I was lying down, then the idea came into my mind),[235] *Na menenam hō a na adwene no besi me tiri mu* (While I was strolling or walking, then the idea came into my mind),[236] or *Na mete hō a na adwene no baa me tiri mu* (While I was sitting down, then the idea came into my mind).[237]

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[230] Kumi and Oforiwa, interviews.
[231] Asantewaa, Afrakoma and Bour, interviews.
[232] Agyeiwaa, Oforiwa, Bour, Afrakoma, Opoku, Nsia, and Boakye, interviews;
[233] Minta, Mensah, Asantewa, Oforiwa, Nsia, Bour, Agyeiwaa, Afrakoma, Opoku, and Boakye, interviews;
[234] See Rudolf E. Radocy and J. David Boyle, *Psychological Foundations of Musical Bdhavior*, 3rd ed. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1997.
[235] Afrakoma and Agyeiwaa, interviews.
[236] Ofosu, Bour, and Minta, interviews.
[237] Quansah, Osei and Ansu, interview.

Like the revelational mode, the ideas that come through the inspirational mode also come in their fragmented form, not so much in an organized manner or in a complete form as would be culturally acceptable.[238] Single ideas might come, according to the composers, sometimes at the same time, the same day, the same night, or sometimes at different times. Furthermore, some initial ideas might come, as they said, by revelation, and would be followed later by other related ideas that would come by inspiration.

4.2.3.2.   The Performative Level of the Creative Behavior

The performative level comprises what the musicians consider to be the *adwene mu* (the mental realm). And from their accounts, it seems it is the person's mind (*adwene*), lying within the *sunsum*, which is believed to be operational. Accordingly, the ability to generate and organize musical ideas within this domain is believed to lie within the control of the creative individual.[239] The major observable activities here, then, are the generating, the moulding and the refining of musical ideas in the conscious domain. And depending upon the kind of mode, these activities may either be covert or overt behaviors, all lying within the control of the individual.[240] Some aspects of these creative behaviors may constitute an in-born, innate behavior—a specific qualitative trait, not learned, not acquired or attributed to environmental influences. Others may constitute a culturally acquired behavior—a trait that is learned through experience and knowledge of culture, and attributed to environmental influences.[241] Accordingly, two modes of

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[238] Agyeiwaa, interview; Afrakoma, interview; Oforiwaa, interview; Asantewaa, interview; Bour, interview; Kumi, interview; Mensah, interview; Quansah, interview; Mintah, interview; Osei, interview; Ansu, interview; Barfour-Amoah, interview; and Appia-Kubi, interview.

[239] The musicians agree that at this point whatever goes on in the process are within their control. In other words, they organize every sound within this domain. Some of those who share this idea include, among many others, Boakye, Bour, Afrakoma, Asantewa, Mintah, Osei, and Ansu.

[240] This view is also held by the Freudians, see Irvin A. Taylor, "An Emerging View of Creative Actions," in *Perspectives in Creativity*, ed., Irvin A. Taylor and J. W. Getzels (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1975).

[241] *Ibid.*

generation may be recognized at this level, which I call *ideational* and *psychomotor*,[242] both of which are psychologically and culturally motivated.

THE IDEATIONAL MODE

I use the term *ideational mode* to refer to the conscious generationm, organization and evaluation of all the separated or fragmented ideas that emerged from the subconsciousness into a complete whole. And, as I have mentioned earlier, this process constitutes a purely mental activity that demands the efforts of the composers. According to the musicians, the ideas that come to them, come in fragmented form, and this different fragments are what they put together—joining pieces here and there together, and generating further ideas, which are also fixed somewhere in the melodic stream.[243] This mode of composing suggests that the compositional process is not that of an "expansion" or "development" of a single idea. They are rather conceptualized as the "putting together" and the "blending" of several related musical ideas, as well as the subsequent generation of other novel ideas from the fundamental ones. Therefore, the two ethnosemantic terms that conceptually guide the compositional process in this mode—and which were used in various sentences by the composers to describe their thought processes—are the Akan terms, *ka bomu* (literally means "to put together") and *sae* (literally means "to blend").

From my observation, the *bomu* (together) in the phrase *ka bomu* seems to constitutes the main thought or the motivating word behind the composers' creative thought. It is generally found in different verbal forms in the Akan language, such as *yɛnyɛ mmomu*[244] (let's do it together), *monkɔ mmomu* (you should go together), etc.; and different noun forms such as *nkabomu* (a kind of union), *abomu* (a kind of gravy prepared by blending several ingredients,

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[242] I borrowed the term "psychomotor" from Educational Psychology; see Glover, Ronning and Cecil 1989.
[243] Bour, Agyeiwaa, Afrakoma, Oforiwaa, Barfour-Amoah, and Boakye.
[244] When *bomu* is used with plural pronouns they change to *mmomu*, with the "mm" replacing the "b."

such as vegetables, together), etc. The various expressions used by the composers include the following: *na merekeka wei abomu* (then I would be putting these ideas together);[245] and *na merekeka wei ne wei abomu* (then I would be putting this and that together).[246] Sometimes different expressions are used to still imply the concept of *ka bomu*, and these include the following: *na mede wei resi wei ani* (then I would be joining this and that together); *na mereyi wei afiri ha de ahyɛ ha* (then I would be removing this idea from one point and fixing it at another point); and so forth.[247] Accordingly, the use of the term *ka bomu* by the composers to explain their creative thought in composition confirms the fact that the process is that of "putting together," this time, of fragmented musical ideas that have emerged from the subconscious.

The word *sae* (to blend) is conceptualized in everyday life as the blending of different elements to form a unified whole. Accordingly, it is used to describe how the different ingredients of certain traditional foods are blended together, and a typical example is the *fufu*,[248] whose ingredients are blended together. The normal expressions used by Akan include such sentences as *fufu no asae?* ("Is the *fufu* well blended?" to mean "Are the various ingradients—plantain and cassava, plantain and yam, etc.—well blended?" And the success of *fufu* preparation depends on the successful blending of these ingredients into that *unified whole* called the *fufu*. In this case, the individual ingredients are no more seen, but have been merged into another substance—the *fufu*.

With regard to music, the word *ōsae* also means "composing," which is based on the concept of "blending."[249] Accordingly, compositional processes that are driven by this conceptualization

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245 Barfour-Amoah, Asantewaa, and Bour.
246 Oforiwaa, Afrakoma, and Agyeiwaa.
247 Those who used these expressions among numerous ones were Ama Oforiwaa, Ataa Agyeiwaa and Yaa Afrakoma, who, to me, were the most eloquent in the description of their thought.
248 *Fufu* is a type of food made out of cooked and pounded edible roots such as plantain, yam, cassava, etc.
249 The word *ōsae* used also as a musical term to refer to "composing" by the Akan was first mentioned to me by Professor J. H. Kwabena Nketia during a conversation in 2003.

would aim at blending the various musical ideas available to the composer. The various expressions used by these composers include the following: *meresae nnwom* (I am composing a song), *ɛyɛ sɛɛ meyɛ na nnwom no sae* (I have to make the music—that is, the different ideas—blend), and so forth.**[250]** Therefore, the use of the term *sae* by these composers to explain their creative thought in composition confirms the fact that the process is also that of "blending," this time, of fragmented musical ideas that have both emerged from the subconscious and generated within the consciousness.

The following statement by Oforiwaa best captures the whole idea of "putting together" and "blending" of musical ideas in composing:

Sɛ adwene no ba me tirimu a, me tra hō dwendwen ho;
Na makeka wei ne wei <u>bomu</u>, na mede wei esi wei ani,
Kosi sɛɛ ne nyinaa ɛbɛ <u>sae</u>, na ayɛ mua, a yɛto a ɛbɛ yɛdɛ.

If the ideas come into my head (or my mind), I sit down to think about them;
Then I put these and those ideas <u>together</u>, and join this idea to that idea,
until they all come to <u>blend</u> into a unified whole, for the song to be pleasant to the ear.[251]

From the foregoing, it can be concluded that compositional processes within the ideational mode involve the conscious organization of musical ideas into a unified whole—involving the putting together and the blending of many musical ideas, all being guided by the composers' own creative instinct, taste and experience.

THE PSYCHOMOTOR MODE

I use the term *psychomotor mode* to refer to the spontaneous generation and application of novel musical ideas through performance. The novel musical ideas that are generated are not isolated musical ideas meant for developing an entirely new song, as it is with the ideas

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[250] Afrakoma, and Agyeiwaa.
[251] Oforiwaa, interview.

generated by the ideational mode. But rather, they are new variations that emerge as a result of the performance of already existing music, and these are generated on the spur of the moment as the performance proceeds.[252] And according to the musicians, these variations are, to a large extent, determined and inspired by the performance context, such as the heightened moment, the crowd's cheers and the performers' level of excitement.[253] As Meki Nzewi points out, they are "determined by spontaneous contingent factors of traditional musical creativity which could be musical, emotive and/or contextual."[254]

From the musicians' descriptions of the creative processes in this mode (the psychomotor mode), one fact that was emphasized throughout is the fact that this mode also involves the mind (*adwene*). According to them, apart from ideas coming to them while performing, they also *decide* on the spur of the moment to improvise (as it is socially and culturally required), and as a result proceed to consciously generate further novel ideas within the music. What can then be said of this aspect of music creativity is the fact that there seems to be coordination of both the mind and the body. And this is so coordinated so much that the body's response to the mental stimuli is so spontaneous that the supposedly two activities—mental and bodily activities—become one single activity. The process in this mode may appear to be the same as that in the ideational mode, because the two processes may be described as cognitive[255] in nature. However,

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[252] Performance setting provides the most exciting moments for the creation of various musical ideas. In this context many musicians—singers, drummers and dancers—take the opportunity to improvise and extemporize on many basic ideas. Almost all of the musicians I intewrviewed during my research explained, and demonstrated, this aspect of musical creation. They included Martin Opuni Appiah, Sofia Appiah-Kubi, Victoria Ackon, Doris Boakye, and Rita Barfour-Amoah at Obuasi, Ghana, 14 November, 2003; Dina Mensah, Julius Yaw Quansah and Solomon Mintah, Charles Osei at Sunyani, Ghana, 11 November, 2003.

[253] Opuni Appiah, Appiah-Kubi, Ackon, Boakye, Barfour-Amoah, Mensah, Quansah, Minta and Osei.

[254] Meki Nzewi, *Musical Practice and Creativity: An African Traditional Perspective*, (Bayreuth: Iwalewa-Haus, University of Bayreuth, 1991), 102.

[255] The term *cognitive* may be defined in this study as a process that relates to or involves conscious intellectual activity (See Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionay, 11th edition).

I use the word "psychomotor"[256] for this present mode because there is a well coordinated mental-bodily activity so much that the end result—what is observed by both the eye and the ear during performance—is not what the mind does, but what the *mouth sings*, what the *hands play* (in terms of musical instruments) and what the *body dances*—the body's response. And, from my observation, this kind of coordination does not seem to be true with the ideational mode.

Furthermore, because most of the time this aspect of creativity is inspired by the performance context—the heightened moment, the crowd's cheers and the performers' excitement—one may also describe it as "inspirational." However, I prefer limiting such a term to a response that is stimulated by *internal* factors (such as those discussed under the transcendental level) rather than external factors. On the other hand, when a response to creativity at performance level is inspired by the individual's own internal stimulus—that is, an idea that sparks off from the person's subconsciousness during performance—that may probably be considered, within this context, to be described as "inspirational." But for the purpose of this study, I would describe all creative behaviors within performance context as "psychomotor."

Unfortunately, creativity in the psychomotor mode is what has come to be generally considered as Africans' way of creating music—that musical creativity occurs during performance—and, as a result, marginalizing the other three modes of musical creativity mentioned earlier. Theoretically, the psychomotor mode is the final stage of all the stages of musical creativity among the musicians. Songs, according to the musicians, are completed before they are brought to be performed, except that what they mean by "complete" may be relative.[257]

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[256] The term "psychomotor" comprises two words, "psycho" from the word "psychology," which refers to the study of the mind's activity and behavior, and "motor," which refers to the nervous activity and. for that matter, the body.
[257] Ama Oforiwa, Yaa Afrakoma, Yaw Bour and Ataa Agyeiwa were, among others, the most eloquent and emphatic with this issue of completing songs before performance. But as has been mentioned in the essay, the sense of "completeness" may vary from one composer to the other. And moreover the idea of completeness itself is also flexible and susceptible to further innovation.

Because Akan musical compositions are "open-ended," they accommodate novel ideas even while they are being performed, so much that a supposedly complete song may still be extended and expanded at performance level, and at any time. The fact that they yield to changes at any time and any place should not be taken to mean they are left incomplete until performance.

4.2.4. The Creative Parameters in Music

The creative parameters in music are defined in this study as those musical elements that interact in musical composition and constitute the musical structure. And in Akan traditional music, those parameters include the verbal text, pitch and rhythm. However, because for the Akan traditional musicians the verbal text is fundamental in a music-creative process—as it is the basis for generating melodies in composition—pitch and rhythm are considered subsidiary to it.[258]

Generally, African languages have been described as "tone languages." But from the way the Akan composers conceptualize and perceive their language in relation to music, the former is considered to be more of a "musical language" or, somehow, a kind of "music." And as a musical language, or music, it reveals itself in various forms at different levels. To the Akan musicians, the words (in the language) are music, a thought that the composers expressed in the following sentences: *nsɛm a yɛka no ɛyɛ nnwom* (the words that we say are songs or music in themselves) and *nnwom no wō nsɛm no mu* (the songs or the music are in the words).[259]

The text-tune relationship in reference to African traditional music is, therefore, a "household" idea having been exhaustively discussed in several scholarly works.[260] In these works, the

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[258] According to the musicians, for example, Odie Yaw Bour, Ama Oforiwaa and Yaa Afrakoma, among others, song composition begins with the text, or the words, which in the Akan language is *nsɛm*.

[259] Koo Nimo, interview by author, Kumasi, Ghana, 21 November, 2003; and Bour, Oforiwa, Afrakoma and Agyeiwaa, interviews.

[260] See, for example, J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Linguistic Aspects of Style in African Music," … 1992, Kwasi Ampene, "Creative Processes in Nnwonkoro: A Female Song Tradition of the Akan of Ghana" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1999) and Eric O. Beeko, "Exploration of Procedures of Pitch Organization in Akan

commonly held view is that the generation of musical tones in Africa has not been without the underlying textual factor; that there cannot be an establishment of procedure for tonal relations without the inevitable textual binding; that there is a close bond between text and tune that even wordless songs or phrases of instrumental tunes display melodic and rhythmic characteristic similar to those of songs and phrases with words; and that the musical elements and patterns derived from language become characteristic of the style of a musical culture.

This habit of thinking of a "marriage" between text and tune finds its highest expression among cantors, lead singers, solo vocalists and instrumentalists who extemporise variations in text and tune during performance. And in the case of instrumental performances, the realization and negotiation of these text-tune relations, in many cases, form the basis for much improvisation and extended variations. Such structures and models also form the basis of many forms of instrumental music, except that the idiomatic features of an instrument may also be taken into consideration.[261] This idea of underlaying instrumental passages with text, then, becomes a key factor, so much that, according to Mapoma, "Instrumental music not based on a text is often given one that fits its rhythmic configuration and contextual orientation."[262]

However, besides this indisputable idea about text-tune relationship or bond that permeates all musical cultures of Africa, my close study among the Akan traditional musicians reveals that the Akan language itself—this could probably be the case for many African languages—is conceptualized and perceived as "music." In other words, the composers consider it to be a "music" that manifests itself in various forms at different levels of realization. In other words,

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Traditional Songs—The Case of Nnwonkoro: A Theoretical Perspective" (M.Phil. Thesis, University of Ghana, 2000).

[261] See J. H. Kwabena Nketia, *Music in African Cultures: A Review of the Meaning and Significance of Traditional African Music* (Legon, Ghana: Institute of African Studies and University of Ghana, 1966) and *The Music of Africa* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974).

[262] Isaiah Mwesa Mapoma, "Determinant of Style in the Music of Ingomba" (Ph.D. Diss., University of California, 1980), 125.

the verbal texts of the language are not just mere words, which melodies must be found to fit, but they are reckoned to be latent or embedded with melodies that only the gifted composer can discern and "unearth." As some of the composers would say: *yɛnya nnwom no wɔ nsɛm no mu* (we get the tune from the words) and *yɛte nnwom no wɔ nsɛm no mu* (we hear the tune in the words).[263]

Accordingly, the composer-performer is reckoned to possess the ability to divinely *discern* and creatively *generate* the "hidden" melodies from these texts. And from my own theoretical deduction, composing may be seen as a two-dimensional process: on the vertical is the realization—that is, "discerning" and "generation"—of melodies from the texts, and on the horizontal is the "putting together" and "blending" of the different phrases of ideas, and both the vertical and the horizontal operations go hand in hand together. I analyze this phenomenon in the following chapter.

4.3.   Akan Musical Creativity: A Theoretical Consideration

The concept of musical creation discussed so far may be seen to constitute a complete set of ordered behaviors that are outward manifestations of both conscious and subconscious processes through which creative energies are released and converted into culturally approved behaviors.[264] We can conceptualize the operation as follows: the first two modes of operation at the transcendental level show how musical ideas enter the consciousness directly—the *inspirational mode*—or how they enter the conscious via the subconscious domain—the *revelational mode*. The last two modes of operation at the performative level also show how musical ideas are

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[263] Bour, Aforiwaa and Afrakoma, interviews.
[264] This view is also held by the Freudians; see Taylor 1975.

organized and how other novel ones are further generated—the *ideational mode*—or how novel ideas are spontaneously generated within, as well as co-ordinated into, a performance—the *psychomotor mode*. This operation, therefore, reveals two theoretical insights: first is the *nature-nurture interaction* and second is the *cyclical-musical creation*.

4.3.1. Nature-Nurture Interaction in Musical Creativity

Analysis of this set of ordered behaviors shows a complete interaction, or a "free interplay," between *nature* and *nurture*, that is, an interaction between "the innate modes of cognition and patterning" and "ingrained, learned habits of discrimination and response,"[265] respectively. For in matters of creativity, this interaction becomes fundamental for what would be assessed within a culturally defined context as an acceptable creative product. As Blacking rightly points out, "[W]ithout biological processes of aural perception, and without cultural agreement among at least some human beings on what is perceived, there can be neither music nor musical communication."[266]

Accordingly, the questions that I attempt to answer in this section are, how, in the Akan case, do nature and nurture interact in musical creation, and what are the observable results. But I discuss this against the background that, in Akan thought, it is the *sunsum* that controls all behaviors that are associated with both nature and nurture, because the *adwene* is believed to inhabit the *sunsum*. The *sunsum* constitutes the innate faculty, which is not inherited but possessed by the person at birth—the *nature*, and at the same time helps the person to pursue, learn and acquire all forms of knowledge—the *nurture*.

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[265] Leonard B. Meyer, *Style and Music: Theory, History, and Ideology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), 4.
[266] John Blacking, *How Music is Man?* (London: University of Washington Press, 1973), p.9.

On the one hand, the Akan composers are products of the Akan culture because they have been enculturated and ingrained into many cultural habits. Their world-view is shaped by influences from the many socio-cultural institutions and environmental conditions. Accordingly, their creative thinking is not isolated, but occurs within this cultural field, which gives their thinking a deeper structural and cultural view, and which results in what Taylor refers to as "changes in functional meaning."[267] That is, the composers' culturally acquired knowledge—their "ingrained, learned habits of discrimination and response"—provides a *cultural field*, a context that may be necessary and sufficient to support their creative thinking, as well as giving their creative products a cultural meaning. In other words, the composer is inevitably guided by what Blacking describes as "some consensus of opinion about the principles on which the sounds of music should be organized."[268]

On the other hand, these composers are also creative individuals whose individual nature, the innate mode of cognition, was not learned but acquired at birth through the *sunsum*. And this uniquely innate mode of cognition constitutes the basis for the individual differences, so that while they live in such culturally constrained conditions, their innate ability, the inborn trait, continues to intrinsically motivate them to override many of these cultural inhibitions or limitations. For instance, although the composer-performers are constrained by, for example, the limited pitches verbal texts can offer them, they innovate within those constraints by creatively generating more ideas to overcome the limitations

What then happens is a kind of negotiation between nature and nurture: the composers' culturally acquired knowledge—nurture—manifests behaviors, in the creative processes, that are inclined towards sustenance and perpetuation of the already existing tradition, which

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[267] This view is held by the adherents of the holistic or gestalt approach; see Taylor 1975.
[268] Blacking 1973, p.10

subsequently lead to *replicating* and *elaborating* cultural knowledge. On the other hand, their in-born trait—nature—manifests behaviors that are inclined towards changing the *status quo*, which subsequently leads to *devising* new ideas. Therefore, the interaction between *nature* and *nurture* in the compositional processes is an interaction between "replicating" and "devising," as well as between "elaborating" and "innovating." Thus, within the Akan musical culture, the composers' *nurture* aims at replicating the existing ideas, while their *nature* aims at devising novel ones.

However, because in composing—as may be opposed to mere performance (only in this context)—the individual creative ability becomes pre-eminent, there is always the urge towards innovation rather than replication. Accordingly, within the constraints of the performance tradition, the musicians make choices among the possibilities available to them. And it is in this choosing, selecting and appropriating from the available limited resources that the individual composers are seen to transcend the cultural boundaries and become musically distanced from the ordinary Akan person.

Therefore, throughout the two levels of operations—the transcendental and the performative levels—and the four modes of operation—the revelational, the inspirational, the ideational and the psychomotor modes—there are manifestations of innate behaviors to effect these devising and innovating. In the revelational mode where ideas are revealed in dreams to the composers, there is manifestation of natural abilities to *store* the musical ideas in the subconscious domain and to *recall* from this domain into the conscious domain when the composers are awake.

In the inspirational mode where musical ideas enter the composers' consciousness as a sudden illumination, there is manifestation of the ability to *respond* to internal or external sign-stimuli, which according to psychologists, trigger innate releasing mechanisms to generate actions that result in the emergence of novel ideas in the conscious domain. In the ideational

mode, where the musical ideas are cognitively processed, there is manifestation of the ability to *organize* the received musical ideas, as well as to *generate* other novel ones from the ones received. In the psychomotor mode where creativity becomes a technique of spontaneous expression, there is manifestation of the natural ability to *bring into being* a coherent body of expressions for performance, and subsequently *realize* novel ideas out of the existing repertory of musical ideas on the spot within the performance setting.

Therefore, while Akan composers possess the capacity for internalizing the culturally structured-sound materials of music to be able to replicate and elaborate on the culturally informed musical ideas, they also have the natural ability to create departures from this coherent body of cultural information. And they do so by innovating and devising novel musical ideas.

4.3.2. The Cycle of Musical Creation

In the entire creative processes within the Akan musical culture, the creative events, associated with the four modes may be seen to constitute four *creative stages* that seem to lead into one another. For example, if an idea should emerge by revelation at the first stage, further related ideas may spring forth by inspiration, which may be considered to be the second stage. And with these fragmented musical ideas, the composer may move to what may be the third stage to process the ideas that may have emerged out of revelation and inspiration. And at this stage, further novel ideas may be generated from the previous ones, which would finally lead to the organization of all the accumulated ideas into a culturally acceptable music. The next step from this point is the performance of the music. And at this stage, novel ideas in a form of variations are further generated. The chain will them appear as follows:

Revelatory Mode	→	Inspirational Mode	→	Ideational Mode	→	Psychomotor Mode
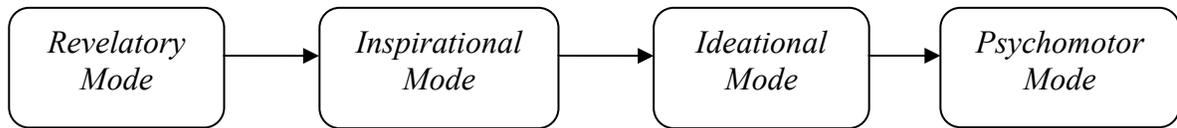
Figure 19: A Chain of the Four Creative Events

Although, from the chart, the psychomotor mode, which involves performance of music, may appear to be the final destination of the creative process, in reality this is not the case with an oral culture such as the Akan culture. In such a musical culture the creation of music does not necessarily come to an end after its performance: musical creation continues endlessly. And evidence shows that after the psychomotor mode, composers in Akan culture may continue to engage their music in another round of creativity where new related ideas emerging again from dreams (the revelatory mode), or out of inspiration (the inspirational mode), or which are consciously generated (the ideational mode) may continue to be used to enhance the already-performed music.

Therefore, there is almost always the case where a creative process would begin from one creative event and come back again to that same event. That is, the creation of a particular music would begin with, for example, the revelatory mode or the inspirational mode and goes round

and comes back to be recomposed at the revelatory mode or the inspirational mode, respectively. In that case, what would naturally occur is that, when a particular music should go through such a cycle of creative events, its second performance would appear to be slightly different in rhythm, melody or text from its first performance. And if it should go through yet another cycle, its third performance may turn out to be again slightly different from its second performance. Accordingly, the procedure of making a composition go through a complete cycle, then through another cycle, and again through yet another cycle, *ad infinitum*, reveals a kind of a "never-ending cycle of activities." We may, therefore, represent this *cycle of musical creation* with the following diagram:
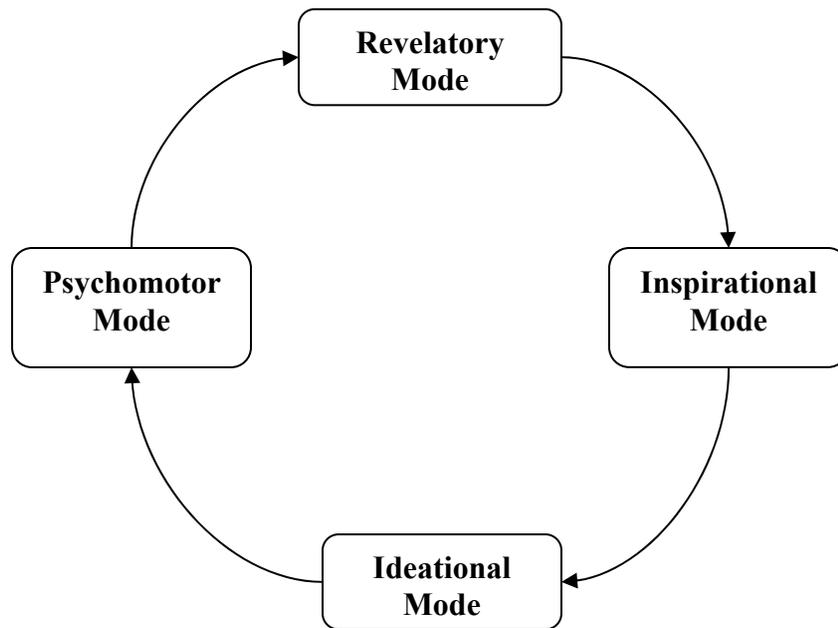
Figure 20: A Cycle of Musical Creation

I must, however, point out at this stage that, although there may be a few instances where a compositional process may not necessarily go through this order, from my observation, it seems the creative cycle almost always follows this pattern. When music goes through such several cycles of creation, the music enters into what is called a "public domain." After this point, the subsequent cycles of creation, with regard to that music, may involve other musicians who have been performing the music. And by culture, these musicians are allowed also to bring into the performance novel ideas to enhance the music. Musical creation in the Akan community, then, becomes an endless chain of events occurring over and over again.

4.4.   Conclusion

I have examined the conceptual framework that underlies Akan musical creativity. And by this, I have examined the Akan concepts of the musically creative person who is considered to be both a spiritual and physical entity, and whose creative endeavors are controlled more by his or her *sunsum*. By this duality, I have emphasized that, while the spiritual end is the source and inspiration of all creative endeavors, the physical end constitutes the context in which all creative products are adjudged to be relevant and meaningful to the society. I have also examined the creative musical ability—its characteristics and source as underlaid by the Akan cosmology, and pointed out that, in Akan concept, the ability is viewed to be both spiritual—divine gift, and physical—a natural talent. I have further discussed the creative processes in music—the two levels and four modes of creative events; and the creative parameters in music.

In addition, I have examined the nature-nurture interaction as it pertains to the Akan musical creativity and concluded with a theoretical deduction of the "never-ending" creative processes that characterize the compositional practices in the Akan music culture. I have used the concept of "cyclicity" to underscore the fact that the creation of the Akan traditional music is an "open-ended" process: an endless chain of events occurring over and over again. In other words, the creation of music, as observed within the Akan traditional milieu, does not necessarily come to an end after its first performance. Once it is composed, it continues to accommodate novel ideas throughout its life span, accordingly underscoring the fact that most oral arts are by their nature fluid forms,[269] accommodating and adjusting to various creative ideas.

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[269] This assertion is given a detailed explanation in the subsequent chapters. For a case specifically in African oral literature, see Isidore Okpewho, *African Oral Literature: Backgrounds, Character, and Continuity*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992).

What I, therefore, intended to make clear in this chapter is that concepts and practices are interrelated. Accordingly, I have shown in the Akan case that the belief of the *duality* of the creative "person" leads to the belief of the *duality* of the creative gift. And with respect for the divine nature of the person and his or her gift, the Akan consider the creative processes to also begin from a source that lies outside the control of the creative person—the transcendental level of operation—before manifesting at the physical level—the performative level of operation. Therefore, the issue of a "never-ending" process of creativity or a *cycle of creation* underscores the fact that, from the Akan composers' view, what manifests from the spiritual and develops in the natural would continue to be subjected to continuing refinement and perfecting as the recipients are inspired to do so.

5.   CHAPTER FIVE: TECHNIQUES OF AKAN COMPOSITION

5.1.   Introduction

My aim in this chapter is to discuss the creative process from the analytic and theoretical point of view. Accordingly, I analyze the cognitive processes during *the act of composing*, dwelling specifically on activities associated with the performative level, as discussed in chapter 4. The reason for this limitation is that it seems one can be closer to objectivity with analysis of conscious processes than one can be with analysis of subconscious processes. Moreover, the composers with whom I interacted were more at ease in describing in detail the act of composing within the conscious domain than they were when describing processes within the subconscious domain, over which they have no control. As a result, all activities occurring in dreams (by the revelational mode) and the spontaneous emergence of ideas (by the inspirational mode) will not form part of the present discussion.

As has already been pointed out (in chapter 4), the performative level involves two modes: the ideational and the psychomotor. The activities occurring within the ideational mode constitute an act of composing that comprises a tone-to-tone and idea-to-idea working out, or the careful organization of musical ideas *outside performance context*. The activities occurring within the psychomotor mode constitute an act of composing that comprises the spontaneous generation of musical ideas *within performance context*.

The two sets of creative activities—one set occurring outside a performance context and the other, occurring within the performance context—are both associated with creative realization or generation of musical ideas. Creating outside performance context—by the ideational mode—is known to the musicians by the Akan term *ōsae* (that is, "putting together" or "blending"). It refers to the persistent occurrence of what John Sloboda calls "superordinate structures or plans"

which apparently determine the detailed note-to-note, idea-to idea creative process.**270** Creating

within performance context—by the psychomotor mode—is known to the musicians by the Akan

term *ōgoro* (that is, "playing," which presupposes a kind of creative activity).[271] It refers to what

Sloboda again describes as "the degree to which these plans can…be rather provisional."**272**

Because so much has been said about creativity within performance setting—particularly

about the Akan**273** and generally about other cultures in Africa**274**—I will concentrate more on the

creative processes occurring in the ideational mode and only provide a very brief summary of the

nature of the creative process in the psychomotor mode.

5.2.   The Ideational Creative Techniques

I have categorized the creative principles that guide the musical creativity among the Akan

composers within this domain into two major principles: (1) the *generative principles*, which are

guided by a socio-linguistic factor such as the language in which the music is composed, and (2)

the *organizational principles*, which are guided by an associative factor such as the relationship

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[270] John Sloboda, *The Musical Mind: The Cognitive Psychology of Music* (Oxford: Claredore Press, 1985), 103; discussed also in Rudolf E. Radocy and J. David Boyle, *Psychological Foundations of Musical Behavior*, 3rd ed., (Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas Publisher, 1997), 251.

[271] This is a term used by almost all the musicians I met, most specially by Beatrice Bono, Afua Oye, Tuabea Kwarfo, Adu kofi, interviews, Aburi, Ghana, 11 January, 2004; and others including Ataa Agyeiwaa, interview, Bomaa, 9 November, 2003; Ama Oforiwa, interview, Odumasi, 11 Novwember, 2003; and Yaa Afrakoma, Kumasi, 27 November, 2003.

[272] Sloboda 1985, p. 103; and Radocy and Boyle 1997, p. 251.

[273] See, for example, J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Role of the Drummer in Akan Society," *African Music* 1, no. 1 (1954): 34-43; "The Development of Instrumental African Music in Ghana," *Music in Ghana* 1, no. 1 (1958): 5-27; *Drumming in Akan Communities of Ghana* (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1963a); Eric O. Beeko, "The Musical Art and Cultures of Akan" (Accra, 1986); "Exploration of Procedures of Pitch Organization in Akan Traditional Songs—The Case of Nnwonkoro: A Theoretical Perspective" (M.Phil. Thesis, University of Ghana, 2000); and Kwasi Ampene, "Creative Processes in Nnwonkoro: A Female Song Tradition of the Akan of Ghana" (Ph.D. Diss., University of Pittsburgh, 1999).

[274] See, for example, John Blacking, *How Music is Man?* (London: University of Washington Press, 1973); J. H. Kwabena Nketia, *The Music of Africa* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974); Akin Euba, *Yoruba Drumming: The Dundun Tradition* (Bayreuth: Bayreuth African Studies Series, 1990); V. Kofi Agawu, "Variation Procedures in Northern Ewe Song, *Ethnomusicology* 34, no. 2 (1990): 221-243; and Meki Nzewi, *Musical Practice and Creativity: An African Traditional Perspective* (Bayreuth: Iwalewa-Haus, University of Bayreuth, 1991).

between phrases. Before discussing these two major principles governing Akan musical composition, I will first provide three creative scenarios that summarize all the creative behaviors and compositional procedures I observed from my informants. The aim is to provide a background for my discussion of the two sets of compositional principles.

5.2.1. Creative Scenarios in Compositional Process

These three scenarios apparently reflect the normal procedures in compositional processes among most of Akan musicians: in the first scenario, an incomplete *melodic idea* emerges from a *dream*; another *melodic idea* emerges out of *inspiration*; variants of these are generated and organized into a complete music. I use Odie Yaw Bour's compositional procedure as a case study for all those who use the first procedure.[275] In the second scenario, an incomplete *melodic idea* emerges from a *dream*; a *literary idea* (with no melody) emerges later out of *inspiration* from which a melody is generated to complement the first idea; a third *literary idea* (with no melody) is later developed, and melody is generated from it; and melodic variants of these ideas are generated and organized into a complete whole. I use Ataa Agyeiwaa's compositional procedure as a case study for all those who use the second procedure.[276]

In the third scenario, an incomplete *literary idea* (with no melody to it) emerges out of inspiration; this is extended by adding several other *literary ideas* (also with no melodies) to it; melodies are then generated from all these ideas, which are organized into acceptable music I use

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[275] Odie Yaw Bour, interview by author, Fiapre, Ghana, 11 November, 2003.
[276] Agyeiwaa, interview.

Yaa Afrakoma's compositional procedure as a case study for all those who use the third procedure.[277] Below is a detailed discussion of these scenarios:

5.2.1.1. *Odie Yaw Bour's "Yaa, Meeyɛ Bi Akɔ̄"*

Odie Yaw Bour composed this song, which belongs to a musical type called *ntwiisi*, out of the following literary idea that came with its own melody to him in a dream:

Yaa, mereyɛ bi akɔ̄, menkyɛ o'

(Literally it means, "Yaa, I am doing my part and leave, I will not be here forever")

The following is the melodic phrase that accompanied the idea:

Example 1

This melodic idea, which came by revelation, was not enough for an entire composition. What he needed was to have a second idea that would complement the first. The following are the words of the second melodic idea that came later to him out of inspiration, according to him, while working in his farm:

Awoɔ̄ dodoɔ̄, aka menko bafua pɛ

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[277] Afrakoma, interview.

(Literally it means, "Too many births, but I am still left as a lonely child")

Measures 21-23 of the following example show the melodic phrase that came with the words:

Example 2

Since the above two phrases constituted the main ideas he wanted to convey, he proceeded to generate variants of them, including a complete phrase for the subject *Yaa* alone. His final step within this ideational mode was for him to organize the melodic ideas and their few variants. And he did that by joining them together (*keka bomu*) and blending them (*ōsae*) into a complete whole, as shown in the full score in Example 3.

One thing to note is that he felt the song was complete at this stage of the cognitive processes, and this sense of completeness was judged by his own insight, experience and knowledge of the culture. That is, he did not need to continue generating again any new idea at this level in the ideational mode, so far as he was concerned. The rest of the creative process would (as always) continue during performance—in the psychomotor mode—where other novel ideas may be added.

The ideas that would be added at the next stage, in the psychomotor mode, are those generated spontaneously from the context of the performance, which are, in most cases, necessitated by the performance situations, or circumstances surrounding the performance. At that stage the song would again be brought to another level of *completeness*.

Example 3

Yaa Meeye Bi Ako

Odie Yaw Bour

5.2.1.2.   Attaa Agyeiwaa's "Ghana Adehyeε Mma"

Atta Agyeiwaa wrote this song, belonging to a musical type called *nnwonkro*, out of the following simple literary idea that came with its own melody to her in a dream:

Ghana adehyeε mma

(Ghana's royal children)

The following is the melody that came with the idea:

Example 4

This melodic idea, which came by revelation, was, as usual, not enough for an entire composition. What she felt she needed was to have other ideas to complement it. But unlike the first idea that came with its own melody, the second idea came only as a literary idea (with no melody to it), but one whose words she felt would be a good continuation for the first sentence. The following is the second idea that came out of inspiration without melody:

Yεwō kookoo, yεwō timba wō ōman yi mu

(We have cocoa, we have timber in this nation)

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However, instead of generating a melody for it, she rather searched for a sentence, or, in a sense, constructed a third idea, that would somehow complete the second idea. This she felt would help her to convey the message she wanted to send across. The following is the third idea:

Yɛn nyɛ biako, efisɛ yɛwō ōman papa bi

(Let us be united, because we have a very good nation)

The next step was for her to generate melodies from these two new sentences (that is, the second and third ideas) and the following examples—Examples 5 and 6—show the melodies she generated for the two phrases:

(a) *Yɛwō kookoo, yɛwō timba wō ōman yi wo* (mm. 8-11)

Example 5

_ na ade hye   mmae_   Ye wo   koo   koo_ ye wo   tim ba   wo oman   yi mu

(b) *Yɛn nyɛ biako, efisɛ yɛwō ōman papa bi* (mm.14-17)

Example 6

en ti a de hye   mmae_   mo mma yen nye baa   koa_   Ye wo   o man   pa pam'

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She later developed a few more ideas and generated melodies for them. After that, she organized them into a complete music, by bringing or joining all the ideas together (*keka bomu*) and blending them (*ōsae*) into a unified whole as shown in Example 7.

Like Odie Yaw Bour's case, the rest of the creative process would continue during performance—in the psychomotor mode—where other novel ideas may be added. Those novel ideas would be generated spontaneously from the performance context, necessitated by the performance situations, or circumstances surrounding the performance. And, as I have already mentioned, at that stage the song would again be brought to another level of *completeness*.

Example 7

Ghana Adehye Mma

Attaa Agyeiwaa

Gha na e___ Gha na ade hye e mmae___ Gha na e___ Gha

__ na ade hye mmae___ Ye wo koo koo__ ye wo tim ba wo oman yi mu

en ti a de hye mmae__ mo mma yen nye baa koa__ Ye wo o man pa pam'

O man mmae__ Gha na a de hye e mma e___ o man mmae__

5.2.1.3. Yaa Afrakoma's "Ōda Mpadua Mu"

Yaa Afrakoma wrote this song, belonging to a musical type called *nnwonkro*, out of the following literary idea, which came to her out of inspiration as she pondered over a relative's death:

Ōda mpadua mu

(He/she is sleeping in bed)[278]

To this simple idea, she added some few ideas as she continued to reflect on the circumstance. The following are some of the ideas that came to her (which came with no melodies):

    a. *Ebue! Wankō amma…* (Ebue![279] He did not return)

    b. *Paapa, wo mma resu* (Paapa, your children are crying)

---

[278] *Ōda mpadua mu* literarily means he/she is sleeping in bed. But in this context, it symbolically refers to a dead person lying in state.
[279] *Ebue* is an expression of pain, surprise, or anxiety.

c. *Paapa nna awia na wodaayɛ akyɛ* (Paapa does not go to bed in the afternoon, so you have been in bed for quite too long)

d. *Na wookō hene yi na yɛfrɛ wo a wonmua yi?* (Where are you going and would not answer our call?), etc.

Because the first idea was proverbial with a hidden meaning, she developed several other proverbial phrases to complement it, all referring to the dead person who was lying in state. Furthermore, because all the above ideas literarily lead to the first idea, *ōda mpadua mu*, they became the lines for the cantor in the *nnwonkro* musical form, with the chorus becoming *ōda mpadua mu*. The following example shows the melodic phrases Yaa Afrakoma generated for some of her numerous cantor lines:

a. *Ebue! Wankō amma…*

Example 8

b. *Paapa, wo mma resu*

Example 9

c. *Paapa nna awia na wodaayɛ akyɛ*

Example 10

d. *Na wookō heni na yɛfrɛ wo a wonmua yi?*

Example 11

The chorus, in a form of a response, was constructed as repeated notes, running in thirds as shown in Example 12:

e. *ōda mpadua m'*

Example 12

After creating all these melodic ideas, her next step was to organize these ideas into a complete music. She did this by bringing, or joining, the ideas together (*keka bomu*) and by

blending them (*ōsae*) into a complete whole; that is, by organizing them into a culturally acceptable music. At the performance stages, in the psychomotor mode, novel ideas may be added, and the song would again be brought to another level of *completeness*. Example 13 shows the complete song after the ideational mode:

Example 13

Oda Mpadua Mu

Yaa Afrakoma

♩ = 120

Voice

Solo / Chorus / Chorus

E bue _____ w'an ko am ma o, O da mpa duam'

Solo / Chorus

E bue___ paa pa wo mma re su o,___ O da mpa duam'

Solo / Chorus / Solo

Paa pa nna 'wia na wo daa ye akye o, O da mpa duam'. O da

Chorus

mpa dua mu na ne nsa gu no bo e, O da mpa dua mue _____

Solo / Chorus

___ Baa ma nna 'wia na w'a da dee a nya ne O da mpa dua mue _____

Solo

wo mma re suo___ o da mpa duam' Na wo___ ko he na ye fre

Chorus / Solo

___ woa___ won mua yi, O da mpa duam' Wa be dan w'a ni a se na won hwe o bia bio

Chorus / Solo / Chorus / Solo

___ O da mpa duam' se wo bo mu se won tie dee yo___ O da mpa duam'. O da

Chorus

mpa duam' na ne suo w'ro noe, O da mpa dua mue _____

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Ei___ na wo___ ko he ne yi na   me di a w're hoo   yia, O da

mpa   dua   mue_____ wo   mma   re   suo___   o   da   mpa duam'

5.2.2.   Generative Principles

It may be seen from the above scenarios that composing in Akan culture is ultimately guided by

the Akan language, which forms the basis for rhythm-pitch generation. African languages, in

general, are known to be tone languages, exhibiting some basic characteristics of contour that is

necessitated by the intonation. As such, musical elements and patterns derived from a particular

African language are believed to exhibit some characteristics of that particular music culture.

Accordingly, there is the accepted fact that in African traditional songs there is a close bond

between text and tune where text is said to generate tune.[280]

This text-tune relation is so strong that even wordless songs or phrases, or instrumental tunes,

display melodic and rhythmic characteristics similar to those of songs and phrases with words.

As a result, it is said that the musical thinking of African traditional composers is that of text-

tune bond, that is, words and melody are inseperable in their musical thinking, and they create

melodies through words, with text becoming the basis for their musical creation, even in

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[280] See, for example, J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Linguistic Aspects of Style in African Music," *Journal for the International Conference for African Music and Dance* 1 & 2 (1992); and Beeko 2000.

instrumental compositions.**281** As Mampoma points out, "Instrumental music not based on a text is often given one that fits its rhythmic configuration and contextual orientation."**282**

In addition to this text-tune bond, my study among the Akan music makers has further revealed the conception the musicians have for the language: to them, there is some "musicalness" about the language. As they say, *Nsɛm no a yɛka no, ɛyɛ nnwom* (that is, the words that we say are "songs" or "tunes" by themselves).**283** Accordingly, apart from being a "tone language," they consider the language to be a kind of "musical language," or "pseudo-music," latent with its own tunes—its own melodies and rhythms. And this is, therefore, the reason why from the scenario account, the initial ideas either came as melodic ideas, or literary ideas from which melodies were easily generated by following the rhythms and contours of the phrases.

The musicians believe that the literary ideas—literary texts—come with their own embedded melodies and it takes the creative minds to discern and generate those "hidden" melodies within the texts. The principle of melodic generation is, thus, guided by the socio-linguistic factor, which I examine in two areas: the *text-tune relationship* and the *text-tune construction*.

5.2.2.1. Text-Tune Relationship

As I have pointed out, traditional composers are in most cases guided by the text-tune relationship in realizing melodies. Accordingly, I examine under this text-tune relationship the relationship that exists between the language and the melodies that are generated from it, or between the texts and the tunes that are generated from them. Accordingly, I discuss the rhythmic aspect of the Akan language, the pitch levels in the language and the coordination of units of structure.

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[281] Nketia 1992 and Beeko 2000.
[282] Isaiah Mwesa Mapoma, "The Determinant of Style in the Music of Ingomba" (Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1980).
[283] Among the musicians who made this statement were Yaw Bour, Agyeiwaa and Afrakoma.

RHYTHMIC ASPECT OF LANGUAGE

The Akan language, like any African language, is embedded with rhythm, which is emphasized in the spoken language. And according to the musicians, the rhythms of the texts come so naturally to them that no effort is made to generate special rhythms from the literary texts.[284] As a result, speech rhythm becomes fundamental to the realization of musical rhythm in composition, of which the composers are very much aware. We can see examples of these from the various phrases I discussed earlier in the scenario. The rhythms associated with the following phrases are those that would be articulated when these phrases are spoken.

a. *Yaa, meeyɛ bi akō, menkyɛ*

Example 14

Yaa mee ye bi ako _____ me nkye
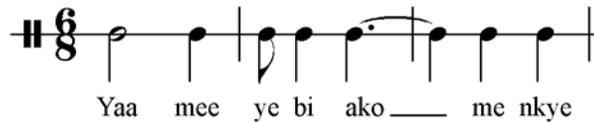
b. *Awoō dodoō, aka menko bafua pɛ*

Example 15

A woo do doo a ka me nko ba _____ fua pe

---

[284] Bour, Agyeiwaa, Afrakoma and Asantewa, among others. Bour asserted strongly that there are no words (in the Akan language) that cannot be put together to generate rhythm and melody.

c.   Yɛwō kookoo, yɛwō timba wō ōman yi mu

Example 16
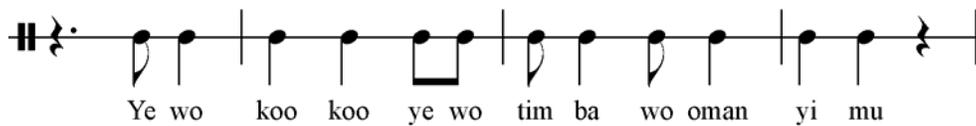
Ye wo   koo   koo   ye wo   tim   ba   wo oman   yi   mu

d.   Momma yɛn nyɛ biako, efisɛ yɛwō ōman papa mu

Example 17
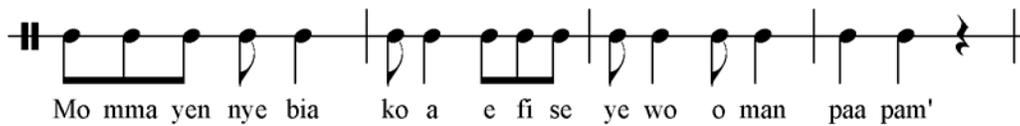
Mo mma yen nye bia   ko a   e fi se   ye wo   o man   paa pam'

e.   Paapa nna awia, na wodaa yɛ akyɛ

Example 18

Paa   pa   nna   'wia   na wo   daa   ye   akye

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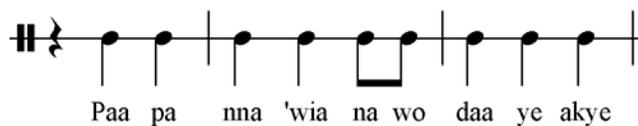
f. *Ōda mpadua mu na ne nsa gu no bo*

Example 19

O da   mpa dua mu na ne   nsa gu no bo
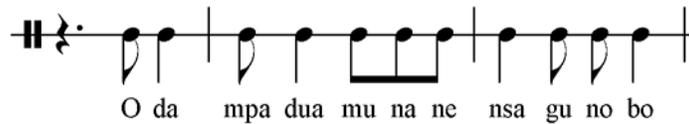
PITCH LEVELS IN LANGUAGE

The Akan language in which the music is framed embodies a two-tone terraced level or down-step system. That is, it embodies a system with two basic discrete *tonemes* and a somewhat midway one that is a down-step and occurs only after a high level. It means that this midway down-step does not exist alone as a discrete level but may only appear following a high tone.[285] The following is an example:

        -
          -
     -

a.   *Obi deɛ*

(Someone's own)

      -
        -
  - -

b.   *Ena pa hia*

(A good mother is needed)

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[285] Nketia 1992.

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There are cases where there may be two or more midway tonemes in succession before a down one as follows:

$$-$$
$$-\quad-$$
$$-\qquad\qquad-$$

c. *Me'eyɛ bi akō*

(I am doing my part and leave)

These may be the case in speech and a composer may want to transfer them into the melody making. In generating melodies from words, the composer comes across words or groups of words that have the same vowels and consonants, but are distinguished one from the other by the use of "contrastive tones"[286] or tone patterns.

$$-$$
$$-\qquad\quad-\;-$$

(a) *pa-pa*   (b) *pa-pa*

(father)   (fan)

$$-\;-\qquad\quad-$$
$$-$$
$$-$$

(c) *pa-pa*   (d) *paa-pa*

(goodness)   (daddy)

Yaa Afrakoma uses the (d) *papa* (daddy) in her song, but avoids the middle down tone with the second "*a*" and rather descends unto the second *pa*. These semantic tones, that is, tones that function in the above manner are numerous in the Akan dialects, which every composer may

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[286] Nketia 1992.

want to deal with them. But most often these words with such tones are allowed to take their meaning from the context of the phrase structure. And in the case of Afrakoma's song, the *paapa* is understood within the context as a call to one's "dad" who is lying in state.

This contextual factor is very important here, because in the process of coordinating speech tones and melody, it is not only in rhythm and contour that the linguistic dimension provides a frame-work for aspects of melodic organization, but also in phrasing. Accordingly, apart from relationships that exist between texts and tune in terms of rhythm and contour, there is also a relationship regarding the aspect of phrase structure. And the composers, knowing this text-tune relationship with regard to the syntactic groups, adhere closely to them in their melodic construction. I discuss this aspect under text-tune construction.

5.2.2.2. *Text-Tune Construction*

My aim here is to examine how composers in Akan culture generate melodies from speech tones and how speech tones and musical tones are coordinated. I further examine the intonation processes and the transformation of these speech tones into musical tones. I have earlier discussed the text-tune relationship, that is, the relationships that exist between speech rhythm and musical rhythm, and speech tones and musical tones. I have briefly pointed out that, in addition to the rhythmic-tonal relationships, there is also a relationship regarding the aspect of phrase structure, or unit of structure, to which the composers also adhere closely in their melodic construction. I elaborate more on the idea of *unit of structure* and discuss how this becomes fundamental to constructing a melodic phrase.

THE UNIT OF STRUCTURE

The term "unit of structure" describes a defined syntactive group, that is, a sequence of tones or lexis marked by clear cadential features such as pitch, pause or prolongation.[287] A unit of structure within verbal discourse may also be described as a "breath group," "linear unit" or a "syntactic group."[288] And there is a relationship between these syntactic units or breath groups and the musical phrases that are structured within songs. These syntactic units or breath groups provide the framework for the transformation of speech rhythms into musical rhythms, and speech tones into musical tones. They also provide the structure for the coordination of speech rhythm-tones and musical rhythm-tones.

Verbal-Musical Phrase Structure

To the Akan traditional musicians, the verbal phrase is the musical phrase; for the former controls the latter. Accordingly, in the construction of a melodic phrase the composers in many cases make the musical phrase "coterminus"[289] with a syntactic unit, or breath group as found in Examples 3, 7 and 13 above. Musical phrases may have, in most cases, a precise number of measures within a song, such as Example 13, "Ōda Mpadua Mu," whose phrases are, in most cases, three bars in length. The reason is that a phrase most often coincides with the structure of the bell line.[290] However, because in the process of coordinating speech tones and melody, the linguistic dimension forms the basis for phrase construction apart from the bell line, the actual thinking in terms of "measures" may not be so crucial in the compositional processes. And there are cases where phrases within a song may vary in length.

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[287] Nketia 1992.
[288] *Ibid*., p. 50.
[289] See Nketia 1992.
[290] See Nketia 1974, and Beeko 2000.

Instances of this case are found in Example 3, "Yaa, Meeyɛ Bi Ako," and Example 7, "Ghana Adehye Mma" above. In Example 7, there are two 4-bar phrases, which are followed with a 6-bar phrase. In Example 3, the 4-bar phrase structure was disrupted at m.29 with the following sentence, *Awoō dodoō aka menko…* (Too many births…), which became 6-bars in length. The reason may be that, because what he wanted to say within the literary phrase was so crucial to him, he consciously or unconsciously disregarded the maintainance of a 4-bar phrase structure.

Shorter and Longer Verbal Units

There are cases where a verbal unit is shorter than the required time span of a musical phrase.[291] In this case, repetitions of the verbal unit or a combination of two or more syntactic groups are used. We may find an example of repetitions of verbal units from the following construction from Odie Yaw Bour's music, Example 3. The sentence is:

Yaa, meeyɛ bi akō, menkyɛ o

(Yaa, I am doing my part and leave, I will not be here for long)

But in its musical construction, the *Yaa*, which was also used to make up phrases, is repeated several times to fill up the remaining time span of those phrase structures (Example 3, mm. 5-8, 13-16, and 27-30). In the same manner, a verbal unit or syntactic group could be extended by the use of "fill-ups" consisting of prolonged vowels, interjections, or nonsense syllables as it is in the case of Example 7, "Ghana Adehye Mma," which has a prolonged vowel, *mma e*. The use of interjections, such as "*Eh*," and other exclamatory expressions are numerous in traditional music

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[291] See Nketia 1992 and Beeko 2000.

of the Akan. In other cases the verbal linear unit may be longer than the musical phrase, and in such cases the durational values of some of the words are modified. And this is done by fixing three or five syllables to the time span of two or four respectively, or omitting certain syllables.[292]

Speech Intonation

Another issue to be discussed in melodic construction is speech intonation, or the manner in which the tones of words belonging to the same syntactic unit are linked in pitch. Within one single verbal phrase are words that make up the phrase. Each word in the phrase has its own terraced level (as discussed earlier). The issue is how these words are connected to each other within the phrase to form a complete unit of structure. There is generally a "junctural rule," which affects the tones of final and initial syllables of words in the same syntactive group: they are level where they are identical and disjunct where they are different.[293] Examples are as follows:

$$-\quad -$$
$$-\qquad\quad -$$
A-sɛm a-ba

(There is news at hand)

$$-\qquad\quad -$$
$$-\ -\ -$$
Medi aw'rɛhoō
(I am sorrowing)

[292] See Nketia 1992 and Beeko 2000.
[293] Nketia 1992.

The *asɛm* is low-high, while *aba* is high-low, so they are identical at the joint, "low-<u>high</u>-<u>high</u>-low, and may be leveled in pitch. With the second example, *medi aw'rɛhoō*, the *medi* is high-low,[294] while the *aw'rɛhoō* is low-low-high, so they are identical at the joint, high-<u>low-low</u>-low-high, and may be leveled in pitch when set to music. The following phrase shows an example of the disjunct phrase:

<div align="center">

\-   -   -

   -     -

M'ate asɛm bi

(I've heard some news)

</div>

As we can see, the *m'ate* is low-high, while *asɛm* is low-high, so they are disjunct at their joint, low-<u>high-low</u>-high and cannot be leveled in pitch when set to music. In most cases the composers do follow the rise and fall of the speech tones and assign a rising interval to a low-high juncture while making sure that tones that are level in speech are also level in song. In rare cases one would find digression from this practice, usually for musical reason. In actual fact, the actual intervallic realization of contrasts such as low-high or high-low is at the discretion of the composers.

5.2.3. Organizational Principles

Under the generative principles, I have discussed how musicians observe the rhythmic flow of a sentence and the "rise and fall" of words in generating melodies. Furthermore, I have shown how text-tune relationship guides text-tune construction. But it will be noted that the discussion was

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[294] Although the word, *medi*, is an Akan term, its pronunciation differs a little in intonation from region to region. For example, while the Asante, the Akyem and the Kwawu would say *meedi* (which is high-high), the Akuapem and the Bono say *medi* (which is high-low) as it is in the example shown above. Interestingly, the composer, Yaa Afrakoma was originally from the Brong Ahafo Region who is now settling in Kumasi in the Ashanti Region.

centered on how melodies are realized within a *phrase structure*, or unit of structure. And from the implicit theory underlying Akan compositional procedures, a *phrase* is considered a single musical idea, which comes to the musician either in the form of a literary idea (with no melody) or an idea with its melody. However, after generating melodies from several of such ideas (that is, those with no melodies), the melodic ideas remain disjointed phrases until they are brought together and worked on into a culturally acceptable musical form.

Although there are cases where some of the melodic ideas may come to the composers apparently connected to each other, the composers almost always rework them until they feel satisfied. They always move a phrase here or there—for example, moving a second phrase to the fourth position and bringing the fourth to the third, and so forth, all with the effort to blend (*ōsae*) the ideas into an appreciable music.**295** This process borders on the issue of *organization*, which I seek to discuss briefly under this sub-section.

The next phase of the compositional process after the generation of melodies within phrase structures is, therefore, the conscious organization of musical ideas into a unified whole. But, as stated earlier, the process here is not that of "development" of a single idea: it is rather the "putting together" (*ōkeka abomu*) and the "blending" (*ōsae*) of many *related* musical ideas in the form of phrase structures. Asked how she was able to know that certain ideas would fit certain places better than others, Ama Oforiwa says, *sɛ mede hyɛhō a mehu sɛ ɛbɛn no, ɛna mete sɛ ɛyɛdɛ* (when I fix a particular idea somewhere in the music, I could feel/see that such idea sounds closer to the other ideas into which its has been fixed, and it also sounds pleasant).296 Accordingly, the terms *ɛbɛn no* (it is closer) and *ɛyɛdɛ* (it sounds pleasant) are what I would call

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295 According to Ama Oforiwaa of Odumasi and Afrakoma of Kumasi, putting ideas here or there depends very much on how those ideas would fit and naturally relate to the others ideas into which they have been fixed.
296 Oforiwaa, interview.

"semantic guides" in achieving a perfect blending (ōsae). However, the feeling of "how close" and "how pleasant" is always the judgement of the composer.

The ideas gathered may be said to constitute a family, or a kind of "association." And it is a fact, from Oforiwaa's (and many others') account that within such a family or association of ideas, some ideas may be more closely related to each other than to others. As a result, it is logical to think that the more closely ideas are related (culturally), the more closely they would be brought together in the organizational structure. The organizational process at this point, therefore, may be described as an "associative process," which is guided by what I call *relations*. And the judgment of such *relatedness* of ideas—that is, the judgment of "how one idea is, or is not, related to others"—is, as many of the musicians pointed out, ultimately guided by the composers' own creative instinct, taste, experience and knowledge of the culture.[297] I shall at this point return to the creative scenarios to briefly discuss how the composers organize their ideas by the concept of *relations*.

We saw from the scenarios that after creating several literary ideas and generating melodies and melodic variants from them, the next step for the composers was to *organize* these ideas— that is, to bring these phrases together—into a complete music. Odie Yaw Bour's case in Example 3 probably represents a situation where a composer may have only a few ideas to work with, and as a result would rather create more variants to be able to extend his or her song.[298] He even makes use of the name *Yaa* and uses that alone to create some phrases, as many composers do within the tradition.

In Yaw Bour's example (Example 3), the note C, the tonic, constitutes the central pitch around which most of the phrases revolve. The first phrase (mm. 1-4) begins with the C and ends

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[297] Bour, Agyeiwaa, Oforiwaa, Kumi, Boakye, Apiah-Kubi, Minta and Quansah, among others.
[298] This song had just probably been composed at the time I met him, so he sang the song to me with only these two literary ideas. But I believe he would later add more ideas to the song.

on the A (a third below); and the second phrase (mm. 5-8) begins and ends on C. Between the last note of the first phrase (A) and the first note of the second phrase (C) is an interval of a third. And from the Akan concept of *relatedness*, notes that lie a third apart (such as A and C) are related.[299] This means that A can naturally move into C and vice versa, thus making the second phrase a natural consequent phrase for the first phrase.

With regard to the interval of a third, many of such related phrases that lie adjacent to each other almost always have their adjoining notes (that is, the last note of the antecedent phrase and the first note of the consequent phrase) lying a third apart. This situation, therefore, means that an interval of a third, apart from being used in the Akan tradition in multipart arrangement, may also enforce some sense of *relatedness*.[300] Therefore, because A can naturally move into C and vice versa, the first phrase can naturally move into the second.

The third phrase (mm. 9-12) and the fourth phrase (mm. 13-16) are repeats of the first and the second phrases, respectively, except that the third phrase comes as a short chorus (or a response). Although he begins the fifth phrase (mm. 17-20) with an A, the main pitch seems to be the C that follows, because the C receives more stress by virtue of its longer note value than the A that precedes it. And as usual, the fifth phrase naturally leads into the sixth phrase (mm. 21-26) that begins with "*awoō dodoō*," because of the interval of thirds that their adjoining notes form. The seventh and eighth phrases constitute the final chorus. One thing to note is that, in the chorus, the lower part (*ɛfɛm*, in Akan) constitutes the melody while the upper part (*ɛsoro*, in Akan) constitutes the harmonic part.

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[299] The issue of relatedness with regard to notes lying a third apart is substantiated by how the Akan harmonize in parallel thirds. See J. H. Kwabena Nketia, *Folk Songs of Ghana* (London: Oxford University University Press, 1963b) and Beeko 2000.
[300] See Nketia 1963b and Beeko 2000.

Yaa Afrakoma's organization of "Ōda Mpadua Mu" (Example 13, p. 143) is manifested in how she connected her ideas. Unlike Yaw Bour, what is interesting in Afrakoma's song is the prevalent use of interval of fourths in the melodic structure, which, in Akan musical culture, constitutes a natural skip. That is, the fourth, especially the "falling fourth," is used in melodic construction.[301] In Example 13, the first sixteen or so measures constitute call-and-response phrases, with 3-bar solo (call) phrases and 3-bar chorus (reponse) phrases. In the first (solo) phrase, the actual sentence is *w'ankō amma* ("He did not return"), but she begins with a shout or an exclamation, *Ebue!*, on a D and gradually descends onto the A that begins the sentence, which is an interval of a fourth from the D. From the A she skips a third to C and falls a fourth to G. This G becomes crucial, because it serves as the main note for the chorus response that follows. The last solo note, F, in m.4 calls and brings the response on the G, which lasts for two measures, although the silent measure following it is part of the phrase.

There are two more call-and-responses that follow—mm. 7-12 and 13-18. But the chorus, which continues through m.18, overlaps with the beginning of the solo's call. At m. 13, the beginning note, E, may be taken to be a kind of appoggiatura that falls on the main note D. Note that, at m. 20, the solo ends on an A, which is a third from the F on which she was ending all the time. Ending on the A note reminds the chorus to come in on a D (instead of the G they have been singing all the time). However, after four Ds, the chorus drops to an A (a fourth from D) and holds it for about four measures.

The solo enters again at m. 25 with a slightly varied repetition of mm. 13-15, again ending on A as the chorus enters on D; this time the full chorus is sung. But we should note that the chorus ends on the G and not the B (at m. 33), because the B is one of the parts harmonizing the melody. At m. 35, the main solo note D is preceded with a C and an E. The solo ends on an F, and the

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[301] *Ibid*.

usual procedure is followed, except that there are many variations coming in. But it will be seen that the same practice continues till the end of the song.

It is certain that one of the factors that make the antecedent phrases related to their consequent phrases in this example is the interval of a fourth[302] that, unlike the third interval, features only in melodic construction and not in harmony. As I have already pointed out, the first three call-and-response phrases are natural. In actual fact, the responses may also constitute the ends of the solo calls, so that the section from m. 1 to m. 6 should be considered a syntactic group, and mm. 7-12 another syntactic group, and so forth. Therefore, apart from these call-and-response phrases that I have mentioned, what makes the rest of the phrases related to each other would seem to lie (1) in the intervals that connect their adjoining notes, (2) the relatedness in their melodic structures and (3) the relatedness of their sentences that connect naturally to convey the message.

From all the examples we have seen so far, it appears the organization of phrases has nothing to do with how many phrases a composer may have. The reason is that, where composers have few ideas at their disposal, they may create variants of those few phrases. I must quickly add at this point that, within the Akan oral culture, traditional composers do not seem to work on two or more compositions simultaneously, as would be possible with composers who write down their compositions. This is probably the situation because, in such an oral tradition, the mind (or the memory) may not be capable of processing several *unrelated* ideas (which are meant for two

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[302] This interval of fourth that links phrases together was demonstrated to me by some of my informants such as Koo Nimo (2003), Odie Yaw Obour (2004) and Ōkyeame Ofosu (2004), even though they did not verbalize the name of the interval as being "fourth." It was more of their information and demonstrations that confirm what J. H. K. Nketia and I have already discovered within the Akan culture (See Nketia 1963b and Beeko 2000).

different songs) at the same time.[303] Accordingly, all ideas that come into the composers' minds are considered to belong to, or meant for, a single composition.

Therefore, within a particular span of time, the composers may consider all ideas that come to, or are generated by, them to be related. However, according to most of them, in the event where unrelated ideas find their way into their minds in the process of composing, they are discarded.[304] Some of their reasons range from the inability to notate the melodic ideas for future use for other songs to the seemingly potential conflict those ideas might have (if they were to remain in the mind) with the current compositional process of musical ideas with which they do not have any relation.[305]

It was a bit difficult for these composers to articulate in words how their own sensations, feelings and strivings guide them towards the perception of what are *related* and what are not *related*. According to them, they are guided by these psychological and cultural attributes

5.3.   The Psychomotor Creative Techniques

In this section, I briefly describe the nature of the creative processes within the psychomotor mode, because this aspect in the creative processes seems to have been adequately studied. The creative principles that guide musical creativity within this domain—the psychomotor mode— are, from my observation, *generative principles* which involve an immediate reproduction of simultaneous mental processes. And unlike the creative processes within the ideational mode,

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[303] Odie Yaw Bour lamented on how he sometimes forgets if he does not develop on time the related ideas that come to him. In the case of Oforiwaa, she makes sure that she always works with related ideas, and continues to work till she comes to conclusion. Their problem is the tendency to have another separate idea that may not belong (relate) to the composition in progress.

[304] Oforiwaa, interview.

[305] Some composers write the words down, for example Ama Oforiwa, but in such case, they would have to generate new melodies other than the ones that came to their mind, or were generated by them.

which involve covert behaviors, the cognitive processes here manifest overt performance behaviors. According to many of the musicians, this set of processes comprises "on-the-spot" creative thinking about the organization and structure of the musical performance.[306]

From what I have discovered, traditional composers in the Akan music tradition may not necessarily go to the performance ground purposely to make new music as such. But if an entirely new music should emerge within performance setting, that would apparently come as a result of the musicians' creative activities within the performance contexts. In other words, a gathering at a performance ground presupposes some readiness to perform an already existing musical repertoire whose structure may be already known. But since the completeness of any song is not final in itself, adding to it is part of the norm, and by so doing, new songs may emerge.

Another observation is that, unlike the creative person in the ideational mode—who may conceive the musical idea without the aid of an instrument, the creative person in the psychomotor mode almost always conceive his/her ideas *with* the instrument, and this may include singing.[307] Accordingly, it seems it is by playing the instrument, or singing, that the new ideas emerge. And, unlike the ideas that come under the ideational mode, those that come within performance *must* work instantly for the performer. As it is generally said—even in improvisation—that, performers create primarily within "the pre-existence of a large set of formal constraints,"[308] which serve as a guide.

Similarly, Nketia has described creativity within this mode as a "technique of spontaneous expression, or an art whose primary aim is to bring into being a coherent body of expression for

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[306] Martin Opuni-Appiah, Rita Barfour-Amoah, Sofiah Appiah-Kubi,Victoria Ackon and Doris Boakye, interviews by author, Obuasi, Ghana, 14 November, 2003; and Diana Mensah, Julius Yaw Quansah, Charles Osei, Solomon Minta, and Adwoa Kumi, interviews, Sunyani Ghana, 11 November, 2003.
[307] Minta, Quansah and Osei, among others.
[308] John A. Slobda, *The Musical Mind: The Cognitive Psychology of Music* (Oxford: Claredore Press, 1985), 139.

performance within a particular context."[309] All these statements point to the fact that the performer creates out of something, but within constraints of cultural knowledge, which he/she carries into the performance ground. Furthermore, he/she does not create in a vacuum, but around a piece which he/she is performing. In this case he/she is indirectly forced into specific spans of time within which to create. For example, if the performer is a cantor, he/she must put whatever he/she wants within his/her solo phrase, but he/she must finish soon enough for him/her to bring the chorus in on time. If the performer is a Master drummer he must do the same; this time not to bring chorus in as such, but to create and elaborate only within a specific time span.

However, there are times where a cantor would raise a line and create variations of it in many different ways before signaling the chorus. In such a case, the chorus only waits for a signal, which almost always comes in a form of verbal expression of which members of the chorus are aware.[310] Drummers or other instrumentalists also do the same, and they do that most of the time before an entire piece, where they have to play variations of rhythmic patterns or variations of melodic lines as a form of introduction.[311] Therefore, creativity within performance settings may involve creating within a strict span of time or free time outside such strict time. But in all such cases, the creative processes may be the same, except that in the former—creating within a strict time—the performer has less time to generate his/her ideas, while in the latter—creating freely out of strict time—he/she may have relatively more time.

Finally, it will be noted from our discussion that, while the creative musician can *generate* and *organize* his/her ideas within the ideational mode, he/she can only *generate* within the

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[309] J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "Generative Processes in Seperewa Music," *Africa* (1962): 117.
[310] Cantors (lead singers) such as Yaa Afrakoma, Yaa Asantewa and Rita Barfour-Amoah say they have certain verbal cues that member of the chorus always know. The endings of these cues differ in diction and in pitch, depending on which of the sections of the chorus the cantors would like the chorus to sing.
[311] Mintah, Osei and Atta Ansu, interviews.

psychomotor mode. The reasons are (1) because of time constraint, which forces him/her into a specific time span and (2) because of the fact that he/she creates within an already *organized* piece of music, which he/she would be performing with other musicians.

5.4. Conclusion

I have discussed the creative processes from the analytic and theoretical point of view by analyzing the cognitive processes during *the act of composing*, dwelling rather on activities associated with the performative level. I have pointed out how the creative process occurring within the ideational mode has comprised a tone-to-tone and idea-to-idea working out, or the careful organization of musical ideas *outside performance context*. The creativity occurring within the psychomotor mode has comprised the spontaneous generation of musical ideas *within performance context*.

I have also pointed out that the two sets of creative activities—one set occurring outside a performance context and the other occurring within the performance context—are both associated with creative realization or generation of musical ideas. I have dwelt on the Akan semantic terms *keka bo mu* ("putting together") and *ōsae* ("blending") to explain the processes associated with the ideational mode. I have used the term *ōgoro* ("playing") to advance my discussion of the processes in the psychomotor mode, except that the concentration has been more on the ideational mode.

However, there is one other issue that may also aid creativity within the Akan culture that I wish to mention in passing. That is, apart from all the factors that guide the Akan musicians in their creative works, there is also an overall conceptual framework that effects their smooth translation of words into music. To the Akan musicians, music is an elevated speech, or

conversely, when speech is elevated, it becomes music; to them, there is some "musicalness" about the language. Accordingly, apart from being a "tone language," the language is considered to be a kind of "musical language," or "pseudo-music." They see the language to be latent with its own tunes—its own melodies and rhythms. The musicians believe that the literary ideas— literary texts—come with their own embedded melodies and it takes the creative minds to discern and generate those "hidden" melodies within the texts. Thus, the realization of melody from text is an elevation of that text to music.

Therefore, composition to the Akan musicians may constitute not only a technique or a practice that must be learned, but also a concept that must be developed. I would like to point out in conclusion that, by examining these creative processes within the Akan culture, I have underlined the fact that creativity within the Akan traditional setting may not be all that accidental as has been thought. Composers cognitively process their musical ideas, and even where they have to create within the performance context, much of the ideas realized are thoughtfully generated although within a very short possible span of time. And they create from a technique that they have acquired and a concept that they have also developed.

6.   CHAPTER SIX: THE AKAN MUSIC TRADITIONS IN THE CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT

6.1.   Introduction

Generally in the Akan music traditions, changes and innovations have comprised those that were creatively initiated and originated within the culture and those that were appropriated from neighboring and foreign cultures. With regard to those appropriated, such changes and innovations have articulated both traditional and contemporary musical scenes as observed today. However, throughout the study, I have centered my discussion on changes and innovations that emerged out of the traditional contexts of creativity, which, among others, include the creation of new musical genres, rearrangements of musical instruments and the organization of new musical groups. Accordingly, I have not as yet provided any definite account of changes that have prevailed on the contemporary scene, and which have affected certain aspects of the traditional way of music making and music organization.

J. H. K. Nketia identified three types of changes affecting folk music generally in Ghana today. According to him, the first type resulted from "the cumulative effect of the creative individuals…or groups of inviduals within a given society of a fairly homogenous character;" the second resulted from "the interaction of such homogenous African societies through georgraphic contiguity;" and the third, from "the impact of an alien culture."[312] It is this third type of change that seems to have occurred within the shortest possible time.

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[312] J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "Changing Traditions of Folk Music in Ghana," *Journal of International Folk Music Council* 11 (1959): 31

The Akan community, although it "constitutes a distinct community of taste that creates and maintains its own art forms,"[313] has also developed "distinct stylistic preferences over and above the common operational principles and basic forms it shares with other communities."[314] As a result, creative individuals within the community have continued to embrace new social formations, new ideologies and new ways of life that come not to displace the traditions but to complement them. My aim in this chapter, therefore, is to discuss the effects changes within the contemporary scene have had on the Akan traditional music organization and music production.

6.2.   The Contemporary Scene

6.2.1.   Historical Setting

The changes resulting from the interactions with alien cultures such as the Arabic and the European cultures have been the more striking. They may be viewed against the background of social change itself. As Nketia points out, such change "reflects the growing acceptance of the material culture of the West and of a number of Western institutions."[315] There was the coming and acceptance of Christianity from the European missionaries and Islam from the Arabs. There was the coming of the colonial era and the subsequent annexation of several ethnic groups to form the Gold Coast. There was the post-colonial era, marked by Independence and the establishment of the modern state of Ghana. There was the Post-Independence era, marked by the introduction of modern political and economic systems. And there has been the contemporary scene, marked by urbanization and globalization.

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[313] Nketia 1959, p. 2
[314] *Ibid.*
[315] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

By looking at all these political structures that came to affect the African social fibre, one would not hesitate to also consider the Akan traditional music and the traditional musician in the contemporary musical scene against the backdrop of this social change. As we survey this scene we will notice that these "macro" structures have not only encouraged the creation of contemporary idioms such as the choral music in the churches, art music in the concert halls and "pop" music in the night clubs and other popular places; they have also affected certain aspects of the traditional ways of music organization and production, by integrating certain aspects of contemporary ideas into the traditional culture.

6.2.2. Changes and Innovations

Social change within Ghana has affected many traditional ways of organizing and producing music, and the Akan traditional way of organizing and producing music have in no way been left unaffected. Many of the Akan traditional bands have welcomed some of these contemporary ways of doing things: there is the merging of African musical elements and behavior with Western elements; there are now new formations and new organizational and administrative systems; and there are now new methods of producing and performing the traditional music. I discuss these innovations briefly.

6.2.2.1. Musical Organization and Admnistration

Many of the Akan musical bands are now organized with an executive body comprising sometimes the president with a secretary, and sometimes with a financial secretary or treasurer. There are many cases where bands may have organizers who organize programs and concerts for the bands. These executive leaders may have their terms of office and are changed according to what is required by the group's constitution, if there is any. Many traditional composers are now

seen with their own groups, also assuming a leadership role and control over these groups.[316]

And where the leader is the composer-performer, he/she combines the role of a composer-performer on an instrument and a principal vocalist, with organizational leadership.[317]

This situation has encouraged new forms of patronage as well as new breed of managers and promoters, structures which were not part of the traditional system. While in the traditional system, musicians sought attachment with traditional bodies, in the contemporary scene, many of these musicians seek affiliations with governmental and private organizations, including councils, political organizations, hotels, night clubs, recording studios or recording companies and churches.[318] They are always booked in advance and such arrangements are made with the groups' Public Relations Officers and Organizers. These groups are always paid at their own rate, stipulated in their constitutions. It therefore means that there are monetary gains associated with being a member of these itinerary groups. Some of their functions include programs such as national festivals that attract foreigners and international tourists. These groups included the Tanokorm Agrōmma of Sunyani,[319] Afia Baasa Nnwonkoro of Kumasi,[320] Folkloric Group of the Center for National Culture, Cape Coast,[321] and the Sikaman Cultural Group of Obuasi.[322]

Another form of innovation is the institutionalization of the rehearsal system. Because of their big-time engagements, most of these groups have to thoroughly rehearse their songs and

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[316] This example is typical of those groups formed by Odie Yaw Bour, Ama Oforiwaa and Yaa Afrakoma. Their respective groups are formed around them, and as such they control them and compose for them.

[317] J. H. Kwabena Nketia, "The Performing Musician in a Changing Society," *The World of Music* 21, no. 2 (1979).

[318] *Ibid*.

[319] This is a resident group of the Center for National Culture at Sunyani, Brong Ahafo Region (refer Chapter Three). The information about the group was given to me by the artistic director, Asumadu Sakyi, who was directly in charge of the group (November 2003).

[320] This group was associated with the Asantehene Palace, Kumasi. The ionformation about the group was given to me by one of the members, Abene Maanu, who was the daughter of the late Afia Baasa who formed the group (November 2003).

[321] This is a resident group of the Center for National Culture in Cape Coast, Central Region. My knowledge of the group was given to me by the Deputy Director, Emmanuel Akortsu (January 2004)

[322] This group is resident at Obuasi in the Ashanti Region. The information about the group was given to me by the group's leader, Hopeson Nyakutse (November 2003).

insist on precision and perfection. As such, each of these groups has its own rehearsal days on which the members meet and learn their new songs and go through old ones. This mode of learning has also affected the process of transmission. Instead of learning songs through performance participation, members now learn through rehearsals. And during these rehearsals composers take full control of the situation: they teach the parts (which are always two parts, except in a few instances where three parts may be taught for specific effects); they observe balance by making sure that none of the parts overshadow the other, or none of the instrumentalists overshadow the singers.[323]

These composer-leaders are responsible for some of the compositions for which the band is known.[324] Those who assume musical leadership always assume important roles as cantors or as master drummers or leading instrumentalists.[325] With the highly professional bands, their leaders may not necessarily be a compose-performer. In such case, leadership may be provided by someone who simply has the ability to manage and organize the group's itineraries, but may not have to perform a star role in addition to this managerial role.[326]

6.2.2.2.   New Centers for Traditional Music Performance

One of the striking innovative practices is the performance of traditional music in the churches. Although this practice may not be too new—as it probably might have been prevalent

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[323] This issue of rehearsal was emphasized not only by the groups associated with cultural centers, but many of the groups I met, including Ama Oforiwaa's Nnwonkoro Group, Yaa Agyeiwaa's Nnwonkoro and Ataa Agyeiwaa's Nwnonkoro group.

[324] As I have already mentioned, this is typical of Odie Yaw Bour's group, Ama Oforiwa's group and Yaa Afrakoma's group, among others.

[325] For example, Yaa Asantewa, Yaa Afrakoma and Odie Yaw Bour are both cantors and leaders of their respective groups.

[326] For example, with the Maame Afia Baasa group, it was one Nana Kwaku Dua (the secretary) and others who lead and manage the group, and they do not join in the performance. They only arrange for the performances.

during the Pre-Independence era—it is very strong nowadays and in an accentuated form.[327] The difference lies only in the song texts, which always carry a religious theme, reflecting on God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, as well as topics such as, among others, salvation, redemption, sin, holiness and Heaven. The instruments that are used include the bell, castanet, rattle, and drums of all kinds (hourglass, frame, etc.). In addition, Western instruments such as the guitar and the accordion are from time to time played alongside the traditional ones. Groups are formed in many of the churches who specialize in traditional music, and these groups sing side by side with the main choirs which sing the Western and African art music. All these changes seem to have begun probably after Ghana's independence in March 1957.

Other novel centers where traditional music is being perfomed are at governmental functions and the concert halls. With the appearance at these centers, the traditional bands see their services as becoming more commercialized, and this has also given rise to a new form of professionalism. Many of these bands, especially those living in the urban centers, perform traditional music as "folklore" to urban audiences in theaters, concerts halls and other places of entertainment.[328] These large-stage performances at concert halls have further enhanced stage performances by encouraging professional choreographing of movements and dances by professional dancers.[329]

6.2.2.3. *Music Production and Promotion*

Because of the constant engagement with both national and international scenes, musical bands within the Akan traditions have developed a new attitude towards the production of music.

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[327] A typical example is Ataa Agyeiwaa's Nnwonkoro group at Bomaa in the Brong Ahafo Region. All the members belonged to the main Catholic Church of the town, which made it easy for the group to sing most often in the church. As such the texts of many of their songs are religious, or bible-based.
[328] Nketia 1979.
[329] An example is the Folkloric Group of the Center for National Culture in Cape Coast.

First is the incorporation of certain contemporary instruments such as the guitar and the accordion, which have led to the emergence of new genres. An example is the use of the guitar by Koo Nimo in his *ōdōnsōn* music and other genres as well.**330** Another is the purchace of musical equipment such as public address (PA) systems—microphones, amplifiers and speakers. These are necessary for performances to large crowds in the urban centers or theater halls.

There is also the issue of costumes. Appearances of these groups at national and international scenes have encouraged the use of well-designed costumes for the dancers, the instrumentalists and the singers. In the event where a band would have to go on tour, members would have to go with several sets of dresses to be able to change for their various performances. The sewing of attire calls for professional designers, tailors and seamstresses who are made to design costumes to match with dances. Many of these costumes are traditional attire, and their use is a way of promoting the culture from where the attire comes. For example, the use of the *kente* cloth to dance *adowa* is a way of promoting not only the cloth, but the Asante culture, or, for that matter, the Akan culture.

One other area of prospect, which has also become a "boom" to many of the music bands, is the music recording industry. Music bands have been engaging themselves with big-time recording projects, recording and marketing their compositions.[331] This recording project has also affected the organization of music bands. Many of the bands now have people who take charge of this area and they are music producers, executive producers, promoters, distributors and marketing personnel. What has made this economic venture more attractive to many traditional musicians is the presence of the copyright law that protects every music production.

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[330] Koo Nimo, interview, Kumasi, Ghana, 21 November, 2003.
[331] The groups belonging to Yaa Afrakoma, Odie Yaw Bour and Ama Oforiwaa have all produced a recorded music, which were being sold in the country. Yaa Afrakoma is the most prolific of them all, and she was blessd to have a good executive producer and a good marketing manager who inspired her to produce more.

Ghana's copyright law, embodied in the Copyright Act 1985, is aimed at protecting a wide range of works, including, but not limited to, literary works, artistic works, musical works, sound recordings and broadcasting. Being a modern-day act and an offshoot of the human-rights movements within the global system, this law fundamentally seeks to protect the rights of the individual to ownership.[332] There is prior establishment of a copyright office with branches in the regions that enacts, or administers and monitors, the copyright law system. In other words, The Copyright Office is the government agency responsible in Ghana for the implementation of the Copyright Law of 1985, PNDC Law 110. Since its establishment in 1985, this office performs several protective functions towards the discharge of its duties under the law.[333]

Another governmental structure, established with the purpose of promoting the arts and crafts in Ghana and making them accessible and attractive to international tourists and other agencies, is the Center for National Culture (CNC). There are branches in all the ten regions of Ghana and each branch is supposed to coordinate and promote the arts and crafts of its region. There are Copyright offices housed in these centers to co-ordinate activities with the Centers. As a way of promoting traditional musics of the nation's ethnic groups, these cultural centers have resident bands whose members are paid monthly by the Centers. The bands in the Brong Ahafo Region, Ashanti Region, Eastern Region, Central Region and Western Region perform Akan traditional music.

I end by providing, as an example, some pictures of performances by one of these cultural dance troupes, called Central Folkloric Group, which was the resident group of the Center for National Culture in the Cape Coast city of the Central Region of Ghana.

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[332] David Andreas Hesse, "Overview of the Copyright Laws of Ghana," in *International Intellectual Property Law 1977: Center for International Legal Studies*, ed., Dennis Campbell and Susan Cotter (West Sussex, England: John Wiley and Sons, 1998), 3-15.

[333] *The Copyright Office and the Administration of Copyright in Ghana, a report on the Copyright Laws in Ghana*, 1985.

Figure 21: Central Folkloric Group of the Center for National Culture (CNC) in one of their performances in Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana (Picture taken on January 23, 2004)

Figure 22: Central Folkloric Group, performing the *asafo* dance of the Akan. This section shows the vigorous male dance movements. The men always dance with a flag in the hand.

Figure 23: Central Folkloric Group, performing the *asafo* dance. This section shows the female dance movements and gestures. They dance with scarfs in the hand.

Figure 24: Central Folkloric Group, performing the *asafo* war dance

Figure 25: Central Folkloric Group, performing the *osoode* social dance

Figure 26: Central Folkloric Group, performing the *osoode* dance

Figure 27: Central Folkloric Group, performing the *apatampa* social dance

Figure 28: Central Folkloric Group, performing the *apatampa* dance.

Figure 29: Cenral Folkloric Group, performing the *apatampa* dance

6.3. Summary and Conclusion

6.3.1. Summary

A survey of the dynamics of the Akan music traditions within both the traditional and the contemporary settings underscores the fact that the Akan community, apart from constituting a distinct community of taste that created and maintained its own art forms, also constituted a community that has developed distinct stylistic preferences over and above the common operational principles and basic forms it shared with other communities.[334] Thus, creative individuals within the community have, apart from initiating and originating novel forms of ideas, also embraced new social formations, new ideologies and new ways of life that came not to displace the tradition but to complement it. These processes of initiation, origination and

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[334] Nketia 1959.

appropriation of novel ideas clearly reveal the fluid nature of the musical traditions. They underscore the fact that the traditions are constantly adjusted and adapted to the changing social order.

This malleable nature of the Akan music traditions is the result of the way the traditions themselves came into being and especially the way the music-making events were conceptualized. The traditions were instituted through continuing social interactions that took place within social settings. Accordingly, the music-making events became socio-musical events that came to be conceptualized as *agorō*. And as *agorō*, the music-making events took on a *playful* character that consequently made them susceptible to changes and adaptable to innovations. On the other hand, the musical forms that emerged out of these socio-musical processes—the music-making events—also became accomodating to novel ideas. What then happened was that, while the processes provided appropriate contexts for the creation of the products, it was also the performance of these products or the forms that necessitated the need for those processes—a symbiotic relationship.

This interplay between the socio-musical processes and the musical products—grounded by the adaptable and *playful* nature of the music-making events—continues to induce a high rate of creativity among Akan traditional musicians. That is, the music-making events continue to encourage an endless flow of creative activities where composers become engaged, consciously or unconsciously, in a "never-ending" process of creativity. Composers continue to engage in an "open-ended" process of music making. They receive songs in dreams, out of inspiration, join and blend musical ideas together, and perform these songs.

Songs that have been performed continue to be subjected to a continuing refinement and perfecting as the recipients are inspired to do so. That is, the songs continue to go through

another round of creative process, and another round, and yet another round, thus, revealing an endless chain of creative events that continue to occur over and over again. Such process has characterized the compositional practices in the Akan musical culture, accordingly, revealing what may be termed a "cycle of musical creation."

6.3.2.　Conclusion

What I have sought to establish in this study is that the Akan, like most people on the surface of the earth, have played significant roles in most human-initiated change processes. They have made contributions to both the material and the institutional aspects of their culture as their creative sensibilities or tendencies continued to bring about various forms of innovations. They have created their own culture over time through their own creative abilities. The choices they made, in most cases, have depended upon their own desire for change, that is, the urge or the drive toward changing their environments. And in the process of creating and recreating their tradition, they have initiated and originated several innovative ideas. From time to time what has been designed has also been transformed as new generations within the Akan society rethought their environments anew. The new generations have always added to the tradition by reconstructing, redesigning and reinterpreting the existing structures to suit their current way of life.

In addition to initiating and originating ideas, Akan have also appropriated and reinterpreted other innovative ideas from other cultures, especially the ones they thought suited them and their environments best. Because of their desire to integrate foreign ideas and structures into certain aspects of the traditional system, they creatively selected from among the lot that were presented to them. This was done by selectively choosing what they thought were compatible with their

philosophical values. That is, it was a process of selection, guided by the value aspect of their culture. And it is through this mode of selection that elements which are not appropriate to, or compatible with, the overall Akan values, are discarded. Furthermore, they also reinterpreted the ideas and localized them. In other words, the Akan did not only receive elements, concepts, values and systems that came to them from foreign cultures, but also redefined them within their own cultural concepts and context.

It is quite clear, then, that the acceptance by the Akan culture of new paradigms has been fundamental to the continuing emergence of change and innovations within the traditions. The Akan people have cherished, and continue to cherish, their traditional norms, values, practices and institutions, which have been transmitted from generation to generation. Yet, they have encouraged and undertaken reforms to improve forms of life and to make the traditional practices relevant for the members of the community. Accordingly, due attention and recognition have been given to new ideals and visions, which have subsequently led to occasional alteration of ideas, systems and practices to suit current trends of life. Concepts of change and innovations have, therefore, been consistent with the Akan traditional values.

The importance of change itself has manifested well in how the Akan regard all creative and visionary individuals in the culture to be divinely gifted with a mission to lead the society—to carry the society *forward*. Such individuals have been believed to provide visionary leadership for the Akan community and to offer their innovative ideas as a contribution to the life of the community. Their innovative activities have been believed to extend and enrich, rather than entirely break with, certain aspects of the Akan's history. Generally, the Akan have held the view that, "It is these features of the innovative activity that make for or sustain the integrity of a

system or tradition and…thus destroy any impression regarding the tentative character of (the)…tradition."[335]

As a result, the people have not hesitated to identify such creatively gifted individuals and, on many occasions, make some of them leaders of some sort. In actual fact, throughout the Akan history, creative and visionary individuals have led them (and still continue to lead them) to develop novel ideas and solutions to old problems. They have led them through the gradual processes of development of their own culture and traditions and their music traditions. And in all these cases, these individuals have set the pace for advancement and transformation within the culture.

Therefore, issues of change and innovation have been consistent with the people. There have been (and still continue to be) the need for change and innovation within the culture. And such desire—and encouragement—has been fundamental to the continuing manifestations of creativity within the Akan culture. That is, Akan's desire to effect change and to bring about innovations in their environments has been—and continues to be—the motivational factor for many creative endeavors among musicians in particular and all creative individuals within the Akan culture in general.

Accordingly, the reason for much creativity may also be said to lie in the continuing social support the individuals receive. With such social support, creative individuals have been encouraged and motivated towards the creation of innovative ideas. As such, they have embarked on all forms of creative activities, which have required the initiation, origination and appropriation of various forms of innovative ideas. But as to when and how these individuals

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[335] Kwame Gyekye, *Tradition and Modernity: Philosophical Reflections on the African Experience* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 58.

create is dependent upon their own innate or intrinsic urge, except that they create within an environment that encourages and promotes innovation.

It may also be said that the creative endeavors—triggered by the need for change and the innate urge to create—also yielded many innovative results. Creativity and change, then, may be seen to constitute two complementary elements, with one leading to the other: for while creativity leads to change, it is also the desire for change that inspires creativity. The interplay between the two has been an important cultural tool for Akan musicians. Concepts and practices of creativity, change and innovations, then, are a *cultural necessity*, enshrined within the Akan's philosophical ethos.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEWS OF MUSICIANS AND OBSERVATION OF MUSICAL ACTIVITIES

Number Code: _____ Nature of Interview: _____

Geographical Region: _____ Town/Village: _____

Genre/Musical Type: _____

[A] A Structured or Close-ended 'One-to-One' Interview of the Composer-Performer

Preliminary Questions

Name of Composer: _____

Background of Composer:

Ethnicity: _____

Education (formal): _____

Experience: _____

_____

Exposure: _____

_____

Dichotomous-Response Questions

Do you always use instrument(s) for your pre-performance composition?

   (a) Yes (b) No

Why?

[B] A Semi-Structured or Open-ended 'One-to-One' Interview for the Composer-

Performer

Pre-Performance Creative Process

1. (a) Are you satisfied with what the tradition already has? (a) Yes (b) No

   (b) If no, why are you not satisfied?

2. (a) Why do you choose to create something new?

   (b) What are the factors that inspire or motivate you to create something new?

   (c) Do you consider them to be new?

   (d) (i) If not, why don't you consider them to be new?

       (ii) If yes, why do you consider them to be "new"?

3. (a) Do the members of the community recognize your new ideas?

   (b) Do they also accept them to be new?

   (b) (i) If no, why?

       (ii) If yes, what makes them accept them as new?

4. (a) How often do you create?

   (b) Is there any preferred time for creating?

   (c) Why do you choose such a preferred time?

5. (a) How do you receive the initial musical ideas?

   (b) How are you able to keep them in memory?

6. (a) How do you process or work with this initial idea?

   (b) How do you proceed from the initial idea to the overall music?

7. (a) Is the music completed during this pre-performance stage, or is it left unfinished and later completed at the performance stage?

8. Any other remarks/comments…

[C] Structured Observation and Documentation of the Creative Process before Musical Performance

Pre-Performance Creative Process

Preliminaries

Date: _____ Starting Time: _____ Finishing Time: _____

Setting and Context: _____

_____

Participants (if any): _____

Description of Participants: _____

_____

Equipment /Physical or Instrumental Objects

Name(s) and description of instrument(s) used for the creative process: _____

_____

Reason for its/their use(s) and the necessity for its/their use(s): _____

_____

The specific role(s) played by the instrument(s): _____

_____

<u>The Creative Situation</u>

Sequential order of events during creative process: _____

_____

Observable non-musical behaviors during creative process: _____

_____

Time spent for the creative process: _____

[D] <u>Structured Observation and Documentation of the Creative Process during Musical Performance</u>

Performance Creative Process

<u>Preliminaries</u>

Date: _____ Starting Time: _____ Finishing Time: _____

Setting and Context: _____

_____

<u>Equipment /Physical or Instrumental Objects</u>

Names and description of instruments used for performance: _____

_____

Specific role(s) played by each instrument: _____

_____

<u>Performers</u>

Constitution and organization of performers: _____

_____

Distribution of instruments among performers: _____

_____

Role(s) played by each performer: _____

_____

<u>Performance Situation</u>

Sequential order of events during performance: _____

_____

Observable non-musical behaviors during performance: _____

_____

Duration of Performance: _____

[E] **<u>Semi-Structured or Open-ended 'Focus-Group' Interview and Discussion after Musical</u>**

<u>Performance</u>

<u>Group of Composers/Creative-Performers</u>

General discussion on the group's background, and questions on processes observed and documented during performances

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