THE LUNSI TRADITIONAL MUSIC OF THE FRAFRAS IN TAMSO

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DECLARATION

This is to certify that this thesis is the result of research undertaken by Evans Oppong towards the award of the Master of Philosophy in the department of music, University of Ghana.

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DEDICATION

I hereby dedicate this work to Mrs. Scholastica Mensah of Westlink Pharmacy, Tarkwa; who has been a backbone financially and spiritually to me.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

He who is appreciative will never forget his creator for successfulness in an endeavor. I am so grateful to God for seeing me through this project work though faced with challenges.

I will like to also show appreciation to my supervisors; Professor John Collins and Mr. Ken Kafui, both of the Music Department of the University of Ghana, Legon for pains-takingly going through and putting to shape this work.

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To my brother, Bright Oppong, I say a very big thank you for doing the typing for almost all the work. I appreciate his readiness and sacrifice.
ABSTRACT

Lunsi musical type, according to the Frafra in Tamso, is a traditional music meant for general use in the community. It can be performed at funerals, weddings, parties and any other recreational events.

This study accesses the difference in lunsi at its place of origin and at Tamso so far as instrumentation, costume, recruitment, training, performance, communication, and migration are concerned. The study also examines the characteristics of lunsi music as compared to that of African music in general. Furthermore, the study characterizes lunsi music as part, or one of the traditional musical types of the Northern region of Ghana. Therefore, as a result, augments the existing traditional music literature of Tamso and also that of the Northern region of Ghana.

To achieve the discussed objectives above, appropriate methods were employed. Since most of the resource persons involved, in the music concerned were illiterates, oral questions were used to acquire necessary information about the music in question. The lunsi ensemble of Tamso was assisted financially to organize a performance; where the true colour of the music was manifested; during which a video coverage of the performance was taken. The video of the performance provided a source of information and analyses. In dealing with the popularity of the music in question, a questioner was prepared for non-Frafra; generally non-Northerners; which determined the degree of popularity of the music among other Northern indigenous music. In addition, published documents were accessed.

Lunsi music of the Frafra exhibits the two general rhythmic characteristics of Africans namely, syncopation and cross beats. This is as a result of the simultaneous use of contrasting rhythmic patterns within the same scheme of accents or meter. In addition, the manifestation of two or more meters in the same scheme confirms the African nature of lunsi music in Tamso. It is also discovered that inasmuch as there is the use of a standard or key pattern in
Lunsi music, it does not conform to the seven-stroke figure commonly used among most African ethnic groups. Furthermore, the study reveals that all drums in lunsi music are double-headed, and that they are either hourglass or cylindrical in shape. The study also reveals that while the lunsi drum performs the communicative role back home, the weiya rather does it in Tamso, while the remaining drums in the ensemble are mainly used as accompaniment. Moreover, lunsi is identified as court music back home, but it is a recreational music, used for ensuring social solidarity among the Frafra in Tamso. The study further reveals that back home, traditional costume, (comprising “kalambiu” and “newerenada”) is used for performing lunsi music. However, T-shirt and a traditional trouser made of traditional cloth are used in Tamso. Lastly, the results show that back home recruitment for lunsi music group could be obligation or retention, affiliation or appointment method. However, among the Frafra people in Tamso, only the appointment method was employed for recruitment into lunsi music group. To Zablog Zakariah Abdullah (African Studies, Legon) and the author of lunsi institution of Dagbon, lunsi is an institution. To him, there is a special family for the institution. Unless you are born or initiated into this family, you cannot be a lunsi.
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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

One cannot comprehend music now, without bringing in the cultural context. Culture has become an integral part of the meaning of music. Since there is the presence of culture, there are cultural functions. Every entity in a particular culture contributes in its own way to ensure cultural identity of a people which music is not an exception; and therefore meaning in such an entity, is peculiar to the people of common culture.

Flolu, Dzansi-McPalm, Awoyemi (2007) posit that; “Music plays a major role in the daily lives of human race, especially Africans”, which Ghana is no exception. According to them, music accompanies household chores, ceremonies, work, games, ritual activities and festivals. It takes performers to give way to the manifestation of music. When there is a performance, there is an experience. Enquiry therefore, is centered on music performance, music experience, and on music performers. If this is what is called “Ethnomusicology, so be it.

With respect to Ethnomusicology, Ghana, as an African country, has a lot of musical types. Every ethnic group in Ghana has peculiar types of music which are relatively meaningful to the ethnic group or people involved. A lot of those musical types have been documented; while some of them are well known to the world, others are still undiscovered. It is in this regard, that I would like to bring the musical type under search to light; as a contribution to Ghanaian indigenous music and African music as a whole.
1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Tamso is situated in the Western region part of Ghana. This town is composed of variety of ethnic groups; with the principal reason being the fact that it is a residence for mostly miners. Many people from different parts of Ghana migrate to this town for job opportunities, and to establish business enterprises. Through this, intercultural music also found its way to Tamso.

It was on the 16th May 2012 when I saw a group of four; they were sitting in front of a drinking spot. Two of them were singing; with one of them playing the double bell, and the other one clapping. Their music sounded to me as “borborbor”¹ of the Ewe people of Ghana. What was convincing about this musical type was that; though not complete in ensemble, the other two were playing the master drum of borborbor (Vuga)² and one supporting drum (pati).

The least expected recreational music which ignited this search was from the Frafras from a burial service when I saw them processing along the street. The ensemble was mainly of drums. I saw the big drums with equal diametric ends, both ends sealed with membrane; and hanged on the shoulder. I also saw a similar hanged drum but very small in size; held in the armpit.

Three people were also playing a familiar drum which was “ondo”³. There was one other instrument which I could not see but was heard very loud and clear. It sounded like the Nigerian kalambo (a blown instrument). It produced a loud whistle-like sound, and was sounding melodic but of very few notes of about five.

¹ Borborbor is a name given to a reacreational dance ensemble of the Ewe people of Ghana.
² Another name for this drum is “Havana”.
³ Dondo is the Akan name for the hourglass drum.
From their looks, one could easily tell that they were Northerners. But in comparing what I had just seen to those I know of the North such as “Bawa”, “Takai” “Bamaya” and some religious musical types seen in the Catholic Church, the instrumental combination was new to me.

About the indigenous traditional musical type in the area of Tamso, the only documented one is the “Asafo”, but for the three years I had been in Tamso, I did not witness a performance of a kind. It was the uniqueness of this performance I witnessed; as the only traditional music in Tamso of an organized group; which struck me to inquire more about them; to contribute to the traditional music status in Tamso.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Had it not because of the very procession I witnessed, I would not have sensed any problem at all. I began to ask myself some questions while witnessing such a performance. “Why had this traditional music not been performed often?” “Why is it that little has been said about the traditional music of Tamso?” I was then moved to show concern about the “inadequacy of traditional music literature of Tamso”.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

One could easily deduce right away the tone and passion of this search, after reading the background and the statement of the problem. Through this study I would like to;

- Augment the existing traditional music literature of Tamso; this can also serve as a source of knowledge to anyone who wishes to research into Ghanaian indigenous music and even in Africa as a whole.
- Bring to light to the people of Tamso and anybody who is relatively ignorant, the importance of traditional music in the society; in other words, the place of traditional music in the society.

- Elevate the musical type in question, to be known as part of the music of the Northern region of Ghana.

1.5 PURPOSE/SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Making ready a literature in this area will serve as a source of knowledge to an ethnomusicologist who wishes to research into Ghanaian indigenous music. This study goes on to broaden the scope of literature on the traditional musical types of the Frafra of Ghana; and even creates the awareness of lunsi music to the ignorant Ghanaian. Becoming aware of the contributions of the lunsi music in the society promotes the appreciation of culture; and the readiness to contribute to the national artistic excellence.

1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW

This section discusses African music and what it stands for. It talks about the cultural relationship of African music and western music. There is a survey in ensemble comparison and in relation to the music under study (Lunsi Music of the Frafra in Tamso). There are also discussions on the characteristics of African music; touching on rhythm, form, melody and polyphony, migration, performance, instruments, recruitment and training of musicians. Literature on lunsi music is also accessed in anticipation of its place in the characteristics of African music. On the characteristics of African music, Merriam (1959) contributes by saying; “Probably the most outstanding characteristics of African music is its emphasis upon rhythms as well as upon percussive concept of music performance”. By saying this he actually referred to a cluster of traits which gather together to form
an identifying characteristics - the simultaneous use of two or more meters, the use of hand-clapping as one kind of accompaniment to songs, the presence of membranophones and idiophones as outstanding instruments of the orchestra, percussive intonation and attack. According to Novotney (1998: p.201), Nketia (1974: p.112)’s description on African rhythmic structure as entirely divisive in nature, is the foundation of all West African polyrhythmic textures.

Fiagbedzi (2009) posits that rhythmic structures are sometimes organized or deduced from the way we speak out the text of a song; that every word or phrase has its natural rhythmic structure which when changed, would result in change of meaning. He cites an example in spoken Ewe in Ghana.

Africans have started using western concept of form in their compositions; such forms include Rondo and sonata form. However, traditionally, Africans have their peculiar form types. According Nketia (1974: p 112), these peculiar forms include, call and response (sometimes called antiphonal song form), litany (one or two phrases repeated over and over) and additive form (new sections of material added one after the other with no reference to the previous material). According to him, form in African music is seen mostly in vocal music. He states that, “although the cultivation of music performed on instruments receives attention in African musical traditions, instrumental music is not regarded everywhere as something that should be developed in its own right”

He further classifies vocal forms used in African societies as accompanied and unaccompanied solos; and group singing. He further gives two common forms with which
solos may be organized. They include strophic form and series of declamations. In the organization of group singing, Nketia (1974) examines “call and response”.

Nketia (1974: p.112) discusses melody and polyphonic instrumental music as he admits that melody and harmony are less highly developed in African music. However he posits that this should not result in African music becoming primitive, because African Music has its strength in the primacy of rhythm. To discuss melody, Nketia (1974) has it that the scales on which instrumental melodies are based usually have between four and seven steps. According to him these scales manifest themselves in intervallic patterns. As a result, he discusses three forms of melodies in Africa according to their characteristics. They include:

- Melodies that follow the formal structure of songs, making use of the melodic intervals, contours and phrases of the particular vocal tradition.
- Melodies that are arranged as sequences of repeated melodic patterns or figures.
- Melodic that attempt to achieve a combined effect of song-like melody or figure by a method of linear elaboration which increases the density of the sound events.

Nketia (1974) starts the discussion on recruitment and training of musicians by defining recruitment as any social arrangement that ensures the availability of specialists for established roles and positions in a society. He acknowledges that sole performers who have no attachment to a patron or to any establishment, and spontaneous groups who do not remain in associative relationship do not need recruitment. He further talks about six
possible ways by which recruitment can be exercised. They include appointment, retention, affiliation, obligation, transition, and assignment. The training of traditional musicians in Africa, according to Nketia (1974), does not require a formal process.

He asserts that traditional instructions are not generally organized on a formal institutional discursion; for it is believed that natural endowment and a person’s ability to develop on his own are essentially what are needed. Agrodoh (1994) and Nketia (1974) have a discussion on instrumental resources in Ghana. They both agree on the grouping of African traditional instruments with which Ghana is no exception. They group African traditional instruments under, idiophones, membranophones, chordophones, and earphones. Idiophones, according to Nketia and Agordoh are self-Sounding instruments that do not need any additional tension as in the case of drums. They define membranophones as drums with heads of membrane or parchment heads. Aerophones according to Nketia and Agordoh are instruments that have their sounds produced by blowing. Finally, they define chordophones as string instruments that are either played with the fingers or with a bow, producing sound by setting the string into vibration.

In the organization of instrumental ensemble, Nketia (1974: p 112) discusses three categories. While the first is the combination of exclusively melodic instruments, other combinations include exclusive instruments of indefinite pitches. The combination of definite and indefinite pitched instruments provides the third category.

“In the traditional context of the Ghanaian culture, performers and audience are not strictly separated during the process of music-making. Instead, the audience may freely mingle with the performers and offer their contribution through singing, clapping or dancing”.
Awoyemi, Flolu, Apreko, Amanowode (2003). According to them the venue for performance needs not be a concert hall or a theatre but could be in the street, a chief’s house, court yard or any convenient place.

For comparison purposes, popular traditional musical types in Ghana, so far as *lunsi* music is concerned, are discussed; these provide a pool of ensembles in which *lunsi* music is found, but has not gained recognition. Ghanaians have musical types that have similarities and differences, be it instruments, texture, performance, functions or playing techniques. Agordoh (1994: p.113-135) discusses extensively Ghanaian musical types. He talks about that of the Akan, Ewe, Northern Ghana and the Ga-Adangme among others. For the Akan, Agordoh discusses *fontomfrom, kete*, and *Adowa*: He discusses *atsiagbeko, agbadza, and borborbor* for the Ewe, *hamaaya, tora*, and *bawa* for Northern Ghana, and *kpanlogo* for the Ga-Adangbe.

The effect of migration on traditional musical types is worth discussing. Since *lunsi* music, as a musical type of the *Frafra*, finds itself in a strange land, its relationship with migration is worth discussing. Adepoju (2010) has a discussion on the historical overview and current dynamics of Intra-Regional Migration in Africa. According to him, migration started long time before colonialism, and therefore, is no news to Africans. He says that colonial era migration is characterized by compulsory recruitment, contract work and forced labour legislation. Post-colonial era, he says, experienced a shift of motivation; from the labour needs to mainly, job opportunities.

Abdallah (2011) discusses *lunsi* music in its place of origin. He says that although *lunsi* is the name given to some of the drums in the *lunsi* ensemble and also of the musical type as
a whole, in its place of origin it is a name for court historians, musicians, geographers, consultants, advisers, judges and chroniclers of the past and recorders of the present. He also discusses the organization, instrumental description, roles and duties of luni.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

These were proposed ways by which I obtained findings. Since some of the resource persons involved in the music concerned were illiterates, I used oral questions to probe the necessary information about the music in question. I assisted the ensemble financially to organize a performance where the authenticity of performance was manifested; during which I took a video coverage of the performance.

Necessary information and analysis about the music were then obtained from the video. Casual “discussion” was between the people of the music in question and me; to know how known and useful the music was.

In dealing with the popularity of the music in question, a “questioner” was prepared for non-Frafras; generally non-northerners; which determined the degree of popularity of the music in question, among other Northern indigenous music.

Published documents were also approached at the Balm library, University of Ghana, Legon; Nketia library, music department of the University of Ghana, Legon; Methodist University college of Ghana library; and the Presbyterian college of education library; as well as from personal book shelf.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

If the musical type in question is seen in a society, the necessary discussion will be on the role it plays in a given society or community. There are theories that share this idea.
**Structural functionalism** has it that social systems maintain themselves in certain kinds of societies for significant intervals of time in a steady state during which time a high degree of social solidarity characterises the relationship among its members. It also focuses on groups, especially those organised along territorial, kinship, and political lines and the interrelationship among different systems within a group. Stone (2008: p.38). Since I will be discussing the role of the musical type in question and also its historical background, as well as the composition of the group, I see this theory useful or applicable.

**Diffusionism** is another theory which I would like to apply. This theory supports the idea of monogenesis. With this theory, cultural traits move over time and space out from the point of origin. It also states that societies are built of many traits that exhibit various origins and histories. Stone (2008: p.27). I share in this theory in the same way in that, there will be the discussion of migration effects on the ensemble or the music in question.

**1.9 SCOPE**

**Historical Background**

This search will talk about the historical background of the *lunsi* ensemble; how it was discovered back home, and how it appeared in *Tamso*. It is known to have appeared in *Tamso* through the migration of some *Frafras* for mining job opportunity.

**Organization**

The *lunsi* ensemble is mainly instrumental; specifically of drums. There is no regular use of vocal sounds. Of the four categories of African music instruments, that comprise idiophones, chordophones, aerophones, and membranophones, there is the use of only
membranophones and an aerophone due to the presence of drums and the wind instrument called wieya.

**Function**

I would like to deliberate about the social use of the lunsi ensemble in its place of origin (Frafra) and in Tamso. It is known to be seen at any gathering of society: be it funeral, marriage, ceremonies, outdoing, festivals and any other social gathering. It is mainly recreational.

**Leadership**

The search would also like to know the definition of leadership managing this ensemble. It looks as if all the members are submissive to only one person as their leader. There is no dissemination of power; one person sees to all affairs of the ensemble.

**Performance/Instrumental Role**

It would also be necessary if I examine the various rhythmic roles of the various instruments. Every instrument has something different to play. But as to whether the absence of one would affect the holistic quality of performance or not, the search will tell.

**Instrumental Composition**

The search will not forget the names and numerical composition of the lunsi ensemble they have;

- Three or more “glugo”\(^4\)(big drums which are hunged)
- One “lunda”\(^5\) (a very small drum which also looks like the lunsi)

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\(^4\) Big cylindrical drums which are hunged.
- Three or more “lunsi”\textsuperscript{6}.
- One ‘wieya’\textsuperscript{7} (like the Nigerian kalambo)

**Recruitment and Training of new members**

The ensemble looks green in existence. They are becoming known to the mining companies and other organizations. The search would like to know how they are going to be sustained. Will they recruit and train new members? And will they make use of only their tribal members?

\textsuperscript{5} A very small drum in the shape of an hourglass that is also hunged.
\textsuperscript{6} This name “Lunsi” has been the name of the hourglass drum, the person who plays this instrument, and the musical type as a whole.
\textsuperscript{7} A wind instrument that sounds like the Nigerian kalambo, in a whistling mana.
CHAPTER TWO

RELATED MATTERS ON THE CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN MUSIC,
MIGRATION, AND LUNSI IN ITS PLACE OF ORIGIN

2.1 INTRODUCTION

According to theories of structural functionalism social systems maintain themselves in certain kinds of society for significant interval of time in a steady state during which time a high degree of social solidarity characterizes the relationship among its members. It also focuses on groups, especially those organized along territorial, kinship and political lines as well as the interrelationship among different systems within a group. Also according to the diffusionist theories by Stone (2008: p.27), cultural traits move over time and space out from their point of origin, it also states that “Societies are built of many traits that exhibit various origins and histories”.

Historically, many societies in the Sub-Saharan interacted with one another and consequently a mix of musical resources was formed. Africanguide.com has it that the mixture of these cultures formed a distinctive musical area along the Guinea Coast that includes the Savanna belt of West Africa. There are distinctions between other areas of the continent as well. East Africa differs from Central Africa because of their use of specific forms of musical instruments. Southern Africa’s traditions include choral groups and musical bow instruments.

The history and traditions of African dance and movement center on communication. According to worldartswest.org, African dance is a way of life for the inhabitants of this culture. Dance is used to symbolize the experiences of life; a way to heal such individuals;
a mode of prayer to the gods encouraging the growth of crops, and a way to tell stories and pass on the traditions of the African culture.

Ceremonial dance is an important part of Africa’s history. According to *worldartswest* the significance of dance has encompassed all aspects of the African life cycle time; ceremonies that incorporate symbolic dance include transition from childhood to adulthood, changes in status within the community and social changes such as marriage.

### 2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN MUSIC

Many attempts have been made to discuss what African music is. According to Merriam (1959), the problem of what constitutes the identifying characteristics of African music is not a simple one. According to him, although extensive bibliography pertaining to African music is presently available, much of it is of a vague and general nature, and there are little attempts to generalize for the continent as a whole. He posits that;

“Probably the most outstanding characteristic of African music is its emphasis upon rhythm as well as upon a percussive concept of music performance”.

In speaking of these aspects, he referred in actuality to a cluster of traits which gather together to form an identifying characteristics –

“the simultaneous use of two or more meters, the use of hand-clapping as one kind of accompaniment to songs, the presence of membranophones and idiophones as outstanding instruments of the orchestra, percussive intonation and attack, and other elements”.

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2.2.1 Rhythm

Sub-Saharan African music is characterized by a “strong rhythmic interest” that exhibits common characteristics in all regions of this vast territory. Jones (1889 – 1980) for en.wikipedia.org has described the many local approaches as constituting one main system. Rhythm represents the very fabric of life and embodies the people’s interdependence in human relationships.

Among the characteristics of the Sub-Saharan African approach to rhythm, en.wikipedia.org talks about “Syncopation” and “Cross-beats” which may be understood as sustained and systematic polyrhythm, an ostinato of two or more distinct rhythmic figures, patterns or phrases at once. The simultaneous use of contrasting rhythm patterns within the same scheme of accents or meter lies at the core of African rhythm tradition. All such “asymmetrical” patterns are historically and geographically interrelated.

African rhythmic structure is entirely divisive in nature but may divide time into different fractions at the same time, typically by the use hemiola or three-over-two (3:2). Nketia (1974); which is considered as the foundation of all West African polyrhythmic textures. Wikipedia\(^8\), the free encyclopedia discusses all important ideas known as “key patterns”. According to this site, key patterns, also known as bell patterns, timeline patterns, guide patterns and phrasing referents all express a rhythm’s organizing principle. They define rhythmic structure and epitomize the complete rhythmic matrix. Key patterns are typically clapped or played on idiophones such as bells, or else on a high pitched drumhead. Music organized around key patterns conveys a two – celled (binary) structure and also a complex level of African cross – rhythm.

Another fundamental concept of African rhythm is what is known as “standard patterns”. It is the seven-stroke figure, the most commonly used key pattern in Sub-Saharan Africa. The standard pattern, composed of two crossed rhythmic fragments is found both in simple and compound metrical structures as shown in the figure below.

![Fig. 1: The Seven - stroke figure](image)

“Tresillo” is another name that invigorates the characteristics of African rhythm. It is the most basic duple-pulse figure found in Sub-Saharan African music. Tresillo is a Spanish word meaning “triplet”. According to Wikipedia, this pattern may have migrated from east from north Africa to Asia with the spread of Islam as the use of the pattern in Moroccan music can be traced back to slaves brought north across the Sahara Desert from present-day Mali. Fiagbedzi (2009: p. XII-XV). He posits that rhythmic structures are sometimes organized or deduced from the way we speak out the text of a song; that every word or phrase has its natural rhythmic structure which when changed, would result in change of meaning. He writes that “a change in the rhythm of a word can precipitate a change in meaning”. He cites an example in spoken Ewe in Ghana.

2.2.2 Form

Though Africans have started using the Western concept of form in their compositions; such as Rondo and Sonata form, traditionally, they have their peculiar form types. These include “Call and response” (sometimes called antiphonal song form); “litany” (one or two phrases repeated over and over) and “additive” form (new sections of material added one after the other with no reference to the previous material. One other characteristic of forms
in African music is that there is no attempt to develop the previous material as opposed to
developmental forms so common in Western music. Agordoh (1994: p.27). However,
African music composers especially in the 21st century are drastically adapting the concept
of development in their compositions that combine Western and African traditional elements.

There is often a leader-chorus relationship in performance and polyphonic performances
are generally structured so that two parts or two groups of vocalists or instrumentalist
perform in antiphony. This form often occurs with variations or improvisations on short
melodic motifs.

The organization of form in African music to Nketia (1974: p.139-146) is seen mostly in
vocal music. He states “although the cultivation of music performed on instruments
receives attention in African musical traditions, instrumental music is not regarded
everywhere as something that should be developed in its own right”. Nketia classifies
vocal forms used in African societies as:

- Accompanied and unaccompanied solos
- Songs performed by two people in unison or in a duet, and
- Songs performed by chorus.

He further merged the last two forms (songs performed by two people and songs
performed by chorus) as “group singing”. Nketia gave two common forms with which
solos may be organized.

i. Strophic forms

ii. Series of declamations
According to Nketia, “strophic form is a single verse repeated, often with slight variations, for the desired number of stanzas”; as opposed to the series of declamation as “cumulative non-stanzaic utterances, possibly rounded off by closing refrains or pauses”. Though African instrumental music is not considered so far as form or development is concerned, they are sometimes part of vocal forms. Nketia (1974: p.140) shares this idea when he said; “in accompanied solos, the gap between declamations or strophes may be bridged by the accompanying instrument; an arrangement in which the voice and the instrument work in alternation in a call-and-response pattern”.

In the organization of group singing, Nketia still talks about call and response. He broadens the idea by telling different ways by which call-and-response may be organized. He provides three ways;

- Simple call-and-response; whereby the second singer echoes every musical phrase sung by the pivot, possibly with a closing refrain rounding off a number of these alterations.
- A brief lead of few notes by one of the singers; the second joining in as soon as possible to sing along with him to the end of the section.
- Both singers begin simultaneously and sing each stanza together.

It could be deduced therefore, that the only denominating form common to the African music is the call and the response (sometimes referred to as antiphonal song form)

### 2.2.3 Melody and polyphonic instrumental music

Traditionally, melody and harmony are less highly developed in African music. They are, however, highly developed focal points of western art music. This caused many scholars to label African music ‘“primitive’” because their point of reference was different, not
taking into account the primacy of rhythm in African music as compared to melody and harmony. Agawu (1984: p.408) strengthens the area of melody in Africa by saying that rhythm is not only an essential component of the spoken word, but also the crucial agent in the transformation of speech into song. He justifies this transformation process by saying that, one has to regulate the larger rhythmic patterns of a given spoken phrase; and make one’s pitch only slightly more definite. Nketia (1974: p.147). Melody cannot be discussed without talking about scales. Scales used in African music are said to be diatonic. But according to the scale discussions of Nketia (1974: p.147-148), it is never true to say that scales in Africa are only diatonic and that they are played on only the white notes on the keyboard. Nketia (1974: p.147) has it that the scales on which instrumental melodies are based usually have between four and seven steps, with the choice of these steps depending entirely on the individual society and culture. Agordoh (1994) shares in the determination of scale intervals by saying that the music of different Ghanaian societies do not all conform to the same set of scales. Melodies based on these scales are characterized as such. These scales manifest themselves in intervallic patterns. With these Nketia (1974) discusses four groups of four-, five-, and six-step turnings. He has them as A B C and D. Type A includes typical intervals that are approximately major seconds, thirds, fourths and fifths. His idea is indicated in figure 2.

![Fig.2: Four - step tuning (type A)](image)

Type ‘B’ is characterized by the presence of a half tone or something closed to a minor second. He represents the idea as follows:

![Fig.3: Four - step tuning (type B)](image)
Type ‘C’ is characterized by the presence of augmented or diminished fourths. This is represented as;

Fig. 4: Four-step tuning (type C)

Type ‘D’ is an equidistant pattern. This is also represented as;

Fig. 5: Four-step tuning (type D)

As an example of the four-step tuning, Jones (1959: p.4) has melodies of play songs which show inherently the use of the four-step tuning scale. His melodies on play songs are based on spoken Ewe of Ghana. Typically the sixth (6th) play song will be appropriate; and is represented in the figure below:

Fig. 6: Melodic excerpt of A.M. Jones’ play song no. 6

According to Nketia (1974: p.118) five-tone (pentatonic) are found in both equidistant and non-equidistant forms, he said ‘each step of an ideal equidistant scale is larger than a major second but less than a minor third’. He further categorizes nonequidistant pentatonic scales into two;

1. The pentatonic without half step (the anhemitonic pentatonic)

Fig. 7: The Pentatonic without half step

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2. Pentatonic with one or two half steps (the hemi tonic pentatonic)

![Fig. 8: The Pentatonic with one or two half steps](image)

Kofie (1994: p.34) attest to these two categories when he discusses the use of horns for the seven warlords of the Ashanti army; he says:

Similarly, questions as to how near to each other or how far apart the employed pitches had to be from one another would be equally irrelevant since the scales of many African music cultures may be anhemitonic or hemitonic, and intervals may be less than semitones, or more than semitones yet, less than tones.

Play song no. 2 of Jones is an example that has the use of the pentatonic scale as its melodic foundation. This is indicated in the excerpt below:

![Fig. 9: Melodic excerpt of A.M. Jones’ play song no. 2](image)

Six-tone (hexatonic) scales also occur in equidistant and non-equidistant forms. While a non-equidistant hexatonic scale includes a semitone, an equidistant hexatonic scale would be a whole tone scale. Below is an example of non-equidistant hexatonic scale.

![Fig. 10: Non equidistant hexatonic scale](image)

Jones (1959) has the use of the six-tone scale in the 7th song of his play songs. Thus:

![Fig. 11: Melodic excerpt of A.M. Jones’ play song no. 7](image)
Seven-tone (heptatonic) scales, According to Nketia, are the simplest of all the scale type and occur in equidistant and non-equidistant form. Heptatonic scale makes use of semitones especially between the third and the fourth degrees and the seventh and eighth degrees. Example is shown in figure 12.

![Fig. 12: Heptatonic scale](image)

There are a lot of Ghanaian art songs that are based on the heptatonic scale. For a closer example, see Amu (1961) for his three solo songs with pianoforte accompaniment. Fiagbedzi (2005: p.60) for example, intentionally wrote the scale out of which his notation of Kpegisu’s “Megbe agbe di” was composed, at the end of the piece. He has it represented as shown in figure 13.

![Fig. 13: Scale extract from Kpegisu’s “Megbe agbe di”](image)

According to Nketa (1974: p.119), Henry Weman noted a more complex scale pattern in the tuning of an ‘mbira’ of a karanga player from the Musume district of Rhodesia. This scale includes chromatic segments as shown below;

![Fig. 14: Scale pattern in the tuning of an “mbira”](image)

African melodies therefore are possible results of the scales discussed above. Nketia (1974: p.119-121) discusses three forms of melodies in Africa according to their characteristics;
- Melodies that follow the formal structure of songs; making use of the melodic intervals, contours and phrases of the particular vocal tradition.
- Melodies that are arranged as sequences of repeated melodic patterns or figures.
- Melodies that attempt to achieve a combined effect of a songlike melody or figure by a method of linear elaboration which increases the density of the sound events.

2.2.4 Recruitment and Training of musicians

According to Nketia (1974: p.56), it is any social arrangement that ensures the availability of specialists for established roles and positions in a society. He made an important notification about those who do not need recruitment. The first is in the case of sole performers who have no attachment to patron or to any establishment. The second is spontaneous groups who do not remain in associative relationship.

Nketia (1974: p.57-58) talks about six possible ways by which recruitment can be exercised. The first is by appointment; where a musician of the highest caliber is encouraged to join a group that admires and respects that is shown for his ability. Moreover, the size of his share of gifts that are given to the group can be of great encouragement. The second process is by ‘retention’. With this process, individual members who achieve reputations as lead instrumentalists are encouraged to remain in the group.

Affiliation is the third process where bands of musicians responsible for particular musical types may be attached to the court either as regular servants or as servants who come to perform whenever required of them, in tribute to the ruler of the state. The fourth being obligation, has it that a given household may be made responsible for maintaining a
particular musical tradition or for supplying a musician for a specific band. The fifth process has to do with ‘transition’. With this process there is a role relaying, where a belief of hereditary works. Here the transmission of roles from father to son is quite common. I call the sixth process an ‘assignment’ just to make it a little different from ‘appointment’ and ‘obligation’. With this process there is a residential factor. A village inhabited by a particular leading musician may take charge of specific royal musical instrument and their music.

According to http://exploringafrica (2015), early historical accounts of music and dance among Africans can be found in oral literature that take different forms such as folk tales, myths, epics, praise poems and historical accounts on rituals. This site feather discusses the oral literature tradition of Africans by giving the two broad functions of music in the African societies. It says that music and dance in Africa have served both utilitarian and aesthetic functions. With a sole interest in the utilitarian function it says; it involves the use of music in everyday activities including child’s naming ceremonies, child rearing practices, initiation rites, agricultural activities, national ceremonies, war time, religious ceremonies and those meant for the dead. Moreover, according to http://exploringafrica (2015), listening has been an important skill that has been perfected by oral traditional practices. The training of traditional musicians in Africa according to Nketia (1974: p.58-59) does not require a formal process. He said traditional instructions are not generally organized on a formal institutional basis; for it is believed that natural endowment and a person’s ability to develop on his own are essentially what are needed. According to him this endowment could include innate knowledge which can be God given. The dominating principle underlying the acquisition of knowledge, observed by Nketia, is that of learning
through social experience. A society therefore has to create the necessary environment so as to enable one learn on his own.

2.2.5 Instrumental resources

Though, Nketia has it that the instrumental resources at the disposal of performers naturally tend to be limited to those in which their respective communities specialize, he admits the fact that similarities in the basic features of instruments even from widely separated areas are striking. African traditional musical instruments are grouped into four. Both Nketia (1974: p.85-87, 89, 92-95, 97-100, 102-104, 107) and Agordoh (1994: p.58-61)\(^9\) share the same idea. They group African traditional instruments under idiophones, membranophones, chordophones and aerophones.

According to Nketia (1974: p.69) idiophones are known as self-sounding instruments and can be defined as ‘any instrument upon which a sound may be produced without the addition of a stretched membrane or a vibrating string or rod ‘’. Agordoh (1994: p.58) defines idiophones as ‘’ instruments made of naturally sonorous materials that do not need any additional tension as in the case of drums. There are two classifications each of African traditional idiophones by Agordoh (1994: p.58) and Nketia (1974: p.70). Agordoh has his classification under ‘primary idiophones’ and ‘secondary idiophones’. While primary idiophones are held and played as part of the main ensemble, secondary idiophones are attached to other instruments, or to the body of a drummer, depending upon the type and source of movement. Agordoh writes about struck idiophones, friction idiophones, shaking idiophones, plucked idiophones, stamping idiophones as kinds of primary idiophones. Nketia’s classification has those used mainly as rhythmic instruments

and those played independently as melodic instruments. Most African traditional ‘membranophones’ are made of animal skin. ‘Membranophones’ are drums with heads of membrane. Agordoh (1994: p.59) and Nketia (1974: p.85) define membranophones as drums with parchment heads. Sounds are produced through these membranes stretched over an opening. The body of traditional drums in Africa is made of several materials which include, wood, clay, metal or gourd, coconut, tins and earthenware vessels. African traditional drums vary in shape. Agordoh mentions hour glass shape, rectangular shape, cylindrical, bottle shape, gourd and conical shapes. Nketia, in addition to these, mentions semi cylindrical, bowl shape, top cup shape, bottle shaped drums. Some of these drums are single-headed while others are double-headed. Although a wide variety of drums exist in Africa, each society usually specialises in a small number of drum types.

Traditional African music also makes use of aerophones. They are instruments that have the sound produced by blowing. Nketia (1974: p.92) and Agordoh (1994: p.60) call them wind instruments. Though they are widely spread in Africa many societies make use of a limited number of aero-phones. According to Nketia (1974: p.92), aerophones fall in to three groups.

The first group includes instruments of the flute family made from materials with natural bore, such as bamboo, the husk of cane, the stalk of millet or the tip of a horn or gourd; alternatively they may be carved out of wood. Sometimes they are also made of clay, metal and shells of fruits. Fruits may be open-ended or stopped and may be designed for playing in vertical or transverse positions. The mouth piece of vertical or end-blown flutes may be notched or round, while the numbers of finger holes provided for each type of flute
depends on the way the individual instrument is used. Flutes may be used as solo instruments, duet and in an ensemble. Nketia (1974: p.94)

The second type of aerophones found in African societies is the “real pipe”; which Nketia (1974: p.94) describes as having an embouchure that consists of a short flap about an inch in length and a quarter of an inch in diameter, made by cutting two parallel slits about two inches from one end to the stalk”. By exhaling and inhaling through the slits around the flap one is able to get two distinct real sounds. In Africa there are double as well as single-reed instruments.

The third types of aerophone in African societies are “horns and trumpets”. Animal horns and elephant husks are used as trumpets; which are generally designed to be side blown. Trumpets are also made out of whole lengths or composite sections of gourd or a piece of small bamboo stem to which a bell made out of gourd is attached. Nketia (1974: p.95). There are also trumpets made out of either bamboo or metal, such as the Ethiopian malakat which may also be covered with leather or skin. Gourd or bamboo trumpets are usually end blown. African traditional trumpets can also be carved out of wood.

Chordophones represent the categorical name for string instruments. They are either played with the hand or with a bow, producing sound by setting the string into vibration. African traditional chordophones include variety of lutes, harps, zithers, lyres and musical bows. It is the musical bow that appears to be the most widespread in African societies. Musical bows have separate resonators; with sometimes the mouth serving as such. A zither has strings stretched between two ends of the body while a lute has its strings
stretched beyond the body. Lyres have yokes to which strings are stretched. In harps, strings are vertical and are attached to the sound board.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>chordophones</th>
<th>Idiophones</th>
<th>Membranophones</th>
<th>Aerophones</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goje (W.A)</td>
<td>Agogo, ogene (Nigerian)</td>
<td>Dundun (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Oja (Nigeria)</td>
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<td>Gora (S.A)</td>
<td>Alo (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Igin (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Opi, impi (Nigeria)</td>
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<td>Knwong (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Bata (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Algaita (Nigeria)</td>
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<td>Kakaki (Nigeria)</td>
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<td>Atsimevu (Ghana)</td>
<td>Malakat (Ethiopia)</td>
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<td>Etwe (Ghana)</td>
<td>Nkofe (Ghana)</td>
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<td>Igba (Nigeria)</td>
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<td>Castanet</td>
<td>Dundufa (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Atentebe (Ghana)</td>
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<td>Akpata (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Rattle</td>
<td>Tambura (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Odurugya (Ghana)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moho (Nigeria)</td>
<td>Dawuro/gakogui (Ghana)</td>
<td>Gagan noma (Nigeria)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Agordoh 1994’s classification of African music instruments

2.2.6 Organization of Instrumental Ensemble

“Instruments are selected in relation to their effectiveness in performing certain established musical roles or for fulfilling a specific musical purpose”. Nketia (1974: p.112). Ensemble is the combination of instruments with different roles. While certain
instruments function as lead or principal instruments, others function as subordinate, accompanying or ostinato instruments.

According to Nketia (1974: p.112), instrumental combinations that are meaningful in terms of aesthetics of African music fall into three main categories. While the first is the combination of exclusively melodic (instruments of definite pitch) instruments such as flutes, lutes, lyres and bows; other combinations include exclusive instruments of indefinite pitches such as drums, bells, clappers, rattles, etc. Nketia puts the combination of both melodic and percussive instruments under the third category such as “flutes and drums”, ‘flutes, drums and bells’, “xylophones, rattles, percussion sticks and membranophones” etc.

2.2.7 Performance

When it comes to the African traditional music performance, three things are common to that of western music performance. Firstly, there is the use of a performance space; secondly there is audience, thirdly there are performers. However there are differences in these three aspects between the African culture and the western culture. The venue of space for the performance in the African traditional setting is any “found stage” or “found space”. The audience is free to participate or join to contribute to any ongoing performance. M.O Awoyemi, J. Flolu,Kofi Apreko, J.Z Amanowode (2003)\(^\text{10}\) have it that:

> “in the traditional context of the Ghanaian culture, the performance and audience are not strictly separated during the process of music making. Instead the audience may freely mingle with the performers and offer their contribution through singing, clapping or dancing”.

\(^{10}\) M.O Awoyemi, J. Flolu,Kofi Apreko, J.Z Amanowode (2003), Readings in Arts, Culture and Social science Education
This makes them active participants than passive listeners. They also say that “the venue for the performance needs not be a concert hall or a theatre but could be in the street, a chief’s house, court yard or any convenient place”.

2.3 POPULAR TRADITIONAL ENSEMBLES IN GHANA

For comparison purposes, I would like to discuss the popular traditional musical types in Ghana so far as luni music is concerned since the popular traditional musical types form a pool of ensembles in which luni music is found but had not gained recognition.

Ghanaians have musical types that have similarities and differences, be it instruments, texture, form, tempo, functions or playing techniques.


2.3.1 Akan

According to Agordoh (1994: p.113) “fontomfrom” is a warrior dance performed on state occasions in the Akan area of Ghana. According to him, it is the most important of all state drum orchestras of the Akan. Agordoh uses the opportunity to distinguish between bommaa and fontomfrom since they both have the same instruments. Bommaa and fontomfrom are in many places now used simultaneously. He states that fontomfrom is said to have developed from bommaa. He goes further to say that the main difference is in the weight and richness of the ensemble. Bommaa is less heavy than fontomfrom since it has fewer drums than the latter. Bommaa orchestra has only one heavy drum (from), one atumpan, two or three secondary drums called “atumpan mma” and one gong. However, Agordoh discusses the full orchestra of fontomfrom as the following:
- Two heavy drums, male and female, each played by one player with two curved sticks.
- A pair of *atumpan* drums splayed with two sticks and played by one drummer.
- *Adukurogya* (or *adedemma*) played with two straight or upturned curved sticks.
- Paso, played with only one stick usually not curved.
- *Brenko* played with stick and hand.
- *Apentemma* played with one stick and hand
- *Nnonka, donno* (hour glass) drums and two heavy gongs.

![Fontomfrom drums](http://www.motherlandmusic.com/drums.htm)

**Fig. 15: A typical representation of fontomfrom drums**

The only drum in this ensemble that can be used for communication is the pair of *atumpan*. Agordoh (1994: p.114) says this talking drum has the opportunity of interspersing the pieces with appropriate messages such as praise names, greetings and
invitations to dance. I will hereby contribute a little to the findings of Agordoh by adding the time line or key pattern since he did not add that. It is the gong that does the key pattern of the fontomfrom music. The figure below shows the notation of the key pattern.

![Gong notation]

**Fig. 16: The key pattern of fontomfrom music**

This same pattern can be obtained by the use of six-eight time signature as shown below.

![Gong notation]

**Fig. 17: An alternative notation to the key pattern of fontomfrom music**

“Kete” is another musical type found in the Akan community of Ghana. It is commonly found in the royal courts or traditional Akan communities. Agordoh (1994: p.116) explains that the Ashantis particularly perform this musical type in the court of any chief whose status entitles him to be carried in a palanquin. Agordoh further discusses the various occasions on which this music is heard. According to him, it is played at state durbars, enstoolment of chiefs, swearing of oaths of allegiance of sub-chiefs, state funeral ceremonies and during national festivals like *Adae, Odwira, Ahobaa, Kundum* and *Kurufie*. The instruments in *kete* ensemble according to Agordoh (1994: p.117) include:

- *Akukuadwo/Aburukua* (two supporting drums)
- *Petia* (optional)
- *Donno* (hourglass drum)
- *Apentemma*
- *Kwadum* (master drum)
- *Kete dawuro* (a bigger gong)
• Trowa

![Kete drums image](http://www.bristoldrumming.com)

**Fig. 18: A typical representation of *kete* drums**

The key pattern of this music is played by the *dawuro*. It is almost the same as the key pattern of Adowa music which is yet to be discussed. *Kete* key pattern is represented below;

![Ketedawuro notation](#)

**Fig. 19: The key pattern of *kete* music**

Alternatively it can be represented in 6/8 time as;

![Ketedawuro notation](#)

**Fig. 20: An alternative notation to the key pattern of *kete* music**
Another popular traditional musical type found in the Ghanaian Akan community is “Adowa”. It is an organized band with predominantly female singers. Agordoh (1994: p.118) adds that it is so far the most widely spread and frequently performed band among the Akan speaking people of Ghana.

Traditionally Adowa is performed at festivals and funeral ceremonies. In Akyim Abuakwa according to Agordoh (1994: p.119), Adowa is performed once a year during the Odwira festival particularly at Kibi when the chief comes out to dance. In Ashanti, Brong Ahafo and Kwahu areas, the drum ensemble is used largely during funerals. Nowadays it can be performed on any occasion. According to Agordoh (1994: p.119) an established adowa band is played at funerals by invitation. If the deceased is not a member of the band then it has to be hired. The ensemble of adowa includes;

- One or two bells called dawuro which is boat shaped or slit-type called adawuraa
- One or two hourglass drums called donno
- One sonorous drums played by the hand called apentemma
- One tenor drum played with stick called petia
- A talking drum called atumpan
Agordoh (1994: p.119) notes that with the exception of the bells which may be played by women, the rest of the instruments are played by men while the women form the chorus.

Usually, one of the bells is regarded as primary while the other functions as “intwamu” (the bell that crosses). The hour glass plays something in simple duple rhythms. Where there are two the second one plays cross rhythm. The main function of the apentemma is to supply recurring high pitched tones.

Agordoh (1994: p.119-120) describes the basic rhythm of patia as a simple 5-note phrase made up of alternating simple and duple rhythmic motif rather than the primary bell. He further notes the atumpan as the most important of all adowa ensembles. It is the master drum of the ensemble; and is required to do the communication aspect of the ensemble. He states further that when the music starts, the drummer first makes an announcement of
drums or gives a short message of sympathy. Immediately after this, he may begin with the introductory rhythms and then other rhythms follow, to give the dancer the opportunity to find his bearing or time. This could be followed by other rhythmic motifs.

The time line of the Adowa musical type is noted as shown below;

![Figure 22: The key pattern of Adowa music](image)

2.3.2 Ewe

Astiagbeko is classified among the oldest dances of the southern Ewe territories of West Africa. In Ghana this musical type is notably performed by the people of Anyako Dzodze, Anlo Afiadenyigba, Anloga, Kedzi and Aflao. According to Agordoh (1994: p.121) history has it that astiagbeko was first performed by monkeys and was adopted by hunters of ages. It is generally accepted that atsigbeko spread through the entire southern Ewe habitations through the fon speaking people of Dahomey now republic of Benin.

Agordoh writes that in the olden days atsiagbeko was considered a war dance (avavu). It was the music played by the warriors when they returned from the battle field. It is difficult to draw a line between atsiagbeko being a monkey’s dance and a war dance. The fact is that brave men of valour who were hunters were the first performers of atsiagbeko.

Agordoh adds that when atsiagbeko was really a war dance in the past, it was called atamuga (the great oath). In the absence of war the dance changed its name to atsiagbeko or simply agbeko.
Agordoh noticed that while in the olden days *atsiagbeko* was performed after battles so that the warriors could demonstrate the deeds of valour on the battle field to those at home, presently the performers can be seen during funerals of important chiefs, stool festivals, state festivals and by professional and amateur groups of entertainment.

The instruments used in *atsiagbeko* dance ensemble include:

- *Gakogui*-double bell that plays the key pattern.
- *Axatse*-rattle
- *Kegan*-supporting drum
- *Totodzi*-supporting drum
- *Kloboto*-supporting drum
- *Kidi*-supporting drum
- *Sogo*-supporting drum
- *Atsimevu*-Master drum

Picture source: http://awudomeculturaltroupe.getaficaonline.com

**Fig. 23:** A typical representation of *atsiagbeko* drums
Costume in atsiagbeko varies from place to place. The men put on “atsaka”\textsuperscript{11} with a piece of cloth around the waist with a shirt without a collar on top. The women put on blouses and clothes down to the knee level. Extensions of the body can be seen in male dancers carrying “sosi”\textsuperscript{12}. In the olden days, noted Agordoh (1994: p.122), actual war implements such us cutlasses and daggers were used. Presently most dance groups use wooden swords and guns. It is danced bear-footed. The song texts are mostly a mixture of Ewe proper or corrupted Fon language.

\textit{Agbadza} is a musical type of the southern Ewe of Ghana. It is a hot dance with brisk tempo, derived from the old traditional after-war dance atrikpui. According to Agordoh (1994: p.123), Agbadza is by far the most widely spread and frequently performed organized band among the Aflao-Tongu people of the southern Eweland of Ghana.

Agordoh adds that agbadza, like atrikpui, used to be specifically a male dance but nowadays it is an organised band for mixed groups. Also agbadza used to be one of the most popular organised bands for recreational purposes. According to Agordoh (1994: p.123), agbadza is played at ceremonies and funerals by invitation. If the deceased is not a member, then it has to be hired at times.

The lead singer or composer known as agbadzaheno or hesino must have a good singing voice and must be a poet. He must be well grounded in the local history and traditions of the locality. He must be able to improvise texts, fix tunes to new words, set tunes to words extemporaneously and to remember texts so that he can recall verses or the leading lines of songs. In addition, he must be able to sing songs of other recreational bands.

\textsuperscript{11} Atsaka is a special Ewe dancing short
\textsuperscript{12} Sosi are horsetails used by Ewe male dancers as extension to the body
The repertoire of *agbadza* is large. According to Agordoh (1994: p.124) there are songs on obscenity, songs about past chiefs and elders, about political figures of the day, songs with reference to a deceased person and songs with sympathy to a bereaved lineage. There are also songs reflecting on the pains of death. Songs on impressions of events on popular minds may also be reflected. There are also songs on the beliefs of the Ewes about death and hereafter. Agordoh noted that many of the old *agbadza* songs are the real *atrikpui* songs. According to Agordoh (1994: p.124) *agbadza* demands that men wear dance shorts with peaks on them, with a cloth or several clothes according to taste, tied around the waist.

![A representation of the agbadza dance](http://gamma.motherlandmusic.com/node/242)

**Fig. 24:** A representation of the *agbadza* dance

The ensembles of *agbadza* according to Agordoh (1994: p.124) include:

- One or more *gakogui* (bells)
- Several *axatse* (rattles)
- *Kagan* (supporting drum)
- *Kidi* (supporting drum)
- *Sogo* (master drum)

![Picture source: http://gamma.motherlandmusic.com/node/242](http://gamma.motherlandmusic.com/node/242)

**Fig. 25: A typical representation of *agbadza* drums**

Agordoh notates the bell pattern of *agbadza* as;

![Gakogui](http://gamma.motherlandmusic.com/node/242)

**Fig. 26 The key pattern of *agbadza* music**

The “*gakogui*” that plays the key pattern is constructed of two moulds put together with the one that produces the high pitch on top of the one that produces the lower pitch. As such the notes below the line in the excerpt above are supposed to be played on the lower
pitch mould and the notes above the line are played on the higher pitch mould of the gakogui.

![Image of gakogui](image)

**Fig. 27: A typical representation of gakogui**

*Borbabor* is another musical type of the Ewes. According to Agoroh (1994: p.125-126), this musical type was founded by a man called Kodzo Nuatror from Kpando in the Volta region of Ghana, just before Ghana’s Independence in the 1950’s.

*Borbabor* is one of the most popularly organised bands for the youth in the Volta region of Ghana. Members perform it for their own enjoyment or for the entertainment of others. An established *borborbor* band is played at ceremonies and funerals by invitation. Each group has persons who see to their welfare. Each *borborbor* group has a lead singer, who is in most cases a male, occasionally supported by a female. There is also a lead dancer who leads the rehearsed group of dancers and a master drummer. There is always a closed co-ordination among these three leaders. The choice of the lead singer according to Agordoh (1994: p.126) depends on the following qualities.

- He should be well grounded in the repertoire of the group
He should have a strong sense of pitch and range when calling the tunes so that too much strain is not put on singers of either sex.

The instrumentation of *borborbor* is not static. Initially the ensemble comprised:

- **Asivuvi** (a sonorous drum played with the hands)
- **Pati** (a small supporting)
- **Vuvi** (a small supporting drum)
- **One vuga/havana** (master drum)
- **Castanets**

At its developmental stage the *donno* (hourglass drum), the tambourine and the conga were added to the ensemble and the *pati* was dropped. The use of the bugle remains a feature till today. Brass instruments such as the trumpet or cornet could serve the same purpose in situations where the bugle is not available. Nowadays, there are more than one master drums in some ensembles, all play the same rhythmic motif at the same time or in a dialogue, giving firm intensity and volume. According to Agordoh (1994: p.127), recently some groups have added to their ensemble “*gome*”- a large framed rectangular drum used by the Ga, and also rattles.

Although most *borborbor* songs have amorous or love themes, there are other songs about death, current events in the society and there are philosophical songs as well. The key pattern is played by the castanet and it is notated as shown below;

![Castanet Notation](attachment:Castanet.png)

**Fig. 28: The key pattern of borbobor music**
2.3.3 Northern Ghana

*Bamaaya* is a musical type commonly found among the Dagomba of the Northern region of Ghana. The Dagomba occupy the entire south-eastern quarter of the Volta basin from the White Volta in the west to the river Oti in the east (Agordoh 1994: p.129). Agrodo added that the Dagomba occupy about 90% of the Northern region of Ghana. He said this musical type is widely distributed all over Dagbon.

Oral tradition has it that *bamaaya* was first a religious music performance related to the land god called *Tingban(a)* of the area. History has it that somewhere in the 19th century a great famine occurred in Dagbon as a result of severe drought. All sacrifices made by the rainmakers (*sabomiba*) to their god proved futile. To avoid a great calamity, the young and strong men decided to try a plan. It was a belief in Dagbon at that time that prayers by women to the *Tingban(a)* got quicker response. The men therefore dressed in women’s clothes, matched to the head priest amid drumming and requested to be accompanied to the place of the god. It is said that the people danced several times around the grove where they believed was the abode of the god. They danced so vigorously that the god, touched by the plight of the “women” sent down heavy rainfall.

The people’s gratitude and joy expressed for having rains brought the name *bamaaya* meaning “the river (valley) is cold (wet)”. The maiden name of the dance was “*tubankpel*” meaning (unless you have had enough food you cannot take part in the dance). Since then the dance begun to be performed as thanksgiving to the *Tingban(a)* for giving them rain and was mostly performed in the rainy season. Presently the musical type is performed during funerals, festival and other national celebrations.
Costume for bamaaya includes;

- **Mokura (agbatoro)** - a skirt worn around the waist.
- **Zupliga** - head turban, hat or head jear.

Body extensions include;

- **Chogla** - secondary rattles worn around the ankles to emphasize the rhythm of the dance movement.
- **Tikpara** (ear rings)
- **Darna** (dark goggles)
- **Boduwa** (towel put around the neck to clean any sweat)
- **Kafini** (fan)

The ensemble includes;
- **Gungon**- popularly known as *brekete*
- **Lunna**- hourglass drum
- **Silayim**- rattle container made from raffia stalks
- **Kalambo**- a flute

![Image of drums](http://www.motherlandmusic.com/drums/htm)

*Fig. 30: Typical example of *bamaya* drums*

**Tora** is a Dagomba women’s musical type. Agordoh (1994: p.131) admits that the origin of *tora* is obscured. However there are schools of thoughts about the origin of this musical type. Some elders in the Dagbon believe that the musical type was brought down from Northern Nigeria by the royal immigrant settlers. Others state that *tora* evolved from the *takai* musical type for men; hence it has the same rhythmic features. *Takai* according to Agordoh is a royal dance of the Dagomba and according to oral tradition it was performed in the evenings after meals by the youth. The women, not wanting to be left out of the enjoyment, tried to invent their own dance movements to some instrumental backgrounds provided by the men. *Tora* is presently performed all over among Manprusi, Nanumba and Dagomba. *Tora* is recreational dance music. It is however performed at funerals too. Other occasions of performance include; marriage and wedding ceremonies, public durbars and festivals and during visits of state dignitaries. Agordoh (1994: p.131) writes that although the performance of *tora* is strictly women’s affair, men also take part by playing the musical instruments. Instruments used in playing the *tora* are the same as *takai*. They include, *gungon* and *lunna*. Singing forms an essential part of *tora* performance. Women
use all kinds of vocal techniques prevalent in the northern part of Ghana, glides, glizzando, nasal voice quality, mellismatic treatment of texts etc. Song texts according to Agordoh (1994: p.132) are based on themes like historical facts, praises and ridicule, advice and human relations.

**Bawa** is a recreational dance performed after the harvest season by the Dagomba, Manprusi, Gonga, Nanumba and the Wala of the northern and upper-east region of Ghana. The ensemble of this musical type includes:

- Xylophones
- Gourd rattles
- Castanets
- Tongue bells
- Single-headed drums
- Snacks used on the ankles to emphasize movement

Dancing is done in a circular formation with the dancers holding whiskers and in smocks. The songs are centered on everyday happenings. It is a mixed group dance which takes place at any merry-making ground.

**2.3.4 Ga - Adangme**

**Kpanlogo** is also a recreational music type of the Ga of Ghana. According to Agordoh (1994: p.132), it is the most recent of all recreational musical types by the Ga of Ghana. *kpanlogo* is said to have started from the wake of Ghana’s Independence as a musical type basically for entertainment in Accra.
*Kpanlogo* is performed during festivals and funerals. It is also performed during the visit of political functionaries and during state holidays. Agordoh (1994: p.133) states that kpanlogo used to be an integral part of political programs in Ghana especially in the CPP\(^{13}\) (Convention People’s Party) era, when most of the *kpanlogo* bands were found by the late president Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. A counterpart of the *kpanlogo* band in the Volta Region during CPP political era was the *borborbor* from Kpando.

Every performance, according to Agordoh (1994: p.133), starts with the pouring of libation to ask the gods for a successful performance. This practice is no more carried out by all bands these days. Themes for *kpanlogo* songs touch on several life issues. These include:

- Politics
- Human relations-love, hatred etc
- Topical issues

The original instruments of the *kpanlogo* ensemble as Agordoh (1994: p.134) discussed includes:

- *Nono*-single bell (slit bell)
- *Nononta*-double bell
- *Dodonpo*-castanet
- *Pati*- supporting drum
- *Tamalin*-frame drum (three are used)
- *Bongo* drums-played by one person
- *Atswereshi*-master drum

\(^{13}\) CPP (Convention People’s Party) is a political party led by the first president of Ghana- Osaagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah
Bugle and harmonica are optional instruments to this ensemble.

The key pattern is played by the *nono* as;

![Nono pattern](image)

**Fig. 32: The key pattern of kpanlogo music**

### 2.4 MIGRATION

According to Awoyemi, Flolu, Apreko, Amanowode (2003), “The attainment of independence has made it possible for Ghanaians to migrate in an unprecedented manner within the borders of the country. This has resulted in the formation of cosmopolitan or mixture of ethnic populations in the towns and urban areas”. Migrants from an ethnic group who are found in another ethnic community, as a subculture of the new community in which they find themselves, select their own representatives to help them in times of need and trouble. They usually come together on occasions such as funerals, naming ceremonies and weddings of members of the kind. It is on such occasions that performing groups, similar to those at home, perform the music and dance of their ethnic group to reinforce their solidarity and to keep in touch with home.
2.4.1 Historical overview

Migration therefore is no news to Africans. It started long time before colonialism. Adepoju (2010: p.46) discusses extensively the historical overview and current dynamics of intra-regional migration in Africa. To him intra-regional migration is migration between kingdoms.

Long before the arrival of the Europeans in the 15th century, he wrote African kingdoms and other dynamic African social organizations flourished. History reveals that several places in Africa, including the Egyptian and Nubian kingdoms in northern Africa, the Ghana, Mali and Songhai kingdoms in West Africa, the Zulu and Great Zimbabwe kingdoms in southern Africa, the Axum and Buganda kingdoms in East Africa, among others experienced rich dynamic interactions manifested by exchange of goods, ideas and people through migration over a considerable period of time (MSU 2000). During this time, frequent conflicts between tribal groups over natural resources and the control of trade routes were associated with the regular uprooting, movement and resettlement of people (de Haas 2007). Generally the major motives for migration were the search for personal or political security, freedom from religious coercion, trade and commerce. Another motive was the acquisition of land, mainly for human settlement and agricultural purposes. Adepoju (2010: p.49) states that one such kind of movement is sometimes called the Bantu Migrations when Africans in the Cameroon area gradually moved south into Africa over a period of 2000 years.

2.4.2 Colonial Era Migration

Colonial era migration on the other hand experienced or was characterized by the labour needed to exploit natural resources. Adepoju (2010: p.49-50) has it that after the arrival of
the Europeans with their desire for territorial aggrandisement and their avaricious speculation through policies of colonialism increased the rate of migration.

This era experienced compulsory recruitment, contract work and forced labour legislation that stimulated regional labor migration. This is what Adepoju (2010: p.50-51) calls the “economic” recruitment policies employed by colonial regimes. He says that in general this type of exploitation has significant adverse effect on the African people and the socio-economy of the regions involved. He added that colonial regimes altered the motivation and composition of migration by introducing and enforcing various new forms of political and economic structures, imposing tax regimes and establishing territorial boundaries. Africans were also recruited into the colonial armed forces.

2.4.3 Post-colonial Era

This era had almost the same experience in the pre-colonial era. The difference is that this time the motivation shifted from the labor needs of colonialism and its security needs to mainly job opportunities. With this motivation Adepoju (2010: p.50-52) says many people move between different African geographical areas simply in search of better economic opportunities and living conditions. He added that people tend to move from countries with fewer opportunities to those with more opportunities, mainly for employment and other income-generating activities.

This motivation has yielded many forms of migration such as, return migration and commercial migration. Adepoju (2010: p.50-52) says that return migration happens in countries that cause the nationals to emigrate, return and re-emigrate, with the reason being changing circumstances, such as periods of economic boom, decline and recovery.
He added that these changing circumstances stimulate the transformation of labour flows from mere “labour migration” into what has been termed “commercial migration”. Commercial migration is where people are involved in extensive cross-border trading, Adepoju (2010: p.50-52).

Furthermore, these discussed movements have further been influenced by a striking factor known as “globalization”. Adepoju (2010: p.51) puts the effects of globalization on migration of the post-colonial era as having two sides; the “facilitative” side of globalization; and the “disruptive” side of globalization of the post-colonial era. By the “facilitative”, Adepoju (2010: p.51) means that “the evolution of globalization has contributed to increased availability and use of modern transportation and communication systems that influence and inform the migration process and make movement easier and faster”. On the other hand the “disruptive” aspect of globalization on migration, Adepoju (2010: p.52) explains, “Exclude an increasing number of people from more productive and meaningful economic participation; due to their lack of opportunity to benefit competitively from globalization induced increased production of goods and services and a more equitable trading system”. This exclusion, he said, is believed to have intensified emigration since it contributes to the high incidence of poverty and other migratory “push” factors.

There have been instances where this era also experiences “voluntary” and “involuntary” movements which Adepoju (2010: p.52) says are created by “forced circumstances”. He states that, “involuntary movements are largely due to forced circumstances such as to escape from civil wars, other violent political upheavals, political and ethnic persecutions and human rights violations as well as severe artificial environmental degradation and
natural disasters”. He added that people who move in such circumstances are generally referred to as refugees. Human trafficking, primarily of women and children also are circumstances through which involuntary movements can be manifested.

Voluntary movement on the other hand can be manifested through a deliberate effort made by an individual to change his or her location for greener pastures. Adepoju (2010: p.52) defined voluntary movement as “the willing decision of people to move in search for better professional opportunities, family wellbeing, better working and living environments, and higher income”. He said people who move under such circumstances include some of the most educationally qualified, experienced and skilled professionals who can move readily to afford the transportation cost and more easily acquire legal travelling documents.

2.5 LUNSI IN ITS ORIGINAL HOME

Although “lunsi” is the name given to some of the drums in the ‘lunsi’ ensemble and also of the musical type as a whole, in its place of origin it was also a name for court historians, musicians, geographers, consultants, advisers, judges and chroniclers of the past and recorders of the present. In addition, they are also teachers, researchers and carriers. In short, according to Abdallah (2011: p.200) lunsi are traditional historians who keep the past.

The first Lunga\textsuperscript{14} was called ‘‘Bizun’’. In the tradition of Dagbon, Bizun is a prince, who is a son of “Naa Nyagse”. According to Abdallah (2011: p.204), it is from the Bizun that all lunsi trace their beginnings. Bizun was instructed to recite the drum poetry of ‘‘Dakoli

\textsuperscript{14} The first lunga means the person who first played the lunsi drum in Dagbon
Nye Bii Ba Nam Lana”15 in a mystical manner. He was given this assignment because he was fond of drumming on a broken calabash to remind his step mother of his presence, since his mother had died and that had no mother to reserve his share of the communal food.

According to Abdallah (2011: p.205), during those days whenever the king’s wives were making food for the household, each woman would reserve some of the communal food for her child. He did errands in the palace and it was during such a service that Bizun was instructed to recite the drum poetry of ‘’Dakoli Nye Bii Ba Nam Lana in a mystical manner. According to Abdallah (2011: p.205). “Lunsi history has it that Bizun was sent on a long errand that required him to walk on a long distant until late in the night when it became dark that he could neither see far ahead or back. There was a thunderstorm. Hungry and exhausted he began talking to himself. All of a sudden he heard a voice that commanded him, “stop complaining; at the end of every struggle and suffering is enjoyment. You together with your children will be honored. You will have enjoyment in the kingdom”. Though he did not see the person commanding him, the voice from above showed Bizun how to sing the famous text. From that day on, Bizun continued receiving text after text of poetry through vision.

2.5.1 The Organization of Lunsi

According to Abdallah (2011: p.200), drummers are fond of saying that “lunsi hold the keys to the outer gates of Dagbon”. Every Dagbana (a native to Dagbon), including the Yaa Naa, may use the respectful term of addings “nyeba” (my grandfather) when talking to a drummer. According to Abdallah (2011: p.200), every chief has a retinue of titled

15 “Dakoli Nye Bii Ba Nam Lana” is a court drum poetry in Dagbon
drummers in his court whose leader is called ‘lunga-naa’’ literally, drum chief (plural “lung-naanima’’ that is hierarchy of drum chiefs’’). Just as the chief holding title Yaa Naa is supreme, the lunga with the title Namo Naa is the overall chief drummer of Dagbon. (See Abdallah 2011).

2.5.2 Instrumental Description

Abdallah (2011: p.200) describes the lunsi drum in lunsi ensemble. He mentions it as the ‘‘talking drum’’ of lunsi. The traditional name for this drum he mentions “lung” (plural “lunsi”). It is made from the trunk of a cedar tree from which a wooden “shell” (lungkobli’’) is carved into a hollowed-out hourglass shape. Over each end is fixed a goat skin drumhead (lungkugra), the two heads being connected by antelope-skin ropes (lungdihi).

Picture source: http://www.motherlandmusic.com/drums/htm

Fig. 33: A typical representation of lunsi drums

2.5.3 Roles and Duties of Lunsi

Lunsi classify their duties into two sets of activities. Kaali lung and Daa lung. According to Abdullah (2011: p.206) kali lung refers to drumming for chiefs that occurs on predictable well-planned occasions at such places as palaces. Daa lung which literally translates as “market drum’’ occurs with less advance notice in variety of venues. While
Kaali lung involves praises, genealogies and historical narratives. Daa lung employs only praises and genealogies.

Lunsi serve as geographers in the community. Every lunsi is imbued with the geographical boundaries of his community. They also know local communities within the kingdom and the villages and towns that are included under the supervision of each chief.

Another role of lunsi in the community is that, they serve as consultant-advisers. Abdallah (2011: p.207) explains that, because lunsi drummers are well regarded for their good sense and wisdom they are empowered to advise any royal personality who behaves in an awkward manner and also tell them of the proper behaviour towards members of the lunsi institution, including showing appreciation for services rendered. According to Abdallah (2011: p.207), chiefs also seek advice from lunsi because they know the history and genealogy of their people.

Through historical endowment, lunsi can pass judgments. If there is a misunderstanding or conflict over land or a skin, lunsi provide historical details that are used to help pass judgments. An example is given by Zablong Zakariah when Yaa Naa Abdullah Bella was threatened with disskinning by national government, the father of Zablong Zakariah Abdallah, informant, who was also named Zablong Zakariah Danaa, in consultation with then named Naa Issahaka was called upon to unearth the truth by recounting the entire history of Nam.

Lunsi drummers are teachers. They exhibit this when they teach royals their roles and responsibilities in the community. Lunsi are also musicians who play for solo and group
dances. According to Abdallah (2011: p.207), the music of the *lunsi* entertains and also motivates workers in the construction of roads, footpaths and other community infrastructure. He states further that, when a woman wants to plaster her room or compound, she may invite the *lunsi* to help the workers’ spirits. Moreover, customarily drummers play the war dance ‘*Zhem*’ until the work is complete where upon they change to “*Zolgu*”, which praises Naa Zolgu.
CHAPTER THREE
THE SCOPE OF LUNSI MUSIC OF THE FRAFRAS IN TAMSO

3.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

_Lunsi_ is known to have appeared in Tamso through the migration of some Frafras for mining job opportunity. According to the informant (Apambilla)\textsuperscript{16} who happens to be the leader of this group, this musical type appeared firstly in Prestia in the 1970s. There he was working formally in one of the mining companies and aside, organised this musical type as well. In 1995 the _lunsi_ musical type came to Tamso after their leader went on pension and therefore had to settle in Tamso where most of his friends and some of his relatives lived.

3.2 ORGANIZATION

The _lunsi_ ensemble is mainly of drums. There is less use of vocal sounds. It can be performed on its own but sometimes with a dance. It is from the dance which sometimes we hear vocal sounds. However, at its place of origin there is singing done intermittently while drumming. According to Apambilla the period of singing is a resting period for the drummers; it is when the drummers relax in vigorousity and intensity. The _lunsi_ musical type is mainly recreational but can fit into occasions like funeral, marriage, outdooring, festivals and other social gathering.

To talk about the leadership of this musical type in Tamso is to talk about only one person. They have nothing like executive body comprising, president, secretary, organizer, etc. It is only one person who does all that. This person is also responsible for the maintenance

\textsuperscript{16} Apambilla (informant) claims that the name “Apambilla” was the only name given to him by his parents.
of the instrument. It therefore implies that, not only the leader, but also, members should be knowledgeable in the construction of the drums.

3.3 INSTRUMENTAL DESCRIPTION OF LUNSI IN TAMSO

To achieve their peak of performance, the musical type should have a sizeable number of instruments. The instruments include the following:

- **Lunda**
- **Glugo**
- **Lunga**
- **Wieya**

**Lunda** is known in the musical type as the key instrument. In other words it provides the time line or the key pattern for the rest of the instruments. It has the highest pitch amongst the other drums and thereby produces a very sonorous sound. It is also the smallest drum among the ensemble without which the whole ensemble could not perform. It has the hourglass shape as the *lunga* or *lunsi* but smaller in size.

![Fig. 34: A picture showing a typical example of the lunda.](image-url)
Glugo; is one of the biggest drums in the ensemble. It has a cylindrical shape with both ends sealed with membranes. It has a handle which is made of cloth; and is hung on the shoulder.

Fig. 35: A typical representation of ‘glugo’

Lunga, according to Apambilla, is the name given to one of this type of drum which in plural is “lunsi”; which has become the name of the whole musical type. As said earlier it has the hourglass shape as the “lunda” but bigger in size. This also has a handle made of cloth. One can decide to hang the instrument on the shoulder, whilst supporting it with the armpit, or solely support it with the armpit.

Fig. 36: A typical representation of ‘lunga’
**Wieya** is a melodic instrument which sounds like the Nigerian *kalambo*. It uses the hexatonic scale to produce pitch contours in the spoken language. According to the informant they understand whatever the *wieya* player plays. Therefore it does not play just melodic notes for melodic purposes but for an inherent language or message. Sometimes it gives an appellation, sometimes narrates lineage, and sometimes criticizes the society, authority and an individual.

![Fig. 37: A typical example of the wieya](image1)

![Fig. 38: A cross-sectional view of the wieya](image2)

### 3.3.1 Material for the membrane

In *lunsi* music, all the drum heads are covered with membranes made of animal skins. The quality of the membrane depends on the type of animal from which the skin is obtained. “*Glugo*” in the *lunsi* ensemble is made of the skin of a cow, while the *lunda* and the *lunsi* drums are made of the skin of a goat. According to my informant the *glugo* is subject to more energy and that requires a stronger skin.

### 3.3.2 Drum Heads

Unlike drums in the other ensembles such as *adowa*, *agbadza* and *borborbor* which have most of their drums single headed, all the other drums in *lunsi* music of Tamso are double headed. Moreover, in *lunsi* ensemble membranes of all the drums are stretched with strings made of animal skin, unlike other ensembles in Ghana which have pegging as the means to fix membranes. The strings used for the *lunda* and the *lundsillunga* do not only
secure the membranes but ensure the production of high and low pitches by being squeezed and released respectively. Unlike the lunsi and the lunga drums the glugo drum has its membrane fixed and secured by thick coiled nylon ropes.

3.3.3 The Body of Drums

The bodies of the drums are made of wood and metal. While the lunsi and the lunda drums are made of wood, the glugo is made of metal barrel. The body of African traditional drums is made of several materials which include wood, clay, metal, gourd, coconut, tins and earthen wear vessels. Among these, lunsi music in Tamso shares in two of them which are wood and metal.

3.4 INSTRUMENTAL COMPOSITION (NUMERICALLY)

No matter how vigorous and dense the ensemble should be for the best performance, there is the use of only one (1) “lunda” and only one (1) “wieya”. The other two which are the “glugo” and the “lunga” can be more than one (1), preferably, three (3) each. With the “lunda” (key drum) and the “lunga” (lunsi), high and low pitches are given by the use of the armpit. The more one squeezes the strings that hold the membrane, the more stretched are the membrane and therefore the higher the sounds or pitches. It means therefore that loose strings to the membranes will result in lower sounds or pitches.
3.5 PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PLAYING TECHNIQUES OF THE LUNSI DRUMS

Fig. 39: Playing technique of the *glugo*
3.6 RHYTHMIC ROLES OF THE INSTRUMENTS

It is difficult to notate a fixed pattern for the “wieya”. This is because it uses the natural rhythm of the spoken language, and as such every word or phrase produces its own
rhythm. Since there is no fixed message (s) for the player to provide, we leave the rhythm to the choice of words. However, an attempt was made to get the notation of one meaningful whole which is used for analysis. The excerpt (Fig.23) shows one section of a full piece which has the display of related patterns of sound and rhythm.

LUNSI MUSIC
An excerpt of the ‘wieya’ in luni music

Fig. 41 An excerpt of the “wieya” music

The drum patterns are recorded and represented in the figure 20 below;

Fig. 42: Drum patterns of the luni ensemble
Alternatively;

![Fig. 43: An alternative notation of figure 20](image)

Though the “glugo” and “lunda” play the same pattern, “glugo” has the tendency of playing variations, while “lunda” is fixed. The rhythm pattern of the “lunsi” represents the basic idea of the movement. There is the use of cross-rhythm in the second bar as shown in figure 44.

![Fig. 44: Representation of a cross-rhythm](image)

While the stick performs the lower pattern (which is the main pattern), the other free hand in an attempt to mute some of the sounds or pitches, adds the top (auxiliary) pattern, producing a cross-rhythmic pattern. Hence, the resultant rhythm as;

![Fig. 45: Resultant rhythm of Figure 14](image)
3.7 PERFORMANCE, COSTUME AND SPACE

Every instrument has something different to play. According to my informant (Ampambilla) the total absence of one kind of instrument will affect the quality of performance, though they can still play.

For costumes, the performers wear trousers made of African material known as “liwerenada” topped by white T-shirt. The T-shirts are provided by the mining companies whenever there is an invitation. At the back of the T-shirt is written ‘ananorese’ meaning; “let us come together”.

In Tamso, there is no fixed space for performance of this musical type. Performance space depends on the assignment or invitation. If it is funeral, they use the central part of space of where the people are gathered. Alternatively, they may be given a sizeable space under provided canopies or sheds. If they are invited by the mining companies they are given they club house of the related company. Sometimes this musical type can be processional as they are sometimes required to accompany their client (those who invited them) to their houses after the performance. Sometimes they also decide to play for themselves while departing from a function.

3.8 RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

As it is now, the group is made up of only the Frafras who already know how to play an instrument. So far as the issue of sustainability is concerned and since they are becoming well known in the community, recruitment and training of new members are essential. According to the leader (Apambilla) who also is an informant, they are ready to recruit and train anybody irrespective of one’s ethnic background and whether one is born into
the *lunsi* family or not. Apambilla (the leader) admits that it is not everyone who can be a member of this musical type because of its peculiar traditional orientation; but they are ready to train anybody for the sustainability of the group. This, he said, will be done by deliberate performance for aural experience.

3.9 BIOGRAPHY OF SOME OF THE LUNSI MUSICIANS OF TAMSO

It has not been easy getting the members for individual interview. The reason being that, some of them are into small scale mining and for that matter they spend days on field and underground. As a result, their movement and presence at home could not be predicted. However, a cross-section of the members have been seen and interviewed for their biographies.

![Fig. 46: Apambilla Akalane](image)

Apambilla was born in 1951, in the town of Zaare of Bolgatanga, in the upper East region of Ghana. He was begotten by Mr. Akalane and Madam Ayinbese, both of Zaare. The main occupation of his parents was farming.

Apambilla could only trace his lineage up to his grandfather so far as *lunsi* playing is concerned. He learnt how to play the *lunsi* drum from his father who also in his time took
it from his father (Mamariga) who is Apambilla’s grandfather. Apambilla learnt how to
play the drum through both social experiences and special tuition by his father. He started
playing the instrument when he was twelve years of age.

According to Apambilla the purpose of his migration was for greener pastures. He first
settled at Prestia in the Western Region in the year 1969. There he got a job in the mines
and worked for 20 years after which he went on pension. In the year 1995 he resettled at
Tamso where he has lived until now (2013).

He organised the luni group when he was in Prestia and played whenever there was a
funeral of a deceased member of his ethnic group. Though he left for Tamso they could
still attend engagements. His departure did not disorganize the group but rather broadened
their territory of performance, since they were now in Tamso and the nearby towns
including Prestia his first station. To engage them, one needs to give about one month
prior notice in order for them to call everybody of their group who might not be around
due to their quest for daily bread.
Akampiereke Atiage was born in the town of Bolga-Zorko; in the year 1970. Unlike Apambilla, Akampereke had the name “Atiage” from his father as the surname. According to Akampiereke he plays the *lunsi* drum as an alternative function in the ensemble. His main instrument is the “*wieya*”. According to him his father also used to play the *wieya* which shows that he inherited it from his father. Akampereke never attended school. He was a farmer, so were his parents.

He migrated for a greener pasture. He first settled at Tamso and was weeding around people’s houses, gardens as well as farms from which he had his daily bread. Later he had the opportunity to work as a security man not in a company but in a private house. Currently, he is working in a small scale mining in Wasa- Akropong; which is at a few miles away from Tamso; in March 2013. He has been playing with this group for five years.
In 1982 Anyagere Atolga was born at Bolga Namon. He also had the name Atolga from his father as his surname. For him his parents are still alive. According to him he felt reluctant to play back home even though he painstakingly studied how to play the instrument from his father.

Things were not moving on well for him as a youth in his original community. His main occupation was farming. As a result he had to migrate for a better living standard.

He first settled at Tamso in the year 2006. Though he was young, he settled at Tamso before Akampiereke. He depended on tribal arms for survival. There he was introduced to the *lunsi* group since he couldn’t hide his identity. He had no option than to join since he had been getting a little financial support from members of his tribal community; some of whom are part of the group.
His instrument was *lunga* but the only available instruments were the *lunda* and *glugo* which Apambilla had to repair for him. He usually plays the *lunda* and sometimes manages the *glugo*. Currently he is into small scale mining at Wasa - Akropong.

![Fig. 49: Amos Awuh](image)

Amos Awuh had a basic education background and therefore was able to tell exactly when he was born. Amos was born on the 19th of July 1968 in the town of Navrongo. He was a co-informant to Apambilla. He used to translate some of the unclear conversations between them and I to his friends in Frafra language since he understands the Akan and the English languages very well.

Like his friends he was a farmer as well as his father. He migrated for a better job opportunity. He first settled at Obuasi in 1993. There he was self-employed; this he termed “*Halla Halla*” which means the small scale buying and selling of goods. In 2011 he came to Tamso where he worked as a security man in the University of Mines and Technology.

Like Anyangere, Amos did not like playing the “*glugo*” back home though it was in his family. Moreover he did not migrate with his instrument. But during the funeral ceremony
of one of his tribal members he had to join the luni group to perform. Apambilla had to repair a spoilt glugo for him to play. Since then he has always been invited to perform whenever there is an engagement. Some of the old members of the luni group are always now at a distance which makes it difficult to get them for interview.
4.1 INTRODUCTION

African traditional music has very peculiar characteristics that really make it African. In light of this, lunsi music in Tamso shall be analyzed to know the confirmations and deviations from the African norms. As discussed in chapter two, Merriam (1959) posits that “probably the most outstanding characteristics of African music is its emphasis upon rhythm as well as upon a percussive concept of music performance”. The analytic parameters include; the rhythmic analysis of the drum patterns, melodic analysis of the wieya, melody extension devices, membranophones as outstanding instruments, form, playing techniques, the communication aspect of lunsi music in Tamso, costume, recruitment and training, performance and functional analysis, and migration category.

4.2 RHYTHMIC ANALYSIS OF THE DRUM PATTENS

The rhythm of lunsi music in Tamso exhibits the two general rhythmic characteristics of Africans; syncopation and cross beats, which is as a result of simultaneous use of contrasting rhythmic patterns within the same scheme of accents or meter. In addition, lunsi music in its rhythm has the use of ‘‘tresillo’’ which is sometimes called ‘‘triplets’’. The glugo drum pattern is transcribed as shown below;

Fig. 50: The use of triplets (tresillo) in lunsi music
With this transcription it could be seen that there is the use of triplets throughout the entire length of the ‘glugo’ line. Even the anacrusis in the first bar has its take-off from a triplet count.

Unlike the glugo the lungalunsi has an alternation between three crotchet beats in place of two crotchet beats and three quaver beats in place of one crotchet beat. The rhythmic pattern for lunga as transcribed is shown below:

![Fig. 51: The use of triplets in lunsi music](image)

The third drum pattern is of the lunda. Though the glugo and the lunda play the same pattern, glugo has the tendency of playing variation, while ‘lunda’ is fixed.

4.2.1 Syncopation

The alternative notation of the above discussed phrases will distinctly portray the syncopated aspect of lunsi drum patterns. For example the glugo pattern can be re-notated as shown below:

![Fig. 52: The use of syncopation in lunsi music](image)

The last notes in every tresillo gives a semi quaver duration, while the first two tied notes in every tresillo give dotted quaver duration. In the same way the lungallunsi pattern can be re-notated as shown in figure 53.
Fig. 53: The use of syncopation in *lunsi* music

With the emphasis on the second bar the *tresillo* effect has reduced the crotchet beats to a dotted quaver beats, with the last crotchet beat being further reduced to practically a quaver beat.

### 4.2.2 Cross beats

With the analytical help of the *glugo* and *lunga* patterns there is a sense of cross beats. Here in the second bar the rhythmic pattern of the *lunga* represents the basic idea of the movement. Thus;

![Fig. 54: A representation of Cross-beats in *lunsi* music](image)

While the stick performs the lower pattern, which is the main pattern, the free hand in an attempt to make some of the sounds or pitches adds the top (auxiliary) pattern, providing a cross-rhythmic pattern. The use of the word “attempt” does not mean either not touching the drum surface, nor a fully sounding action. It is rather a brief rub or touch of the surface of the membrane. These lightly sounded touches are so rhythmic that we cannot ignore about them analytically. They produce the resultant pattern as;

![Fig. 55: A resultant pattern of figure 28](image)
4.2.3 Polymetre *(simultaneous use of two or more metres)*

It is been said about African music that its rhythmic structure is entirely divisive in nature but may divide time into different fractions (time signature) at the same time. Typically this division is made by the use of “hemiola” or three-over-two (3:2) cross beat which Novotney has called the foundation of all West African polyrhythmic textures.

Looking at the time signatures of the figures used as examples under the subtopic “cross-beats” it can be seen that though there is the same movement, there is a change of time signature. Thus, from simple duple to simple triple. It can even be further represented by compound duple as so represented as;

Fig. 56: A representation of polyrhythm in *lunsi* music

To;

Fig. 57: A representation of polyrhythm in *lunsi* music

And further to;

Fig. 58: A representation of polyrhythm in *lunsi* music
With these deductions, *lunsi* music in Tamso confirms the idea that two or more representations of time signature are found as a characteristic of African rhythm. This is called the “polymetric” nature of African rhythm.

### 4.2.4 Standard Pattern

As discussed in the literature review the standard patterns are also known as key patterns, bell patterns, timeline patterns, guide patterns and phrasing referents. These African key patterns are typically clapped or played on idiophones such as bells, or else on a high-pitched drum head.

In *lunsi* music of the Frafra in Tamso the key pattern is performed by the “*lunda’* which has the highest pitch. The key pattern is noted as shown in figures 33, 34, and 35.

![Fig. 59 The key pattern of *lunsi* music](image)

Alternatively;

![Fig. 60: An alternative notation of figure 25](image)

Or better still;

![Fig. 61: Six-eight extract of figure 25](image)

This pattern however, goes contrary to what is said generally about the key pattern of African music. As discussed in the literature review; Wikipedia; the free encyclopedia has
it that the seven-stroke figure is the most commonly used key pattern in Africa. The seven-stroke figure is as shown below:

![Fig. 62: The analytical seven–stroke figure](image)

It is composed of two cross-rhythmic fragments which are found in simple and compound metrical structures. Notwithstanding, there are still two common African features that are found in the lunsí music of Tamso, they are polymetric and cross-rhythmic nature.

### 4.3 MELODIC ANALYSIS OF THE WIEYA

It has been very difficult to place the scale used by the wieya in the category of African scales discussed by Nketia. However we can place it under the six-tone scale which he calls hexatonic even though his notes are not all the same as in the wieya. He has it as shown in the figure 10 in the literature review as;

![Fig. 63: The scale reduction of the “wieya”](image)

The scale reduction of the wieya also has its representation as shown in the figure 41.

Two notes in the first bar of Nketia’s discussion are not found in the scale of the wieya, that is, notes “B” and the “E” flat. “B” and F in the second bar too are not found in the scale of the wieya. Also “D flat” and “E flat” in the last bar are not found in the scale of the wieya. There is an important and critical observation which Nketia also talked about.
The F sharp note in the scale of the wieya does not sound exactly as such. Neither is it an F natural as it lies between F natural and F sharp, though a semitone interval. That is what Nketia meant by “something close to a minor second” when he was discussing his type “B” of his scale tunings. He made this observation in connection with four step tunings; it is seen as a six step tuning in the case of the wieya.

4.3.1 Tresillos and Syncopations in Lunsi music of Tamso

The use of triplets (tresillos) and syncopations are also found in the rhythmic analysis of the wieya as shown in the fig.11 of chapter three. An example of few bars is represented for analysis as shown below.

![Fig. 64: Tresillo and syncopation in lunsi music](image)

Though triplets dominate in the given excerpt, they can be re-notated to portray the syncopation aspect of it. All anacrusis notes to the fifth notes in the next immediate bar, such the first and second bars of the except given can be alternatively notated as shown in fig.31

![Fig. 65: Syncopation in lunsi music of Tamso](image)

4.3.2 The Use of Anacrusis

Though there are few instances where there have been phrasing on strong beat such as the transition between bars five and six, anacrusis characterizes the beginning of phrases.
4.3.3 Pitch Range

The pitch range of the *wieya* is between G5 and F6. It means therefore that what has been written and presented in this write-up is actually an octave-higher than written.

4.4 MELODY EXTENSION DEVICES

There is the use of sequence in the melody build-up, preceded by a preparatory or introductory idea and they are joined by a mediatory idea. This can be seen in the first theme of the given excerpt below;

![Melody extension devices](image)

**Fig. 66: Melody extension devices**

From the first bar to the eleventh bar there is the representation of the first theme. Bars 1 and 2 present an introductory idea to the sequential motif and between the motif of the sequence (Bar 3) and the introductory bar (Bar 8) to the development there is the “mediatory” idea, where the player plays something skillfully to join the two sides. (The rest of the analysis can be referred to in the fig.33 provided at the next page). The third sequential idea occurs in bar 11 and is also connected by a mediatory bar, which is the 19th bar. Before the 10th bar, there is a resolution of the second sequential idea in the 9th bar which is also connected by a mediatory idea in bar 8. The same building idea runs through the four sections or themes of the piece. The second theme has it from bar 12 to 25. Bar 26 marks the beginning of the third theme which ends A Bar 39.
While the fourth theme has it from bar 40 to bar 53. Each theme has its take-off from the last note in the last bar of the previous theme.

4.4.1 Repetition

Repetition is another extending device used in the excerpt. Bars 3, 17, 18 and 19 and also bars 46 and 47 have a manifestation of this technique.

Fig. 67: Analysis of an excerpt of the “Wieya” in Lunsi music
4.4.2 Restatement

There is also the use of restatements in extending the melody. Always the third of the sequential progressions are restated and are linked with what I call “mediatory ideas”. Bar 11, for example, is a restatement of bar 9. Also, bar 25 is a restatement of bar 37. The last but not the least bar, which is bar 53, is also a restatement of bar 51.

4.5 MEMBRANOPHONES AS OUTSTANDING INSTRUMENTS

Merriam (1959) was right to mention membranophones as outstanding instruments in the African music orchestra. In lunsi music the ensemble is mainly of drums. There is no use of idiophones and hand clapping as accompaniment, though Merriam added then also as outstanding instruments of African music orchestras. However, they are used in other African musical types such as “adowa, nwonkoro, agbadza, borborbor, and kpanlogo”\(^\text{17}\), all of Ghana. There is the use of a wind instrument called “wieya’’ as mentioned in chapter three. It is said to be an important instrument back home in Bolgatanga since it does the appellations of the individual and also comments on social issues. So far as the lunsi music of the Frafras in Tamso is concerned this instrument is optional. The main share of instruments therefore, for lunsi in Tamso are membranophones.

4.6 FORM

There is nothing like development in the lunsi music of Tamso. Neither is there the use of modulations in their music. This goes to confirm the idea that there is no attempt in developing a previous idea in an African musical form. The only form name that comes to mind for lunsi music in Tamso is “strophic”\(^\text{18}\). The fact is that there is no need for development so far as the realisation of function, aim or purpose of the music is

\(^{17}\) Adowa and Nnwomkoro are musical types for the Ashantis of Ghana. Borborbor is amusical type for the Ewes of Ghana. And kpanlogo for the Gas of Ghana

\(^{18}\) Strophic is the name given to a musical form which does not have restatements
concerned, and that being a “through composed”\textsuperscript{19} would not affect whatever it is intended after performance.

Nonetheless, the use of the “wieya” (kalambo) in the lunsi musical type calls to mind one form which Nketia talked about. This is what he referred to as “accompanied and unaccompanied solos”. Though he puts this idea in a vocal context, the fact that the “wieya” is a melodic instrument means lunsi music does have an “accompanied solo”, for the “wieya” can be considered as a solo instrument that accompanies the drum ensemble.

Nketia (1974) says that, in accompanied solos that the gap between declamations or strophes may be bridged by sections in which the voice and the instruments work in alternation in a call-and-response pattern. But in the case of lunsi music it is rather an arrangement in which instruments (drums) fill the resting parts of the wieya player.

Though call-and-response is said to be one of the peculiar form of African music, it is not seen in lunsi music of the Frafras in Tamso. The closest form is “strophic”.

4.7 PLAYING TECHNIQUES

In Africa, drum playing techniques include, only hands technique, stick and hand technique, sticks technique, hand and leg technique, as well hand, armpit and stick techniques. Of all these techniques two are peculiar to lunsi music in Tamso; “the stick and hand technique” and the “hand, armpit and stick technique. The only instrument that is played or sounded by blowing air is the “wieya”.

\textsuperscript{19} “Through composed” is another name given to a strophic form.
4.8 THE COMMUNICATION ASPECT OF LUNSI MUSIC IN TAMSO

In Bolgatanga and Dagbon, it was the *lunsi* drum that played the apppellations and did all the commentary and criticisms on social issues. In the *lunsi* music of Tamso it is rather the ‘*wieya*’ that does all the appellations, commentaries and criticisms. It is very amazing that there is no use of spoken language to serve the functions of the *wieya*, yet according to the Frafra they understand whatever the *wieya* player “says” when playing the instrument. They themselves could not tell me how they are able to comprehend the sound of the *weiya*. It may be that the *wieya* uses the melodic intervals, contours and phrases which are very common to the people so far as their vocal tradition is concerned. The melodic nature of the *wieya* seems to be in conformity with the first category of Nketia’s grouping of African melodic forms as “melodies that make use of the melodic intervals, contours and phrases of the particular vocal tradition”.

There is another form of communication through the use of costume in *lunsi* music of Tamso. It is very simple but not part of their cultural background. There is an inscription at the back of their T-shirts. (The use of T-shirts or costumes in general shall be discussed solely; for now it helps to discuss the inscription). At the back of the T-shirt is written in their language “*ananourese*” which means let us come together. This is not done traditionally back home. Since they have migrated to a different land this inscription tells anybody of their kind, whether from the same home town or not so far as one is from the same region as them, they should come together. This tells how alienated they felt and therefore used the *lunsi* musical type to unite people of their kind. With this idea, Awoyemi, Flolu, Apreko, Amanawode (2003) were therefore correct by saying that

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20 “*Ananourese*” is the name given to the lunsi group of Tamso which means “let us all come together”
migrants from an ethnic group, whenever found in another ethnic community as a subculture within the new community in which they find themselves select their own representatives to help them in times of need and trouble. They usually come together on occasions such as funerals, naming ceremonies, and weddings of members of their kin. It is on such occasions that performing groups of migrant Frafra, at home, perform to reinforce their solidarity and to keep in touch with home from a distance.

4.9 COSTUME

The costume for the performance of lunsi music in Tamso does not fully reflect or portray the traditional Northern nature of the music. Costume is said to be contributive factor in the identification of people of one common culture, as music of a particular culture, contributes to their identity. So the costume related to this music must fulfill as such. Nevertheless, the authenticity of costumes does not stop them from enjoying the music wherever they may find themselves. Such an observation highlights the difference between the lunsi music in Tamso and the authentic lunsi music.

Back home they used to wear what is known as “newerenada and kalimbiu”\(^{21}\) which is a traditional costume. In Tamso, there is the use of T-shirts and trousers made of African cloth. Seeing this will tell and confirm the effects that the change of environment has had on this group. The other side of the issue is that sometimes their costume is influenced by the company that invites or engages them. If a particular company wants this group for an occasion the company provides them with their own anniversary or ceremonial wear, which bears the company’s name. Moreover, every mining company around the area of Tamso has its own distinguishing colour(s) represented in their logos, uniforms, buildings,

\(^{21}\) Newerenada is the short. And kalimbiu is the top wear.
etc, and that if there is the need of a particular colour atmosphere, the band is required to
dress as such. However being in a T-shirt helps them to popularise their name as
“ananorese” which, as discussed previously, is inscribed at the back of the T-shirts. Also
there is a sense of belonging wherever they wear their T-shirt. They feel accepted in the
community and therefore “feel at home”.

4.10 RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING

All the members involved in the performance of this music in Tamso are from the home
ethnic group. From the look of things, this music will have to be performed by some non-
Frafra or the group will collapse in the near future. As a result and according to my
informant, they are ready to teach anybody who is interested. This will practically work in
the case of sustainability but philosophically may not. Since they are no more in their
traditional home town, the issue of obligatory recruitment, as Nketia (1974) explains as
when a given household may be made responsible for maintaining a particular music
tradition or for supplying musicians for a specific band, is not possible. This happens in
relation to a court where a chief of a traditional area makes it mandatory. The
impossibility of this method comes in since the group in question is out of their traditional
rulers. The new environment does not need this musical type for its traditional functions
and therefore there will be no need for obligating their recruitment process.

Retention as another method of recruitment may help this group in question. Nketia (1986)
explains this as the motivation given to members who are already in the band so as to not
leave them for greener pastures. Even with this method, with respect to aging, cannot be
sustained for a long time.
Nketia (1986) has it about the “affiliation” method as the attachment of bands off musicians responsible for particular musical type to the court either as regular servants or as servants who come to perform whenever required of them, in tribute to the ruler of the state. However, “Affiliation” will not work in Tamso since the lunsi players there are out of their traditional domain.

The only applicable method among Nketia’s discussed methods of recruitment is appointment. This has to be done from their tribal law back home. It sounds quite challenging but, if the issue of sustainability is so dear to their heart, it is possible. Nketia (1974) explains this method as the encouragement given to traditional musician of higher caliber to join a group through the admiration and respect that is shown for his ability. It means therefore that motivation should be very high since it has to do with migration and transportation.

4.11 PERFORMANCE AND FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS

Lunsi music as traditionally known is performed in court. In other words it is court music. The recreational aspect of it is just a small fraction of the essence of it. The lunsi rather serve as consultants to the chief and the elders of the community since they are imbued by the history of the society, the lineage of individuals and the geography of the community. Lunsi music of Tamso on the other hand does not have this relation to the court. It is obvious that since they are migrants they are no longer under their traditional rulers. This creates the impossibility of experiencing any role or duty related to the court or palace. In effect a lunsi musician in Tamso can no longer render the services as consultant, advisor and geographer.
Another traditional role of a *lunsi* is to pass judgments. With the provision of historical details every *lunsi* can pass judgment if there is a misunderstanding or conflict over land or skin. Since the *lunsi* group in Tamso is out of their traditional boundaries and moreover since they are migrants, they do not have control over the new environment and therefore cannot pass judgments, on community affairs.

Drummers in *lunsi* play the role of “educators” when they teach royals their roles and responsibilities in the community. This function is also absent for the *lunsi* drummers in Tamso since the issue has to do with “royals” and their responsibilities in the community. Where there is a change of environment, the royals of that new environment are strangers.

*Lunsi* are musicians who traditionally play for solo and group dancers. This can also be seen in the *lunsi* in Tamso. This is because there are also Frafra women in Tamso who know how to dance already. The only problem is that they are not always available when the drummers are performing. However, playing for solo and group dances is a common feature of the *lunsi* in its traditional home and *lunsi* in Tamso. Traditional *lunsi* music at home entertains and motivates workers in the construction of roads, footpaths, and other community infrastructure. In Tamso there is nothing like playing to entertain road and footpath constructors. They are rather involved in the available jobs, such as mining and so when they play, it is for the mining workers. The *lunsi* in Tamso cannot function as carvers of the hourglass-shaped wooden drums since it is very difficult to find appropriate tree. However they do also ensure the availability of drums by servicing and maintaining the drums. Also there are instances where they order for the wooden frame of the hourglass drum, and then they do their membrane fixing in Tamso themselves.
*Lunsi* music in Tamso will fit into the category of ‘*Daa lung*’ according to the categorisation of Abdallah. He said lunsi classify their duties into two sets of activites; "*Kaali lung*" and “*Daa lung*”. “*Kaali lung*” refers to drumming for the chiefs that on predictable well planned occasions at such places as palaces. ‘*Daa lung*’ which literally translates into English as “market drum” occurs with less advanced notice in variety of venues. While *Kaali lung* involves praises, genealogies and historical narratives, *Daa lung* employs only praises and genealogies. Again, since the *lunsi* music of Tamso is no more under their traditional rulers due to migration, they cannot be associated with *Kaali lung*. Their only choice is Daa lung.

### 4.12 MIGRATION CATEGORY OF THE FRAFRAS IN TAMSO

Though Adepoju (2010) discusses the types of migration between African kingdoms, some of his discussed categories can be applied to the migration of the Frafra in Tamso. If Adepoju could call his migration as intra-regional, I will also call the migration of the Frafras in Tamso as “intra-national”.

Labour migration as Adepoju (2010) discussed is a compulsory and a forceful way of recruiting labourers which can be classed under involuntary movement. This can also be seen and said about the Frafras in Tamso. However their way of job acquisition is a voluntary one rather than the forceful recruitment. One characteristics of forceful recruitment is “decision”, where one decides to move or not. The movement of the Frafras from the upper-east region of Ghana is a deliberate one to be used by companies for the exploitation of natural resources such as gold. These unskilled migrants are mostly recruited as security men, as in the case of Apambilla (my informant). Some of them also find themselves in the small scale mining as excavators and washers.
Return migration can also be said to apply to the Frafras in Tamso. I once asked Apambilla if he has been going back to his hometown sometimes, and he said “yes”. And the next question was that, does he spend on his family or rather gain or take from them? He said “who? I have to make sure I settle everybody financially before I return. What Adepoju (2010) said about migrants is that sometimes there is a positive impact on their society of origin. Migrants return from their new territory to the old to ease family life.

It is not all the Frafra in Tamso that have no qualifications and skills. Some do have certificates. In this case the voluntary aspect of movement that characterizes the post-colonial migration is still manifested.

With migration related to the Frafras in Tamso the idea of political security has now shifted to personal economic security.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

Chapter one

The introduction of chapter one places the study in ethno musicological context and Ghana’s place in such context. It discusses the fact that Ghana as an African country has a lot of musical type which are relatively meaningful to the ethnic groups. It the expresses the concern that while a lot of the traditional musical types in Ghana have been documented, more are still undiscovered. This concern therefore places the study in its sense of purpose.

The background to the study discusses the composition population in Tamso; incorporating the idea that Tamso is a multi-ethnic community which is as a result of migration for mining job opportunities - the main occupation of Tamso.

“Inadequacy of traditional music literature of Tamso” is discussed as the statement of the problem of this study; which further contribute to the literature of lunsi music of the Frafra.

This chapter as well, discusses the objectives and purpose of the study; considering the provision of addition of literature of Ghanaian tradition music, for the consumption of ethno musicologist and any other interested persons.

The literature review relatively discusses briefly the following areas and their corresponding relevant sources. Characteristics of African music so far as rhythm, form,
melody, recruitment and training, and performance are concerned. It also discusses popular Ghanaian traditional music focusing on the Akan, Ewe, Northern Ghana and Ga-Adangme people of Ghana. In addition, the literature review touches on the aspect of migration and lunsi in its place of origin.

The chapter discusses mainly interviews, video coverage, observation, and the use of published documents as well as internet articles as the methodology of this study; using structural functionalism and diffusionism as the appropriate theoretical framework; touching on function, leadership, performance, instruments, recruitment and training of lunsi music of Tamso as the scope of search.

Chapter two
Chapter two does the detailed discussion on the interrelationships or related matters on the characteristics of African traditional music, migration and lunsi in its place of origin.

Rhythm, so far as characteristics of African music is concerned, is said to be entirely divisive in nature and may divide time into different fractions at the same time, typically by the use of hemiola or three – over – two (3:2); which leads to the idea of syncopation, cross-beats and tresillo; which feather yields the standard pattern (the seven stroke figure) mostly said to be the commonly used key pattern in Sub-Saharan Africa. Also African rhythmic structures are said to be sometimes organized from the way we speak out the text of a song.
Form in African music is said to be in call-and-response (sometimes called antiphonal form), litany, (one or two phrases repeated over and over), and additive form (new sections of material added one after the other with no reference to the previous material).

Scales used in African melodies manifest themselves in intervallic patterns. This chapter discusses four step tunings, five step (pentatonic) tunings, six step (hexatonic) tunings, and seven step (heptatonic) tunings. Three forms of melodies according to their characteristics are discussed:

- Melodies that follow the formal structure of songs; making use of the melodic intervals, contours, and phrases of the particular vocal tradition.
- Melodies that are arranged as sequences of repeated melodic patterns or figures.
- Melodies that attempt to achieve a combined effect of a songlike melody or figure by a method of linear elaboration which increases the density of the sound events.

Recruitment in Africa, into traditional bands, has six possible ways discussed in this chapter. They include; appointment, retention, affiliation, obligation, transition and assignment. It is also known in this chapter that training of traditional musicians does not require a formal process; for it is believed that natural endowment and a person’s ability to develop on his own are essentially what are needed. African traditional music instruments are grouped into four. They include; idiophones, aerophones, membranophons, and chordophones.

Three ways by which instrumental ensemble may be organised are discussed in this chapter. The first has to do with the combination of exclusively melodic instruments; the second include exclusive instruments of indefinite pitches; while the third has to do with the combination of both melodic and percussive instruments.
The chapter discusses the nature of performance in African traditional music in terms of space and audience. The stage needed for a traditional music performance is a found one. No need of a special auditorium. The audience is free to participate or join to contribute to any ongoing performance.

The next sub-topic of discussion is on migration. Here, migration is defined as an individual or group resettlement. This can be intra-national or international. The chapter discusses the historical overview of migration by saying that migration started long time before colonialism; and this pre-colonial era migration was characterized by the search for personal or political security, freedom from religious coercion, trade and commerce between kingdoms. Colonial era migration is discussed to be characterized by forced labour; while post-colonial era is characterized by search for jobs.

The chapter discusses lunsi in its place of origin in terms of the use of the name ‘lunsi’, the role it plays in the society, and the instrumental set-up. It is discussed that although lunsi is the name given to some of the drums in the ensemble and also of the musical type as a whole, in its place of origin it was also the name for court historians, musicians, geographers, consultants, advisers judges, chroniclers of the past, and recorders of the present. The ensemble of lunsi in its place of origin is made up of a number of only lunsi drums (that is the plural of the lunga drum).
Chapter three

This chapter discusses the historical background of lunsi in Tamso in terms of how it got to Tamso. Obviously, lunsi music is discussed to have appeared in Tamso through the migration of some Frafra people for mining job opportunity.

The lunsi ensemble is mainly of drums. It mainly recreational but can also fit into occasions like funeral, marriage, outdooring, festivals and other social gathering. To talk about the leadership of lunsi in Tamso is to talk about only one person.

The wieya mimics the natural rhythmic flow of the vocal tradition of the Frafra. The rhythmic lines of the drums exhibit the use of cross-rhythm and syncopation.

Every instrument has something different to play; and that the total absence of a kind of instrument will affect the quality of performance. The lunsi performers in Tamso wear a pair of African print trousers known as ‘liwerenada’; and topped a white T-shirt as their costume. There is no designated space for the performance of lunsi in Tamso. Venues for performances are provided by those who engage them.

According to the leader of lunsi in Tamso, they are ready to train anybody who is ready to join them irrespective of the ethnic background; by providing aural sessions for learners to understudy.

Chapter four

Lunsi music of the Frafra in Tamso really exhibits the two general rhythmic characteristics of the Africans; syncopation and cross-beats. This is as a result of the simultaneous use of
contrasting rhythmic patterns within the same scheme of accents or meter. *Tresillo* (triplets) in *lunsi* music is also part of the outstanding rhythmic characteristics of African music. Also the manifestation of two or more meters in the same scheme confirms the African nature of *lunsi* music in Tamso. There is also the use of a standard (key pattern) in the *lunsi* music of Tamso. However, it does not conform to what is known as the most commonly used key pattern in Africa, the seven-stroke figure.

While the seven-stroke figure is given as fig.1 in chapter two (as represented below),

![Seven-stroke figure](image)

The key pattern of *lunsi* music in Tamso is given as shown below;

![Key pattern](image)

Though Merrian (1959) said that membranophones, idiophones and hand clapping are outstanding instruments in African orchestra, the *lunsi* music in Tamso only employ membraphones as accompaniment.

If the appellation of the “*wieya*” is considered as melody, this confirms the first category of Nketia’s vocal forms as “accompanied solo”. In this case the *wieya* does the solo part and the drums do the accompaniment.

There is no use of dynamics and harmony in the *lunsi* music of Tamso. At home, the music is loud and very fast throughout the length of the piece.
“Call and response” is one of the outstanding “forms” of African music. However there is no use of call and response in the lunsi music of Tamso, though my informant claimed its use back home. However, “strophic” is the appropriate form for lunsi music in Tamso.

The notes used by the “wieya” have added another scale to the discussed ones of Nketia (1986). It has a hexatonic tuning, but the use of the F sharp note in the scale makes it different from the three discussed hexatonic tunings of African music by Nketia (1986). However Nketia was right in mentioning what he describes “close to a minor second” as the F sharp for the wieya does not sound exactly as such. It is lower than F sharp and higher than F natural; which confirms the use of microtones.

It is said about African music that notes or pitches are found only in the white keys of the key board. This has been proven wrong by the discussion of the scales by Nketia (1986) and the confirmation of the wieya notes in lunsi music which contains the use of F sharp.

In Africa (and especially Ghana), drum playing techniques include only hands technique, stick and hand technique, only sticks technique, hand and leg technique, as well as hand armpit and stick techniques. Of all the techniques, only two are peculiar to the lunsi music of Tamso. These are stick and hand technique and the hand, armpit and stick technique. Sticks in this musical type are the curved type and not the angled straight ones found in “adowa and fontomfrom”.

All drums in lunsi music have their heads covered with animal skin membrane. Moreover these drums are double headed. Two forms of shapes are peculiar to the shape of drums in Lusni music; hourglass and cylindrical. While the lunsi drum does all the communication
aspect back home, the “wieya” rather does it in Tamso with the drums becoming accompaniment. *Lunsi* is court music back home. In Tamso it is a recreational one which ensures social solidarity.

Costume for *lunsi* music back home is a traditional one known as “*kalambiu*” (a small *fugu* or smock “as the top and “*newerenada*” as the short). In Tamso it is a T-shirt and a trouser made of traditional cloth. Recruitment is done back home by the obligatory method, retention method, affiliation method and appointment method. Among these methods “appointment” is the only method found in the *lunsi* group in Tamso.

In terms of the theoretical framework of this write-up two theories have been mentioned: structural functionalism and diffusionism. The structural functionalism has it that “social systems maintain themselves in certain kind of societies for significant interval of time in a steady state during which time a high degree of social solidarity characterises the relationship among its members” It also focuses on groups, especially those organised along territorial, kingship and political lines and the interrelationship among different systems within the group. This theory is applicable to *lunsi* in its traditional setting.

However the diffusionism theory states that “cultural traits move over time and space out from the point of origin”. This theory is applicable to *lunsi* as it moved to Tamso and it underwent changes over time.

*Lunsi* music generally is very unique in terms of the social solidarity and history of the people. With the *lunsi* function in traditional society as court historians, musicians, geographers, consultants, advisors, judges, chroniclers of the past and recorders of the
present, their musical type should not be allowed to die out. Rather, every effort should be made to ensure the sustainability of this institution.

In the case of the migration of lunsi music we noticed that there were no forced circumstances, such as to escape from civil wars, violent political upheavals, political and ethnic persecution, human right violations, severe artificial environmental degradation and natural disasters. Therefore the movement of the Frafra in Tamso can be a voluntary one. As it migrated and as noted it underwent changes in terms of instrumentation, function, costume and type of recruitment.

CONCLUSION

I hereby conclude that lunsi music, as compared to that of the place of origin, has lost part of its essence in the society; in the sense that it is no more considered as court music due to its change of environment. However, the sense of social solidarity among the Frafra in Tamso through the lunsi music is a worthy one.

Lunsi music differs from what is said about African music as the most commonly used key pattern (the seven-stroke figure). In fact, in all the popular traditional ensembles discussed in Ghana, it is only the agbadza and atsiagbeko ensembles that use the seven-stroke figure as the time line or the key pattern. Therefore, care should be taken when generalizing issues on African traditional musical types. Nevertheless, a lot of the generalizations are true in lunsi music e.g. the use of membranophones as outstanding instruments, syncopations, cross-beats, and tresillos as features of African rhythm, and also the fact that African traditional melodies are as a result of a particular vocal tradition involved; a
function that is fulfilled by the ‘wieya’ in lunsi music, as it is known to mimic the vocal contour of the Frafra people of Ghana.

Migration is another key element in human institution which if not well managed, will contribute in the loss of essence in cultural traits. This is left to the mercy of the government to create jobs so that folks of traditional values may be retained to a considerable extent, to satisfy positively, traditional functions.

Gradually, with the contributions made towards the literature building of the lunsi musical type, it shall come to be popularly known as part of the traditional music in Ghana; and for that matter, Africa. With its richness in values so far as traditional meaning and function are concerned, it will gradually and hopefully be a point of feed to the ethnomusicological world as worth discussing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It will be very difficult for the lunsi group in Tamso to organise a formal training session for new members so far as recruitment is concerned. This is no news to the lunsi group and us as Africans; for it is believed that natural endowment and a person’s ability to develop on his own is essentially what is needed. Nketia (1974: p.58). This, Nketia observes, results in learning through social experience. Therefore, the lunsi group in Tamso should be organizing periodic traditional performances; leading to the attainment of social solidarity; and creating an enabling environment for their children, friends and relatives to join and develop skills in playing the instruments. Generally, parents or elders in a given community of a common tradition should make the conscious effort of creating the awareness of the value of their cultural traits to the younger generation; spanning from
the historical background of these traits to their current usage in the community; so that no amount of changed environmental forces can easily take the younger generation away from their traditions.

I suggest that financially able men and women of a common tradition such as in the case of the Frafra in Tamso should serve as patrons to the music groups; so as to enable them award contracts to the drum constructors or drum carvers in the villages to construct authentic music instruments to replace those that are not in good condition for use. This will contribute to a considerable extent, the preservation of authenticity; so far as tone colour and vocal contour of given traditional instruments are concerned; and to sustain a given music group of a tradition such as lunsi in Tamso, in the situation of environmental change; so far as migration is concerned.


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