An African Music and Dance Curriculum Model
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An African Music and Dance Curriculum Model

Performing Arts in Education

Modesto Amegago

CAROLINA ACADEMIC PRESS
Durham, North Carolina
Dedicated to my father Atifose Amegago and my mother Esiga Lodonu, my family members, predecessor composers, musicians, dancers, arts educators and all my teachers and mentors
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Series Editor’s Preface

The Carolina Academic Press African World Series, inaugurated in 2010, offers significant new works in the field of African and Black World studies. The series provides scholarly and educational texts that can serve both as reference works and as readers in college classes.

Studies in the series are anchored in the existing humanistic and the social scientific traditions. Their goal, however, is the identification and elaboration of the strategic place of Africa and its Diaspora in a shifting global world. More specifically, the studies will address gaps and larger needs in the developing scholarship on Africa and the Black World.

The series intends to fill gaps in areas such as African politics, history, law, religion, culture, sociology, literature, philosophy, visual arts, art history, geography, language, health, and social welfare. Given the complex nature of Africa and its Diaspora, and the constantly shifting perspectives prompted by globalization, the series also meets a vital need for scholarship connecting knowledge with events and practices. Reflecting the fact that life in Africa continues to change, especially in the political arena, the series explores issues emanating from racial and ethnic identities, particularly those connected with the ongoing mobilization of ethnic minorities for inclusion and representation.

Toyin Falola
University of Texas at Austin
Introduction

Situational Analysis

In this contemporary era, the accelerated global cultural interaction due to Western exploration, colonization, technology, capitalism, education, and the media has contributed to the formation of nation states and intra-states through the regrouping of former communities/nations, leading to the emergence of multiple domains of knowledge within the global system. These phenomena have had a considerable impact on African cultures and the African educational system.

Pre-colonial African societies were characterized by unique but related educational systems. The knowledge of these societies reflected mainstream and contextual experiences, based on age, sex, profession, politics, religion, ceremony, and individuality. These contextual experiences constituted the traditional African curriculum. The arts were integral to this curriculum, and were transmitted through practice involving social interaction and a holistic integration of physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual values. Education in African traditional societies was a lifelong and cultural process and the social ethics regulated individual and group learning and behavior. Evaluation of traditional African knowledge was mainly informal and generally took the form of positive comments, praises, reinforcement, counselling, and reprimands expressed by peer groups, parents, and traditional leaders within the entire learning process, on the basis of social ethics.

The impact of colonization, industrialization, and printed and electronic media culminated in the superimposition of the Western educational system on the African educational system and the relegation of African traditional knowledge to the status of primitivism and paganism, and hence its marginalization in the Western education curriculum. Western education began with a teacher-centered method, which placed African students at the receiving end of information as opposed to being co-mediators in the learning process. This was due to the foreign nature of the Western knowledge and European ignorance of African cultures. In consequence, students lacked understanding, as
well as creative and critical skills. Industrialization and the rural-urban drift further contributed to the gradual decline of the traditional educational system and the art making process.

There was a series of educational reforms during the colonial era, particularly in Ghana, from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century, the most notable of which were based on the Phelps-Stokes Commission’s recommendations in 1922, which was in turn indebted to John Dewey’s progressivist notion of adaptation and learning by doing. In line with the Phelps-Stokes Commission’s recommendations, attempts were made to Africanize the curriculum through an emphasis on agriculture and the inclusion of other African cultural components such as botany, literature, folklore, music, and dance. The proposal for the Africanization of the curriculum was met with criticism from the African Europeanized elites as part of the colonialists’ attempt to perpetuate the suppression of the Africans. This reaction was due to the elites’ ambition to keep abreast with modernization in the Western societies. Nevertheless, the initial implementation and success of the Africanized curriculum at institutions such as the Achimota College of Ghana in 1925 led other institutions to emulate its principles.

After political independence, various African countries undertook initiatives to revive African cultures. In Ghana, under the leadership of Prime Minister Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, this led to the establishment of the Institute of African Studies in 1958, and the Ghana Dance Ensemble and School of Performing Arts, both in 1962, all aimed at preserving, promoting, and developing African arts through research, performance, and education.

The Postcolonial Ghana-African Performing Arts Curriculum

The endeavor of preservation, promotion, development and implementation of the African music and dance curriculum in Ghanaian art institutions necessarily entailed research in integrated African performing arts and cultures and adapting them through restructuring and recategorizing them. The core curriculum includes practical and theoretical subjects such as African performing arts; African music, music history, composition, drumming, and singing; traditional African dance forms, history, and choreography; African drama, theater studies, acting techniques, costume and stagecraft; African Diaspora music and dance; and Western music and dance. African performing arts were also introduced in the Ghanaian First- and Second-Cycle institutions as extracurricular activities.
In view of the Western influence on African cultures, the diversity of African cultural groups with their distinct languages, and the urban-oriented nature of formal African performing arts education, attempts were made to hybridize African and Western teaching methods. This involved the adoption of the English language as the medium of instruction in Ghana, still in use today. The teaching methods vary in relation to instructor, subject, and topic, but theoretical courses are usually taught in the teacher-centered or lecture mode while practical courses such as drumming, singing, and dancing combine traditional participatory and Western methods. Attempts were made to involve traditional artists in the teaching process, but occurs rarely, due to the lack of funding which continues to hamper research into African arts and cultures. Innovation, however, continues to take place in the curriculum and teaching methods.

Recent curriculum reforms involved the introduction of the Bachelor of Arts in Dance and Drama, and a Master’s Program in Drama and Theater Studies, the change from trimester to semester system, the use of audio-visual recordings in teaching, the intensification of field trips and foreign exchange programs, and the introduction of the continuing assessment method of evaluation. This was to conform to some of the Western institutional arrangements and to encourage students’ full participation in the educational process. Evaluation of students’ progress in Ghanaian arts institutions still combined the Western norm reference and the criteria-based evaluation reflected by letter grades of A, B+, B, C, D, and F.

Some Consequences of Postcolonial African Performing Arts Education

The current institutionalization of African performing arts and cross-cultural interaction has resulted in the constant training of professional artists, along with traditional composers and performers, who now operate as art educators, researchers, and creators. Many of these professional artists continue to create a fusion of traditional and Western performance types. This leads to the continual emergence of new artistic categories in local and foreign institutions, such as neo-traditional music, African drumming, neo-traditional dance, contemporary African music, contemporary African dance, popular, and church music. Foreign imports, such as Western art music, Latin American music, African-American music, and Western dance have also emerged in Ghana. In addition, Western teaching methods continue to dominate in the higher Performing Arts educational institutions in Ghana.
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Statement of the Problems

The constant emergence of new generations of African artists and scholars, new artistic styles and categories, and the open-ended creative process require a corresponding review of the performing arts education curriculum. However, research in the arts is lacking due to insufficient funding and their lower relative status in contemporary African educational institutions. In addition, the separation of integrated African music and dance into distinct departments, and the emerging emphasis on individuality, affect the traditional art-making process and the psychology of African students. Today, as African music and dance is gaining its place in the cross-cultural arts education curriculum, the African youth who were originally oriented toward integrated performance find it difficult to understand the new concept of music, dance, drama, or theater. Despite the presence of semi-specialists, individual performers, and the emphasis on certain artistic elements in the African traditional art-making process, there is much empirical evidence that African societies emphasize integrated performance and learning, as opposed to the Western tendency to separate into distinct and independent artistic forms.

The separation of African music and dance further affects students’ acquisition of the social skills needed for future teamwork. Despite the promotion of collaborative and interdisciplinary studies in the University of Ghana’s School of Performing Arts, this institutional separation of African music and dance and emphasis on specialization create a tendency for most students to focus on their own areas of specialization, and to regard other components of this integrated art form as distinct subjects or areas. As a consequence, many graduates from the contemporary Ghanaian performing arts institutions often find it difficult to effectively engage in integrated African creativity and performance.

Since language is the bedrock of African performing arts, the use of English language as a medium of African arts education in Ghana inhibits students’ understanding of the philosophical concepts and values underlying these artistic creations and their creative potential. Students find it difficult to translate the traditional artistic concepts from the local languages into English or vice versa. Although such ambiguities are inevitable in intercultural education, much seems to be sacrificed on the part of the African cultures. Also, the dominance of Western teaching methods affects the development of some of the traditional teaching methods which could enhance the creative and learning processes.

In addition, many Christian groups who continue to appropriate and modify traditional African arts to enrich their ceremonies and activities persistently
INTRODUCTION

discourage the youth from participating in such performances outside the Christian context. Such an attitude threatens the future of African arts, and creates a problem for African arts educators since the youth who would perpetuate these art forms are discouraged from doing so. Furthermore, the current socioeconomic and political order generates new perspectives on society, the nation state, ethnicity, identity, sex, and professionalism. Education is now assuming a global dimension in this era, characterized by fragmentation, eclecticism of cultures and knowledge, and intensified cross-cultural interaction; hence many nations continue to reflect critically on their formation and the process of human migration. Many sovereign African states are undertaking the modernizing project without due consideration of traditional cultures and knowledge, thus intensifying their alienation and cultural imperialism. Above all, early representations of African cultures and the performing arts were fraught with ambiguities about their nature, origin, and criteria for their evaluation. All these issues necessitate revisiting African music and dance in order to re-represent and re-adapt it for a cross-cultural education.

This book, therefore, aims at revisiting the cultural context of African music and dance in order to restructure, reorder, and re-adapt it for cross-cultural arts education and for the sake of social harmony. In doing so, I will focus on the traditional Ewe who occupy the southern part of Benin and Togo and the southeastern part of Ghana. My focus on Ewe music and dance is due to the fact that the Ewe as a nation of West Africa have made an immense contribution to African and world cultures, and this contribution could be shared among various cultures. This approach will enable me to adequately represent the essential contributions of the West African Ewe nation as complementary to the contributions of other nations and to serve as a basis for African music and dance curriculum. My focus on the Ewe culture accords with the emerging social consciousness and regrouping of the original centers or nations in various parts of the world in the face of our multiple identities. I will also draw from other Ghanaian, African, and Western cultures and music and dance forms as a basis for the African music and dance curriculum. I occupy an intermediate position on the spectrum of Western and African cultures due to my traditional and Western educational backgrounds as well as my interest in integrated music and dance performance and creativity. I further view integrated African music and dance as a unique art form, which deserves consideration for contemporary arts education and creativity. With the emphasis on specialization by some contemporary arts institutions, many institutions, social groups and individuals cherish integrated compositions, performances and education. My usage of the term integration refers to the interweaving of vocal and instrumental sounds with human movements, other visual imagery,
and multisensory modalities in the artmaking and learning processes. My holistic approach to curriculum development implies the location of African music and dance curriculum in its sociocultural framework and its adaptation to various educational and cultural environments.

**Aims of This Study**

1. To revisit the creative, performative, and educational contexts and processes of African music and dance;
2. To develop a conceptual framework for an African music and dance curriculum which emphasizes the integration of vocal sounds, instrumental sounds, and human movements in multisensory modes in a way that complements the prevailing curricula;
3. To provide a complete African music and dance curriculum model for the degrees of Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts and Bachelor of Arts Education which is adaptable to other African and Western educational institutions and communities.

**Objectives or Learning Outcomes of the African Music and Dance Program**

1. Students will gain skills in integrated African music and dance performance and creativity through a broad and holistic learning experience.
2. Students will learn the fundamental characteristics of African music and dance forms.
3. Students will acquire analytical, interpretative, evaluative, appreciative, and critical skills relating to African music and dance.
4. Students will gain knowledge of African music and dance curriculum development and implementation procedures.
5. Students will develop collaborative skills needed for teamwork and social harmony.

**Literature Review**

Until the introduction of Western literary, audio-visual, and electronic modes of documentation, the significant African historical and cultural experiences were documented through oral, practical, artistic, symbolic, and unique
literary modes. The emphasis on somatically oriented documentation may be related to the tropical nature of the African environment which favors physical activities; Africans' desire to satisfy their biological, physical, and social needs (through engaging in practical and performative activities); the values attached to practical modes of documentation; the quantity of experiences or knowledge they desired to document; their movement from one location to the other, leading to the abandonment of certain modes of documentation in their former locations; and their dominant conception of time and events as cyclical and recurrent (albeit not without change). Hence, the unique Western or Arabic type of documentation was absent in pre-colonial sub-Saharan African societies. From the fifteenth century onward, European travellers, explorers, missionaries, anthropologists, and government officials began to theorize on African cultures. Some of these works are fraught with ethnocentric biases while others provide an insight into African cultures. These works were subsequently followed by the work of the early African elite (who adopted a cultural relativist approach, using the dominant Western knowledge system as a frame of reference), and by postcolonial theories. I will briefly review some of this literature before proceeding to my main topic.

One of the earliest studies of African music is that conducted by Eric Von Hornbostel (1928), who elucidates the early European approach to studying African music through the use of phonographs. Von Hornbostel presents an outsider’s perspective on the characteristics of African music: melodic scales and harmonic devices, polyphony and rhythm, the interaction of language and melody, some notations of African songs, and the sociocultural functions of African music. He further compares African, Islamic, North American, Indonesian and European music and remarks on the differences between African and Western musical characteristics and their impact on musical fusion, particularly in African churches.

An article by Seth Dzagbe Cudjoe (1953) offers an introduction to the location and demography of the Ewe, their instrumental ensembles, musical genres, construction of musical instruments, and Ewe games involving rhythm. Cudjoe discusses the techniques of Ewe drumming, rhythmic structure, sociocultural functions of Ewe music, and the traditional method of teaching drumming. He pinpoints the Western influence on the traditional modes of musical composition and performance and suggests the need for perpetuating the Ewe’s art making process through maintaining a balance between the old and new technologies. Cudjoe relies mostly on Western musical terms in his analysis of Ewe drumming, which leads to some inaccuracies; for example, his use of “sogo” as a musical type is inaccurate since the sogo is an instrument used in Ewe drumming or performance and not a musical style or genre.
Another important and pioneering contributor to the study of African music is A. M. Jones’s two-volume study (1954 and 1959), which discusses the contextual framework of African music and dance, as well as fishing songs, game songs, club music and dance, funeral music and dance. Also included in these books are descriptions of the construction and manipulation of musical instruments, performance processes, language concepts, the African conception of time, some photographs of Ewe musical instruments, a comparison of Ewe/West African and Lala/East African music, and an overview of contemporary African music. Volume two of Jones’s book contains transcriptions of some African melodies and rhythms. Jones has been criticized for relying on second-hand information and scanty materials; nevertheless, his work is a significant contribution to African music and provides a basis for further research.

An article by David Locke and Godwin Agbeli (1980) provides a discussion of the characteristics of adzogbo music and dance and its sociocultural functions, the linguistic basis of Ewe drumming, and a transcription of selected adzogbo drum texts. This article provides a good insight to the linguistic basis of Ewe drumming. David Locke (1987) discusses the gahu music and dance of the Aŋlɔ-Ewe, its sociocultural contexts, performance structure, musical instruments, instrumental playing techniques, timing, and performance process, and includes some notation of gahu musical/rhythmic patterns.

An outstanding contribution to African music is the work produced by J. H. K. Nketia in 1963 and 1974. One of Nketia’s 1963 books (1963b) elucidates the cultural context of Akan drumming, as well as its socioeconomic and political basis, orchestration, timbre, performance techniques, and the communicative functions; it includes a discussion of the linguistic basis of Akan drumming, and some illustrations of musical instruments. His other book in that year (1963a) surveys the cultural context of Ghanaian music: age, sex, religion, kinship, initiation, economy, politics, judiciary, socialization, and individuality. The book further contains descriptions or categories of African music, such as spontaneous groups, organized groups, folk groups, popular bands, occasional music, recreational music, social music, and Western art music.

Nketia’s third book (1974) surveys sub-Saharan African music. It addresses the sociohistorical and cultural contexts of African music, attributes of musicians, traditional African music education, musicians’ remuneration, and social relations. Also included is the geographical distribution of musical resources, a description of the form and structure of African music and dance, performance techniques, tuning, interrelations between African music and dance and other art forms, an introduction to aesthetics and problems of aesthetic evaluation, and the process of adaptation of African music to contemporary phenomena.
Alfred Ladzekpo and Kwabla Ladzekpo (1980) offer an introduction to Aŋlo-Ewe history and culture, and an overview of the social, religious, political and economic activities of the Aŋlo-Ewe of Anyako. They also discuss the formation of dance clubs among the Aŋlo-Ewe, Aŋlo-Ewe musical styles and performance procedures, and include some pictures of Ewe musical instruments. Their work focuses on music but draws from dance and other cultural elements.

John Miller Chernoff (1979) makes an important contribution to African music, particularly in the area of aesthetics and performance. He adopts a participatory approach in studying Ghanaian music in its social and ceremonial contexts, and its functions and aesthetic values. Also included in his work are some notations of Ewe and Dagomba drum rhythms and photographs of performers. Chernoff’s work focuses on music but refers to dance performances in their cultural context.

Kofi Agawu’s work (2003), which provides a critical perspective on the discourse of representing Africa, treats ethical considerations, assumptions, and prejudices that influence the presentation of ethnographic data, and theorizes about the definition of African music. His earlier work (1995) provides a detailed discussion of the integration of African rhythms with life, the characteristics of northern Ewe music and dance, their cultural functions, and the relationship between language and rhythm. Agawu here provides a useful example of an integrated approach to theorizing on African music and dance, although he focuses on rhythmic aspect.

Nissio Fiagbedzi (2005) elucidates the nature of the aesthetics in African musical arts, drawing from Ewe philosophical concepts, worldview, and performance process. Also included in his work are questions and suggestions on the relationship between aesthetics and morality and examples of aesthetic concepts from the Ewe, Akan, and Ga cultures. In an earlier work (1996/97), Fiagbedzi re-integrates music, dance, and drama, and reviews the Ewes’ creative process, language concepts, and the sociocultural functions of Ewe performing arts. Included in this work is a speculation as to the possible roles Ghanaian artists might play, in the next ten to twenty years, with respect to the traditional, contemporary creative, and educational processes. Finally, Fiagbedzi recommends bi-musical (African and Western musical) education and the development of the social, artistic, and economic potential of the succeeding generations of Ghanaian artists. However, the African performing arts education in this contemporary era may require multi-musical and integrated approaches.

S. Friedson (2009) adopts a participatory and observatory approach in discussing some Ewe rituals and their associated music and dance practices. He traces the migration of some northern Ghanaian gods to southern Eweland; their
roles in the daily lives of the worshippers, with particular reference to major
gods (such as Kunde, Ablewa/Tseriya, Sanya Kompo Ketetsi, Sara Konde and
Wango), and minor gods (such as Tsenge, Gediya and Surugu). Also included
in his book is a discussion on the relationship between the Gods, priests and
priestesses, the significance of rituals and music and dance in such religious ob-
servations, and their impacts on the followers, participants, and observers.

A recent book by William Ofotsu, Adinku (1994) discusses the develop-
ment of African dance education. A proposed Bachelor in Dance in Society
curriculum model is included. In the first section, on dance as a cultural ac-
tivity, Adinku provides an insight into the sociohistorical and cultural context
of African dance, its movement qualities and spatial organization, and its vi-
sual imagery such as costumes, properties, and make-up. In the second sec-
tion, on dance as an art form, he regards the new compositions as a continuation
of the older ones and stresses the need for contemporary Ghanaian artists to
base their creative works on the older patterns. Adinku reexamines the West-
ern notion of art for art’s sake and describes the work of the contemporary
Ghanaian choreographer Mawere Opoku as both a reflection of the notion of
art for its own sake and art that reflects Ghanaian cultural values. In the third
section, on dance as an aesthetic activity, Adinku further reviews the Western
concepts of objectivity and aesthetic experience and affirms the historical and
cultural basis of various dance forms. Adinku’s Bachelor of Arts in Dance cur-
riculum model draws from Susan Walther’s model of dance description, in-
terpretation and evaluation (Walther, 1979). Its objectives are to familiarize
students with the functions of dance within the traditional African cultures
and to provide them with the basis for participation in, and appreciation and
understanding of the cultural context of dance and to utilize cultural dance
forms as a tool for their own creativity, evaluation, and criticism of dance.
Adinku stresses the need for students of African dance to undertake field trips
to traditional areas in order to interact with the local people, and the need to
involve the local people in performance and teaching. Although Adinku refers
to music, he treats dance as a separate subject. Further, his distinctions be-
tween dance as cultural activity, art form, and aesthetic activity may lead to dis-
tinctions between dance which is art and dance which is not art, and dance
which is an aesthetic activity and dance which is not.

Kariamu Welsh-Asante (1985) discusses the common elements that under-
lie African dance aesthetics, such as polyrhythm, polycentrism, curvilinear
forms, shapes and structures. She also discusses the holistic and multisensory
modes of African dance performance, the use of memory, documentary and
critical roles of African performers, open-ended creativity, repetition which
reinforces contextual values, and stylistic devices.
Welsh-Asante’s other work (1994) critiques the Western view of the African dancer’s body as an erotic, exotic, and sensual object, thereby elucidating the sociocultural values that shape the African female body and its dances. She elucidates the influence of the Western individualized body on the African woman’s body in this contemporary era and suggests the need for a reconsideration of African cultural values that shape their concept of the body.

An anthology edited by Welsh-Asante (1996) provides an insightful discussion of the cultural framework of African dances, drawing from some African and African-American cultures, individual dancers and choreographers. Also included in her work are the changing conceptions of African dance creativity and aesthetics. Her works also focus on the dance component of African music and dance.

Patience Kwakwa (1994) addresses the sociocultural values, beliefs, ideas, gender roles, and environmental factors that shape African female dances. She pinpoints the essential female qualities in Akan dances with reference to neighboring groups, such as the Ewe, Dagomba and Ga. Kwakwa elucidates the crucial role of African women in dance education and perpetuation. Kwakwa’s work focuses on dance as a unique discipline.

Mawere Opoku (1987) reveals the nature of Asante court dances, courtly manners, and etiquette as reflected in the Asante court dances, in comparison with the Western court dances during the reign of Louis XIV. Opoku discusses the qualities of Akan dances, the impact of the physical and social environment on Akan dances, and the use of Akan dances as a form of historical documentation and as an instrument for establishing connections between the Africans at home and in the Diaspora. Also included in Opoku’s work are the semiotic functions of costume, props, and other paraphernalia, and a brief discussion of the training of Akan dancers. Opoku emphasizes dance elements but refers to music and visual elements of the integrated Ghanaian music and dance.

Blum Odette (1973) provides an insightful introduction to Ghanaian history and social organization, a discussion of the formation of dance groups, an analysis of Ghanaian dance movements and modes of presentation, photographs, and notation for some Ghanaian dance movements. Blum’s work refers to the relationship between dance and music but focuses on dance.

Omofolabo Ajayi (1998) examines Yoruba dance within the context of religious communication, the role of Yoruba divinities in the physical and metaphysical universe and creative process, and the Yoruba conception of creativity, dance, and aesthetics.

Alphonse Tierou (1992) makes another contribution to African dance. The introduction reviews the Western ethnocentric view of African cultures and
art forms, and the influence of African arts on Western artists such as Picasso, Vlaminck, Derain, Juan Gris, Braque and L’Hote. A discussion of the nature of African dances, their creative genesis, and the environmental and cultural factors that shape them is also provided. Tierou further provides a guide to African dance pedagogy, including the mainstream participatory method, the structural analytical approach, and the contextual learning approach. Finally, Tierou includes some photographs of sculptures, a mask, and a dancer. Tierou’s study also treats dance as a separate discipline. Some of the sculptural figures in Tierou’s work may require revisiting.

A recent work by Francesca Castaldi (2006) focuses on Senegalese ballet. After reviewing the discourse of representation of African cultures, Castaldi treats African choreography, reexamines the heterogeneity of the membership of the Senegalese Ballet, and suggests an alternative mode of categorizing ethnic dances.

Another helpful scholar, focusing on the ritual and visual dimensions of African dance, is Michel Huet. His work (1978, 1996) offers an introduction to the historical and social context of sub-Saharan African dances (with a focus on French West Africa), their ritual and social functions, and provides photographs of elaborate masks and masquerades dances. The focus on the visual dimension of African music and dance reflects Huet’s experience as a photographer.

Sharon Friedler (1997) provides a useful guide for cross-cultural art researchers and educators. She discusses the nature of the academic program in Ghanaian arts institutions (particularly the School of Performing Arts), educational leadership, and the role of Ghanaian artists as perpetuators of traditional art forms and creators of new art forms. Also included in her discussion are the current projects of Ghanaian arts educators and practitioners, and the potential for arts research in the country.

Robert Manford (1996) discusses the general purpose of education and music education in particular. He discusses the sociocultural functions of music and stresses the significance of music performance in bringing self-confidence and feelings of self-achievement. He views the current Ghanaian music curriculum as falling short of modern aims and objectives of education by its emphasis on singing and theory at the expense of the aesthetic education. Manford suggests the need to provide opportunities for children to develop their aesthetic potential through performance of local instruments, songs, and movements, and through listening to, composing, and improvising music relevant to their developmental levels at home and in schools, as a basis for learning foreign music.

Kitty Fadlu-Deen (1988) surveys the pedagogical approaches to teaching music to Ghanaian elementary school children and reveals that some of the
teaching materials are irrelevant to modern music education. Fadlu-Deen suggests the need for Ghanaian music educators to draw from local materials, such as percussion, songs, movements, and games, and adopt integrated and interactive approaches to teaching music.

Mensah Aggrey (1984) surveys the opinion of Ghanaian secondary school students about their music education programs in selected schools in the Central Region of Ghana. Her research, which focuses on teaching style, teaching materials and the curriculum content, reveals the unattractive nature of the music program in Ghanaian secondary schools, due to the low regard students have for the subject, teaching styles, and lack of teaching aids.

A review of the Ghanaian schools’ music curriculum is provided by E. A. Akrofi (1982), who discusses the curriculum reform process followed by the Ghanaian Ministry of Education aimed at relating the curriculum to Ghanaian cultural values. Such a reform led to the teaching of Ghanaian languages, traditional music, and dance and cultural studies in the tertiary institutions and as extracurricular activities in the elementary and secondary schools.

Akosua Addo (1990, 1995) surveys the strategies for teaching music and children’s singing games in Ghanaian elementary schools. Her work includes an investigation of children’s musical cultures of singing games, dance, drama, and language in some schools in the Central Region of Ghana. She further examines the level of acculturation among Ghanaian children, and the use of multimedia devices, such as video, audio, and computer technologies in the documentation and teaching of Ghanaian children’s singing games. Addo reviews the music syllabi of the Ghanaian elementary and secondary schools and training colleges, and pinpoints some of the deficiencies, which include an emphasis on theory and singing at the expense of integrated learning, and inadequate representation of children’s values in the curriculum. Addo further reviews the relevance of Carl Orff and Kodaly’s music teaching methods to Ghanaian music education.

Alexander Agordoh (1994) provides a survey of the history, characteristics, and contextual framework of African music, including social, religious, and political music, and discussion of individual musical performances. Also included in his work are transcriptions of selected songs and multiple-choice questions for students. However, his statement that “African music is improvised” in his comparison of Western and African music may create a false impression that the entirety of African music is improvised.

E. Y. Egblewogbe (1977) provides a sociocultural framework of Ewe personal names, including their typology, syntax, morphology and semantics, and reveals the philosophical and educational values that underlie these names. Egblewogbe’s 1995 publication examines the role of games in African children’s
education. He discusses the Ewe virtues that are transmitted to children and the reflection of these virtues and other social experiences in children’s games and songs at various developmental stages. Egblewogbe also provides a contextual framework of Ewe children’s games.

G. K. Nukunya (1969) offers a comprehensive study of the traditional and the contemporary sociopolitical and economic life of the Aŋlɔ-Ewe, including their history, location, occupation, religious practices, and kinship or lineage system, and the effects of contemporary changes on their social, economic, and political systems.

An concise ethnographic work conducted by Madeline Manoukian (1972) treats the Ewe-speaking people, their location, history, language, and socio-economic and political organization (kinship terminology, marriage, divorce, inheritance, and succession). There are minor inaccuracies in Manoukian’s terminology due to cultural and geographical barriers.

Recent works by V. Y. Mudimbe (1988, 1994) offer philosophical reflections on African historical and cultural experiences. These include early Greco-Roman representations of Africa and its people; the partitioning of Africa by Spain and Portugal in 1493 (by papal bull); European exploration, colonization, and representations of Africa; Pan-Africanism; the effects of Marxism on African political systems; the ambiguities of ideological choices; the rise of the second generation of African intellectuals and the emergence of an African epistemological foundation; problems of cultural relativism; and the contemporary African reality. These works are very illuminating and thought-provoking.

A number of graduate theses have also been dedicated to the Ewe music and culture. An astounding dissertation by Nissio Fiagbedzi (1977) integrates musicology, anthropology, and history in its analysis of Ewe music. Fiagbedzi provides a detailed discussion of the historical and cultural background of the Aŋlɔ-Ewe, their musical organization, creative process, song structure, the interaction between their language and melodies, song genres, Ewe terminology and transcriptions of some Ewe songs. This, his initial work, treats the musical component of African music and dance as a unique subject.

Daniel Avorgbedor’s dissertation (1986) includes an ethnographic study of the Aŋlɔ-Ewe’s geographical location, economy, and social system; of the effects of social mobility on their musical organization; and of their manner of composition, innovation, and performance.

Willie Anku’s work (1986), focusing on the drumming aspect of Ghanaian music and dance, involves a comparative study of the Akan and Ewe instrumental music performance processes. He discusses the construction of Ghanaian musical instruments, the environmental factors that influence the selection of
constructional materials, tuning of the musical instruments, performance techniques, instrumental rhythmic organization and structure. He further provides a comparison of African drumming in both Ghana and Pittsburgh. Also included in his work are some transcriptions of drum music. His more recent work (1996) provides a holistic approach to African drumming, integrating songs and movements.

William Kɔmla Amoaku’s dissertation (1975) discusses the sociohistorical and cultural frameworks of Ewe music. The introduction addresses the effects of colonization on African cultures, early Western representations of African cultures, and contemporary problems of representing Ghanaian cultures through Western theoretical methods. He suggests the need to emphasize the culture’s perspective in the cross-cultural theorizing process. Amoaku’s work is holistic in its integration of music and dance, costume, visual imagery, and symbolism of the Ewe.

The above literature review has indicated that the various scholars focused on specific areas of African performing arts and cultures, which may reflect their interests, specialities, and specific aims and objectives. Some focused on drumming; others focused on dance, singing, and music while some adopted an interdisciplinary approach to theorizing on African performing arts in specific contexts. My integrated approach to theorizing on the African performing arts will complement the previous approaches.

Methodology

This project extends my ongoing investigation into African music and dance, which began in my infancy through my participation in and observation of Aŋlo-Ewe music and dance in the social, religious, ceremonial, economic, and political contexts. Formal field research for this curriculum development project was conducted intermittently between September 1997 and August 1999. This took place mainly in Ghana, particularly in the Volta region (Aŋloa, Tegbui, Woe, and Keta) in the Aŋlo-Ewe traditional settings, and at junior and secondary schools in Aŋloa, Donogbo and Keta. Archival research was conducted at the Ghanaian School of Performing Arts and was supplemented through participation in and observation of music and dance classes and performances. I gathered information at Sekondi-Takoradi during the Ghanaian Second Cycle’s National Music and Cultural Festival (11–16 December 1997) as well as in Canadian libraries, on the Internet, and at African music and dance performances and conferences in Canada and the USA.

The research involved observation, participation, demonstration, and teaching some traditional Ewe and Ghanaian music and dance forms, such as ag-
INTRODUCTION

badza, adzida, ageshe, agbekɔ, adzogbo, gadzo, nyayito, gohu, misegɔ, afavu, atrikpui, zizihawo, and goto of the Ewe; fontomfrom, adowa, and kete of the Akan; and kpanlongo and fumefume, in both the local and institutional settings. I have documented some of these performances in the local areas on social, ceremonial, and festive occasions with audio-visual devices.

I also interviewed traditional artists, parents, elementary and secondary school students and performers, instructors, some members of the Ghana Dance Ensemble, and affiliates of the School of Performing Arts, the Institute of African Studies, and the International Centre for African Music and Dance. My interviews were mainly informal and involved an investigation of students’ age, their preferred music and dance forms, and their perspectives on the prevailing music and dance curriculum, the separation of African music and dance, linguistic concepts, the creative process, and the aesthetic values of these art forms.

I have interacted with renowned musicians and composers such as Emmanual Logodzi Ahiabor and Afi Amegago regarding the historical developments of Ewe music and dance and the creative/performative and instrument-making processes, linguistic concepts, and the ethical and aesthetic values of performances. I also interviewed master percussionists, dancers, composers, and senior members of the Ghana Dance Ensemble, such as Foli Adade, Salomon Amankwando, and William Diku on the origin, development, performance processes, functions, and meanings of some Ghanaian/West African music and dance forms and elements. Renowned professors such as J. H. K. Nketia, Mawere Opoku, Nissio Fiagbedzi, Willie Anku, and Nii Sowah were interviewed on issues regarding curriculum content and cultural representation.

I have reviewed relevant books and audio-visual materials in the Ghanaian School of Performing Arts, the International Centre for African Music and Dance, the Institute of African Studies, libraries of the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University, York University, and the University of Calgary. Lack of funding, equipment, and time prevented me from collecting more data for the project.

In the process of analyzing this data and theorizing on the subject, I would like to state that being born and raised within the Ewe and Ghanaian traditions and educated in their local and institutional settings has given me an added advantage in gaining much insight into the culture. This is not to imply any absolute understanding of the culture and art forms, but I will endeavor to provide a comprehensive analysis of this data to facilitate cross-cultural arts education.
Note

The letter υ which is inserted from the font of Lucida san Unicode sounds like “or”.

The letter υ which is inserted from Lucida san Unicode stands for a bilabial fricative letter, pronounced as if one is blowing air over the lower lip.

The letter f which is inserted from Lucida san Unicode is also pronounced as if one is blowing air over the lower lip.

The letter η which is inserted from Lucida san Unicode is pronounced by exerting some tension in an area of the throat closer to the soft palate and sounds like the suffix “ng” of “going”.

The letter γ which is inserted from Lucida san Unicode is pronounced with some release of air out of the stomach or throat.

The θ which is inserted from Lucida san Unicode is pronounced which the tongue slightly touching the hard palate, and sounds close to “re”, or “ra”.

The letters, L and C placed at the beginning of some of the sentences of the songs refer to the lead and the chorus parts of the songs respectively.
An African Music and Dance Curriculum Model
Chapter One

The Curriculum Foundation

1.1 Definition of the Curriculum

The term curriculum derives from the Latin word currere, meaning “to run a course”, or “a course to be run”, or “a program to run”. With time, its use in schools caused the term to be defined as a course of study (Barrow, 1990, p. 84; Wiles and Bondi, 1993, p. 9). The conception of the curriculum continues to shift in relation to social conditions, the emergence of new experiences, and changing conceptions of knowledge. Another definition of the curriculum (as influenced by the work of Tyler, 1949) refers to the knowledge, skills and attitudes actually learned by students (Barrow 1990, p. 85)

Some educators define the curriculum as permanent subjects such as grammar, reading, rhetoric, logic, and mathematics (for the elementary and secondary schools), and the “great books” of the Western world (beginning at the secondary level of schooling) (Marsh and Willis, 1999, p. 8). Other educators maintain that the curriculum must consist essentially of disciplined study in five areas: (1) command of one’s mother tongue and the systematic study of grammar, literature, and writing; (2) mathematics; (3) sciences; (4) history; and (5) foreign languages (Wiles and Bondi, p. 9). Such definitions limit the curriculum to the subjects considered academically significant or relevant.

The curriculum is further defined as subjects that are most useful for living in contemporary society (Marsh and Willis, 1999, p. 8). This definition of the curriculum places more value on contemporary issues and problems. Such a definition does not prevent individual students from making their own choices about which subjects are most useful for their lives but it may create a tendency to undermine other valuable cultural knowledge.

Manifestations of the curriculum include the planned and unplanned (the hidden) curriculum, and technical and practical learning. The planned curriculum may be written out in long or short documents, specifying course contents, lists of intended outcomes, or simply the general ideas of teachers about what students should know. The exponents of the planned curriculum include Say-
lor, Alexander, and Lewis (1981), Beauchamp (1981), and Posner (1998) (Marsh and Willis, p. 8; Wiles and Bondi, p.10). Some educators define the hidden curriculum as the unplanned experiencing of things, such as the taken-for-granted rules, rituals and regulations of the school (Marsh and Willis, p. 9).

The above definition of the curriculum places more emphasis on planned activities but provides scope for the unplanned experiences in the curriculum and educational settings.

A sociological definition of curriculum is proposed by Caswell and Cambell, who define the curriculum as composed of all experiences children have under the guidance of a school (Wiles and Bondi, p. 10). This definition does not include learning experiences that children have outside the school environment; neither does it differentiate between the desirable and undesirable learning experiences within the school environment.

A more liberal definition of the curriculum is proposed as all the experiences that learners have in the course of living (Marsh and Willis, p. 9). This definition emphasizes the personal and social character of the curriculum and does not differentiate between school experiences and general life experiences; neither does it specify the role of schools in curriculum development and education. Still others maintain that “education should be conceived as a guided recapitulation of the process of inquiry which gives rise to the fruitful bodies of organized knowledge comprising the established disciplines” (Wiles and Bondi, 1993, p. 9).

Some of the previous definitions of the curriculum tend to undervalue the fine and performing arts. They also de-emphasize learning experiences which occur outside the school environment. Needless to say, many of the curricula that were proposed during the Greek, Roman and early Christian eras, and during the period of renaissance and reformation in Europe included music, dance and physical training (see Thompson, 1951, pp. 106–111). Some contemporary educators conceptualize the curriculum as an aesthetic, poetic, critical storytelling and a theatrical text (Pinar, et al., 1995, pp. 567–605). For example, Madeleine R. Grumet (1978, p. 280) states that the aesthetic function of the curriculum replaces the amelioration of the technological function with revelation. Maxine Greene (1988b, p. 295) states

“If the uniqueness of the artistic-aesthetic can be reaffirmed, if we can consider futuring as we combat immersion, old either/or may disappear. We may make possible a pluralism of vision, a multiplicity of realities. We may enable those we teach to rebel” (cited in Pinar, pp. 567–568).

The above statement suggests the need to discard the older practices of marginalizing certain realities in the school curriculum in order, first, to develop
a curriculum that would reflect multiple modes of knowing, and alternative visions and realities; and, second, to avoid rebellion from certain cultures and students. Similarly, Knitter (1986, p. 265) states,

“An aesthetic model for curricular thought and action would rest upon the principle of developing experience: the point is not to do away with substantive principles and rules and recipes, but to transform our use of them by reflectively relating them to developing experience” (cited in Pinar et al., p. 568).

The above statement suggests the need to reform the curriculum to contribute to the development of the experiences of the various learners or students. “Curriculum as an aesthetic text functions as an agent of disclosure, in which new possibilities, hitherto unperceived in the ground of their daily experience, are revealed to students” (Pinar et al., p. 593). Karen Hamblen (1986) notes, “studying art—insofar as it indicates universal associations and relationship—reveals what it means to be human at a particular time and place” (cited in Pinar et al., p. 568).

A contemporary rationale for the importance of the arts in education focuses upon the centrality of imagination to aesthetic experience, and the consequent relation among imagination, language, thought, and feeling (Langer, 1957; Egan, 1992; as cited in Pinar et al., p. 569). Harry Broudy (a distinguished philosopher of education) argues that historically and theologically, the material of imagination—the image—precedes “the word” i.e., concepts (Pinar et al., 1995, p. 569). He maintains that the cultivation of the intellect—the capacity to generate, analyze, and synthesize concepts—necessarily requires the cultivation of the imagination (Broudy as cited in Pinar et al, p.569). Broudy views language as a system of symbols, often imagistic in character and maintains that children without a rich store of images are less able to decode concepts and articulate perceptions. In this way aesthetic literacies can be regarded as essential to linguistic literacies. They are foundational to social intelligence as well (cited in Pinar et al., 1995, pp. 569–570). The view of language as a system of symbols, imagistic in character is relevant to Africans’ association of words or concepts with images, events, and experiences in their meaning-making process.

Reflecting on children’s dance, Susan W. Stinson (1985b, p. 17) states, “curriculum exists only as it comes through persons” (cited in Pinar, et. al., p. 567). Stinson and other scholars who conceptualize the curriculum as an aesthetic text maintain that the curriculum comes to form as art does, as a complex mediation and reconstruction of experience, and can, in this regard, be likened to any art form, for instance, dance (Stinson, 1986, as cited in Pinar et al., pp. 567–568).
Thomas E. Barone suggests that the educational reform must begin with curriculum specialists deconstructing their own texts, departing from the conception of the curriculum as a closed system, toward a more discursive community where the curriculum will be “disturbing” and “transformative” (Barone, as cited in Pinar et al., p. 574). Barone proposes the need to deconstruct the traditional discourse that honors the hierarchy of producers over consumers of mass media, popular magazines, trade books, and journals, and to combat the invisible power configurations, norms, values, and interests of much educational literature (Pinar et al., p. 575). Such a move would include in the curriculum the experiences of various people and regard both the producers and consumers as co-producers or co-mediators of knowledge.

Some contemporary educational theorists such as Madeleine Grumet and Jerzy Grotowsky conceptualize the curriculum as theater (Pinar et al., p. 589). Grumet contends that autobiographical reflection can expose the genesis of assumption and commonsensical attitudes of students and teachers (Ibid., p. 590). Grumet’s views of the curriculum as theater extend beyond autobiographical reflection to improvisational dance, acting exercises, and scene production, to bring students back to the conscious sense of their own bodies, feelings, thoughts, and world (Ibid., p. 590). Grumet notes further that “curriculum is the process of persons coming to form, not content, only in idealized isolation is curriculum content primary”. She argues that: “The student’s response to the curriculum reveals his possibilities for action within the particular domain of experience-natural, social, aesthetic—that the curriculum as content symbolizes” (ibid., p. 593).

Taken together, the above conceptions of the curriculum reflect a wide range of human experiences. In my situational analysis, I have reconceptualized the traditional African curriculum and educational process to include participation in, and reflections on a whole range of valuable African experiences such as activities in the socioeconomic and political spheres. The notion of curriculum brings into focus the purpose of its development, which is education. Etymologically, the word education means the process of leading out (of ignorance) or bringing up. The term is also applied by some educationalists to mean the process of fostering, nurturing, and cultivating, or the process of shaping, forming, molding an activity, or a person in conformity with a desired standard (Dewey, 1944, p. 10). John Dewey refers to education as the process by which the society perpetuates itself (Ibid., p.11). Robin Barrow refers to education as involvement in a number of activities designed to contribute to the desired result which should lead to the development of a broader understanding (as distinct from accumulation of knowledge) (Barrow, 1990, pp. 105–106). A Ghanaian educator, V. K. Ametefee, refers to education as “the process of socialization whereby the human individual is trained to adapt
to sociocultural, physical and natural environments to enable him/her survive meaningfully.” This involves participation in economic and religious activities (Agbodeka, 1997, p. 219).

In brief, the above definitions of the curriculum and education refer to the human agent, society, environment, culture, knowledge, activity and goal. In view of the fact that this curriculum project is geared toward intercultural music and dance education, I will review the Western and African conceptions of human nature, human development, human family, society, school, epistemology, and ethics as a basis for this curriculum development and implementation. In doing so, I will draw mainly from the work of Western philosophers such as Plato, Locke, Rousseau, and Dewey that I find relevant to the traditional African conception of human nature, human development, family, society, and knowledge. These thinkers have had a considerable influence on contemporary African philosophy and education.

1.2 Human Nature

The conception of human nature continues to shift throughout history, though it has retained some of its essential elements. The ancient Greek philosopher Plato defines human nature as a combination of the body and soul. He maintains that the soul is composed of three kinds of abilities or faculties of action: reason, spirit, and the appetitive faculty. He contends that reason is the part of the soul through which human beings cultivate a sense of rationality and good judgement. He further defines human spirit as an agency of the soul which assists the mind in cultivating rationality by acting in accordance with the will that translates knowledge or wisdom to virtuous action (Conford, 1941, pp. 129–131; 307; Price, 1967, p. 19). Plato further maintains that all human beings have the faculty of appetite or desire, whose movements he subdivides into necessary and unnecessary desires. The necessary desires are those needed to sustain life, such as desire for food, sex, and shelter. The unnecessary desires are those that aestheticize life and may be indifferent or even disruptive to life. Plato maintains that all desires aim at securing personal pleasure. He further holds that all individuals are endowed with some natural aptitude or other: some may excel in acquiring knowledge and wisdom, while others may excel in physical activities or in the production of goods and services (Price, 1967, pp. 19–20). Plato’s conception of human nature reflects ancient Greek socio-historical and environmental conditions and social structure. His view of the individual’s natural aptitude is held by most traditional societies but this is now problematic to determine due to the complexity of human interaction.
and the effects of technology on human qualities and endeavors. The question is raised as to whether the notion of natural aptitude should be reduced to individual idiosyncrasies or common human values.

The seventeenth-century English philosopher John Locke conceptualizes human nature as a combination of mind and body. He maintains that the human mind has the power of understanding through the power of perception or thinking, which includes knowing, believing, reasoning, sensation, and reflection. (Price, 1967, pp. 253–255). Locke maintains that understanding is the first capacity of human intellect and involves conceptualization, perception of objects, and ideas capable of being translated into signs. He further states that these ideas are formulated through the sensation of external objects and reflection or introspection. Locke defines desire as an idea which is pleasant or good and whose absence is painful and requires future gratification (Price, 1967, p. 255). He categorizes desires as natural and unnatural. The natural desires are those that are necessary to sustain life and include desire to secure bodily pleasure and to avoid pain, desire for freedom, desire for power, desire for material needs, desire for approbation of others and to avoid their censure, desire to control, desire to vary an activity after a long period of repetition, desire to know, and desire to be happy. The unnatural desires include desire for fancy (imagination) or learned desires, which are unnecessary to life and could be prevented by reasoning. He further holds that all human beings have the power of will, which is the ability to prefer or choose, and this power is intimately connected with liberty, which is the power in any human agent to do or forgo any action according to the determination and/or thought of the mind whereby one of them is preferred to the other (Price, pp. 259–261).

Locke’s conception of human nature reflects the emphasis on human rationality and increasing human desires characteristic of the seventeenth century. However, his notion that humans desire control raises the question whether teachers or learners should desire to control their students, colleagues, or knowledge in the learning process. Indeed, self-control is essential in life and in the learning process. In addition, some individuals who are assigned mediating roles may desire to mediate between various people in order to regulate social vices for the welfare of the community or the state. Some people may desire to control the environment and other people, which may not be socially or contextually desirable. The current Western educational system also stresses empowerment, which refers to freedom to control one’s destiny or goal, and is aimed at developing one’s self-esteem and avoiding a negative self-image (especially on the part of minority students) (see Shor in Ghosh, 1996, p. 58). Students can be empowered through the acquisition of decision making, critical thinking and communication skills (Ghosh, 1996, pp. 58–59). However, the notion of control should be contextualized.
Jean-Jacques Rousseau defines human nature as a combination of the soul and body (Rousseau, 1979, pp. 246–247, and 256; Price, p. 326). He identifies five capacities of the body: sense, feeling, desire, will, and reason. He further elucidates the senses of smell, taste, touch, hearing and seeing (Rousseau, p. 122; Price, p. 326). Like Locke, Rousseau maintains that these senses are triggered by external objects and are presided over by common sense or reason. Rousseau further holds that pleasure and pain are intimately connected with sensation which in turn triggers human desires. He categorizes desires under innate/instinctual desires and the learned desires. Innate desires include the self-love needed for survival (as distinct from selfishness), desire for food, water, sleep, crying, and pity. The learned desires are those acquired through social interaction and include desire for vengeance, punishment, dominion, aggression, servitude or submissiveness, and personal property. Rousseau identifies humans’ sexual desire, but maintains that a child’s sexual desire is primarily directed toward physical consummation and, as such, involves no love or affection for any object on which it may focus. He holds that desire for pity arouses our empathy and sympathy toward our fellow human beings who are suffering or perishing (Price, pp. 327–329).

Similar to Locke, Rousseau defines the will as the soul’s capacity to choose between conflicting goals and initiate one course of action instead of another. He contends that commonsense reasoning provides us with ideas of particular things while intellectual reasoning enables us to compare particular ideas and to form the idea of a thing. Rousseau acknowledges the importance of language in human development (Price, 1967, pp. 329–331). Rousseau’s conception of human nature reflects the values of the eighteenth century, and his personal experiences and speculations on future human societies. His view of children’s sexual behavior may also depend on the social conditions of his time. Obviously, a child may be curious about the functioning of his/her sexual organs but within a communal setting, parents keep watchful eyes on children and prevent them from engaging in any sexual misconduct during childhood.

Another definition of human nature is proposed by the twentieth-century American pragmatic philosopher John Dewey, who defines human nature as a combination of force and pattern. The force (impulse) is innate and has no direction but very soon a pattern is assumed through habit (cited in Price, p. 552). Habit is a disposition to respond in a certain way to environmental stimuli. He maintains that the mode of releasing the impulse is taught by experience, and the smooth release of impulse, which the organism learns, is its adjustment to its world. In this adjustment the impulse finds its objective (Price, p. 552). Dewey contends that intelligence is acquired when habit breaks down or when change in the person lags behind changes in the environment,
Dewey’s conception of human nature as a combination of force and pattern reflects his conception of the American socio-historical and cultural conditions characterized by progressive ideology, technological advancement, the emerging global capitalism, and intense social mobility from rural to urban and industrial areas in competition for economic wealth. His view of human nature as a combination of force and pattern suggests a metaphor of constant human mobility (from one environment to another) and adaptation to new environments. It is obvious that there is no universal human being. Although all human beings share common characteristics, each person is unique in appearance and behavior. However, Dewey’s notion that intelligence is acquired when habit breaks down further reinforces his progressive ideology, and hence, his recommendation of new habits. This needs proper scrutiny. The older habits may neither necessarily imply lack of intelligence nor does the acquisition of new habits always lead to “intelligence.” Some new habits may worsen peoples’ conditions and necessitate reverting to older habits. Adopting this view of Dewey may create a tendency to regard all old habits as primitive in the era of technological developments.

The above conceptions of human nature may be regarded as complementary, serving as a synecdoche of the various humane qualities during the historical process. Hence, some defining characteristics and concepts such as soul, spirit, mind, body, wisdom, commonsense reasoning, rationality, feeling, the various desires (natural, innate, instinctual, and learned), as used by the various philosophers, may be variously interpreted at different points in time. The various philosophers inspired one another and have identified some of the essential humane characteristics such as the soul/spirit, mind, body, and the senses.

1.3 African Conception of Human Nature

Similar to that of the West, the African conception of human nature may have shifted over time. This may be elucidated through dialogue with the cultural bearers or through an investigation of the literary documents on African cultures. In view of the inevitable linguistic and cultural differences between societies, these views would no doubt be expressed in different ways but there would be similarities in the concepts.
The early theoretical representations of African nature can be located in the colonial discourses of anthropology or the social sciences, which view the African nature as savage, barbaric, primitive, childish, cruel, indolent, irrational, and emotional (Mudimbe, 1988, pp. 16–64). Some African intellectuals later revisited some of these views (in the 1930s) during their search for positive self-image. Leopold Senghor, a Senegalese leader, re-inscribed some of the Western representations of African people as essential elements of black personality. He states that

the Negro is the man of nature, by tradition, he lives off the soil and with the soil, and by the cosmos. He is sensual, a being with open senses, with no intermediary between subject and object, himself at once subject and object. For the Negro African, this accord and immediacy to nature is first of all, sounds, scents, rhythms, forms and colors; I would say that he is touched before being eyed like the white European. He feels more than he sees. This is the being of the Negro African, a docile immediacy in tune with nature (cited in Serequeberhan, 1994, p. 44).

He further states that “the black man had succeeded in perceiving the harmonious order of nature. Then, thanks to his feelings and intuitive intelligence, to his hands and techniques; he had become integrated with it” (Senghor, 1967, p. 51). Some of these qualities reiterated by Senghor, such as emotion/feeling, orientation toward the earth, love for sound, rhythm, color, scent, and subjectivity, constitute part of African humanity. However, the African mode of reasoning is not only intuitive; Africans are also capable of intellectual reasoning and/or rationality.

Part of the Ewe conception of human nature can be deduced from the qualities they attribute to Mawu, the Supreme Being, since they believe that human beings are created in the image of God. These attributes include Sogbo, which refers to the sun and symbolizes the male component of God, and Lisa, which refers to the moon and symbolizes the female qualities of the Supreme Being. These concepts translate into the union of the male and female and their procreation, indicating the spiritual, social, and sexual nature of human beings. Other attributes of the Supreme Being include aṣaya usu be yewo asi iwọ afọ, meaning, the craftsperson or artist who says s/he has created hands and feet. In this context, the Ewe employ hands and feet as a synecdoche of all things created by God (including human beings). The Ewe also refer to other human components such as luo (soul), gbọgbọ (breath/spirit), amekpotsi (human body), ko (neck), seselelamae (sensing or feeling), susu (mind), ho ho (brain), and de or no no me (character), as some defining characteristics of human beings. Similarly, the Akan conceptualize okra (the soul: the principle of life of a per-
son and the embodiment and transmitter of his or her destiny or *nkrabea*), *sunsum* (mental spirit: the active part of the human psychological system whose energy is grounded for its interaction with the external world, and which is also said to have extrasensory powers of thinking, feeling and desiring), *honam* (the body, formed partly by *ntoro*, the father’s spirit or semen, and *mogy*, the mother’s blood [*ntoro* and *mogy* are also genetic factors responsible for inherited characteristics]), as the essential elements of human nature. *Okra* and *sunsum* are considered immaterial while *honam* is material, indicating that the Akan hold a dualistic and interactionist view of human nature (Gyekye, 1987, pp. 94–103). The Ewe recognize *ta* (head) or *susu* (mind) as a guardian of the various human faculties. They also recognize the interaction between *tawo*, the various heads/minds. This is expressed in statements such as *wofe ta na he mi eye miafe ta nahe wo*, meaning, their heads should pull us and our heads should pull them. They also conceptualize *de* or *nnonome*, character (which manifests from *dzi*, heart, and is also attributed to conscience) as an important element of human beings and cherish an integrated functioning of the various human components. The Ewe maintain that human beings are products of the physical, social, and metaphysical environments. It can be inferred from the above analysis that the Ewe hold a holistic view of human nature.

Africans in general desire to know/learn through interaction with the physical environment and through practice, sensation or feeling, memorization, reflection and speculation on their experiences. They also desire to repeat significant activities and vary certain activities. Most Africans and particularly the Ewe recognize *hiahia*, basic human needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and practical activities such as music and dance; and *dzodzro*, desires or craving for some activities and material goods in specific or general contexts. They also desire to love, share their possessions and experiences with fellow humans as well as defend themselves in adverse conditions. The Ewe recognize individual differences and maintain that each individual may be endowed with *sefenu* (“nature’s thing or gift”; i.e., natural aptitudes) by *Se*, destiny, the law or lawgiver, or Supreme Being. Some people may excel in fishing, farming, hunting, medicine, spirituality, philosophy, teaching, music, dance, etc. The Ewe further maintain that, within the broader society some individuals may share the same natural aptitude, and an individual may excel in more than one activity. These natural aptitudes are believed to be passed on to the succeeding generations.

The Ewe acknowledge the limit of all human endeavors, and express this in proverbs and metaphors such as *nusianu fe sedofe li*, meaning everything has its limit; *Exi lia Xife li nae*, or *Exi* has its limits; *Eve lia vetae li nae*, the valley has its limits; and *nusianu ayae*, everything is worthless (or an illusion). The
qualities discussed above are not exhaustive but reflect some of the essentials of Ewe-African nature.

The above analysis of human nature has elucidated spiritual, social, physical, emotional, and intellectual human values and multiple human desires within specific and general contexts. It can be deduced from the analysis that the Western and African conceptions of human nature share many similarities. Differences in characteristics may be due to historical, environmental, cultural, and racial factors. The implication is that an African music and dance educator should consider the essential human elements in designing the curriculum. This raises the question of whether the arts can cater to the complexity of human nature, with its needs and desires, in this contemporary era. The extent to which African music and dance satisfy some of these humane values will be elucidated in the latter sections.

1.4 Developmental Stages

In principle, developmental theories are concerned with locating and describing the various stages of natural and maturational development through which individuals pass. These consist of descriptive stages of human development in chronological order (Barrow, 1990, p. 96).

An elaborate developmental theory which has had considerable influence on subsequent theories is that proposed by Rousseau on the five stages of human development. The first stage, from infancy to about two years, is said to be dominated by feeling of pleasure and pain through sensation received by the infant. The second, from two to about twelve years, is said to be characterized by eating, walking and the use of the faculties of sense, speech, hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling, and common sense. The third, from twelve to fifteen years (pre-adolescence), is marked by the child’s intellectual development (reasoning), and the excess strength and energy accumulated through the previous stages is directed toward satisfying the child’s curiosity, leading to judgements concerning the relations of things. During this stage, the child achieves the notion of the self and develops understanding of goals that would lead to his/her natural happiness. The fourth or adolescent stage, between fifteen and twenty years, is said to be dominated by the development of the child’s sexual desires; this, coupled with pity, develop the child’s interest and affection for other person(s) and marks the child’s moral development (during which s/he can act altruistically or selfishly). The fifth stage, from twenty to twenty-five years, is marked by maturity and will, and by the ability to distinguish between individual and civil rights (Price, pp. 331–334).
Further developmental theories were formulated by Piaget, Kohlberg, Erickson, Bruner and Isaacs (cited in Barrow, 1990, p. 97). For example, Jean Piaget’s theory of children’s cognitive development conceptualizes children as developing from the concrete to logical thinking stage. Similarly, Jerome Bruner categorizes three stages of growth: the enactive stage, characterized by learning by doing; the iconic stage, characterized by learning through images; and the symbolic stage, characterized by learning through language. He maintains that adults code experiences by all these means, but in some cases the enactive or iconic stage may dominate. Erik Erikson’s theory of personal development conceptualizes the adolescent stage as marked by a search for identity (cited in Barrow, 1990, p. 97). Similarly, Lawrence Kohlberg focuses on five stages of moral development, in terms of sense, fairness, legality, duty, and an increasingly rigid insistence on rules (ibid.).

Kieran Egan proposes four main stages of human development: the Mythic stage (up to seven years), the Romantic stage (7–14/15 years), the Philosophic stage (14/15–19/20 years), and the Ironic stage (19–20 years). According to Egan, the Mythic stage is characterized by mythic thinking during which myth users attempt to provide absolute accounts as to why things are the way they are. This is also a stage when people provide fixed meanings of events by relating them to sacred models. This view is based on the premise that mythic people lack intellectual security amid the changes of life in the world, and young people in the Western industrialized societies seem to establish their first security in a manner not dissimilar to mythic stories. Egan further holds that the Mythic stage is characterized by a lack of a clear sense of the world as autonomous and objective and that mythical stories are articulated on the basis of binary opposites: nature/culture, life/death, good/bad, etc. (Egan, 1979, pp. 11–13).

The Romantic stage is characterized by children’s perception of knowledge, experience, and the world as autonomous, separate, and fundamentally different. This stage is also characterized by the child’s anxiety and desire to satisfy his/her curiosity for the extreme (Egan, pp. 27–31).

The Philosophic stage is said to be characterized by the realization that all things are part of the same world but without concern for the connection between things. Students create a new kind of intellectual security within this newly received world through which they establish their place and roles in the natural, social, and historical processes of which they are becoming aware (Egan, pp. 50–53).

The Ironic stage is characterized by the student’s realization that the general scheme cannot accommodate all the particulars and no general scheme can adequately reflect the richness and complexity of reality. According to Egan, the
transition from the Philosophic to the Ironic stage is achieved by preserving the commitment to truth but recognizing that it is the particulars that can be established as truth. Students may resolve the dilemma at this stage on the proper epistemological status of the general scheme that they no longer perceive as true or false but as more or less useful for organizing the particulars into larger useful units. However, now it is the particulars that determine the general scheme, unlike at the philosophical stage (Egan, pp. 82–84). The writer, however, indicates that these stages overlap—they are just approximations, yet some of these modes of thought contribute to certain global historical and cultural changes.

The above developmental theories attempt to clarify the various stages of human development while focusing on specific premises at a given time and adopting specific methods. However, these theories reflect researchers’ observations, judgements, and hypotheses. The assessment of the various developmental stages are, therefore, culturally specific and involve value judgements, generalizations, and approximations. Thus, Piaget’s assertion that his work is partly epistemological and his claims about the chronological/invariant order of the stages are a matter of logical necessity and seldom provide a necessary and sufficient condition for child development (Barrow, 1990, p. 98).

Obviously, certain elements of the above theories may have cross-cultural relevance. However, in view of the early Western representations of Africans as primitive or barbaric and their knowledge as myths, superstitions, and static, the application of Egan’s developmental theory, for instance, to the African context raises the question of whether Africans are also perceived to have transcended the Primitive or Mythic stage to the Romantic, Philosophic and Ironic stages.

1.5 African Developmental Stages

The development of an African child is greatly influenced by his or her immediate environment. However, due to the higher degree of interaction between children and adults of both sexes within African societies, it is problematic to determine the exact developmental level of an individual African child. Nevertheless, some differing characteristics may be noted. The following examples are approximate stages of an Ewe child’s development based upon an empirical fact and my own experience among the Ewe.

An African child begins to develop spiritually under the nurturing of the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors with whom the child cultivates the highest sense of spirituality. An Ewe child gradually develops this spiritual quality
alongside other human components in the physical world. From infancy to about two years, is characterized by the child’s inability to provide his/her basic needs such as caring, bodily protection, food, clothing, and shelter. The period from 2 to 13 years is characterized by the gradual development of the child’s physical, social, emotional, and intellectual faculties. This stage is characterized by walking, playing games with toys and through participation in music and dance, doing domestic chores, and pursuing occupational activities in imitation of peers and adults.

Puberty or adolescence (from about 14 through 19 years) is characterized by physical development, including the growth of body hair, voice changes, the beginning of menstruation in the case of females, and moral and intellectual development (but dominated by physical growth). Traditionally, this stage is also marked by puberty rites for girls and initiation rites for both boys and girls into religious/political and educational institutions. The rest of life, from 20 years onward, is characterized by the total development of all humane qualities (spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual), but from between 70 and 80 years of age, development is marked by physical deterioration and the waning of memory.

It is obvious that the adolescent youth tends to be more energetic, curious and prone to excel in physical activities, while the elders (ranging between the ages of 30 and 70) are more experienced and reflective about their life experiences. Those beyond 70 or 80 gradually decline in physical and intellectual growth but retain a greater sense of spirituality, thus reversing the earlier developmental stages. There are also individual differences and some youth may be considered relatively more reflective and analytical of their life experiences.

The problem of determining specific developmental stages is further complicated by the influence of new technological, educational, and medical devices, and intensified social interaction which continues to blur the distinction between childhood and adulthood in terms of physical appearance, and social, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual development. Such phenomena also contribute to the gradual disappearance of some contextual experiences such as children’s games, music, dance, and other forms of knowledge, leading to mainstreaming in some contexts (see also Postman, 1994, pp. 98–148). In addition, the developmental stages may overlap, especially within a cross-cultural setting through moving backward and forward in stages, and relatively linear progression from one stage to another in time and place. However, certain aspects of these developmental stages may relate to the general and specific educational levels of students, and serve as a point of reference and a basis for future research.

The implication is that a contemporary arts educator should consider these developmental stages in relation to his/her aims and objectives in designing
the curriculum. The relevance of African music and dance to the various developmental stages will be elucidated in the latter sections (that will involve the restructuring of these art forms for university arts education).

1.6 The Family

Another factor worth considering in this curriculum project is the family. The conception of the family also continues to shift. For example, Locke develops a theological and patriarchal notion of the Western family by tracing its genealogy from Adam. He maintains that unlike Adam, who was endowed with innate powers of understanding and will, all his descendants would develop from the stage of immaturity to maturity, during which interval parents provide bodily and spiritual protection and education for their children (Price, pp. 263–264). Locke does not specify the size of the family but one may assume that it was relatively larger than the present-day Western nuclear family. In addition, John Dewey emphasizes broader social values, “one big family,” as revealed in his notion of a homogeneous society. The notion of one big family or homogeneous society accords with the American assimilative ideology, and this may extend to the global society. The above conceptions of the family reflect the sociohistorical conditions in the Europe and America respectively.

1.7 The African Family

The traditional African family extends from the immediate family of parents and siblings, to relatives, clans, lineage, and the entire community or society including neighboring creatures. The immediate family is usually headed by parents or guardians while the extended family is usually headed by lineage heads, chiefs, kings, ancestors, divinities, and God.

In this contemporary era, the immediate African family is relatively smaller but the family still extends to lineage, neighbors in the regions, and nations within and outside Africa. The same may apply to the contemporary Western family. However, the intensified social mobility from rural to urban areas for better employment opportunities, is leading to a gradual breakdown of the immediate family. Some contemporary families may now be perceived as spatially or temporally disintegrated while others have maintained a strong sense of interconnectedness. The majority of traditional African family members still reside in their original locations and are engaged in agriculture, farming, fishing, animal husbandry, weaving, goldsmithing, pottery, trading, and teaching. Those
in urban areas are engaged in large-scale fishing, weaving, animal husbandry; factory work, commercial and tertiary services such as banking, teaching, military, police, and telecommunications, governance, and civil service at home and abroad. The same may apply to contemporary Western families.

In this situation, the original role of the family as an arts/educational institution continues to decline, thus placing greater responsibility on teachers and other arts practitioners. Nevertheless, the family still provides the biological, social, emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual foundation for children’s education in many societies. The diversity of family values also poses a challenge to contemporary arts educators. However, the arts transcend family barriers and can serve as a unifying force for various families and social groups. This project will consider the crucial role of the family in arts education in the various contexts.

1.8 The Society, State, or Nation

Another factor worth considering in this curriculum development project is the society. The conception of society also continues to shift, while retaining essential elements. Plato provides a tripartite model of ancient Greek society based on the economic, military, and political classes. He maintains that primitive societies were formed by people who cultivated simple tastes and pursued simple livelihoods, and lived peacefully according to the dictates of the natural division of labor. However, the complexity of contemporary Greek society necessitated that individuals and groups perform broader economic, military, and political functions at home and abroad. This created a problem of injustice, thus necessitating the transformation of the primitive societies into civilized ones (Conford, pp. 53–64; Price, pp. 12–21). Plato contends that justice would prevail if every gifted individual (within the economic, military, and ruling classes) efficiently performed his/her duties without infringing on the provinces of others (Price, pp. 21–22). For Plato, primitivism suggests simplicity of taste and livelihood, and closeness to nature, while “civilization” presupposes civility or political state formation (which was necessitated by socioeconomic problems).

Similarly, Locke develops a metaphysical theory of Western society by viewing Adam and Eve as existing in peace/paradise during their early stages (Price, p. 268). He relates this stage to the genesis of human society, a non-political state marked by natural freedom and socialization partly derived from sexual instinct, and a long period of nurturing. In this state of nature, each person provided all his needs through engaging in multiple activities, and governed others by natural law. However, the development of society led to the desire
to control material wealth and other people, which in turn led to insecurity and the transformation of a non-political state into a political state. This mutual consent or agreement on the part of the members to surrender individual rights to the community and to punish violation of the law of nature by death is the social contract (Price, pp. 268–269). Other scholars, however, disagree with Locke by stating that nature is a completely non-social state and that the contract establishes society for the first time as an aspect of human life (Price, p. 269).

Indeed, one can hypothesize the past environment as inhabited by both hostile and friendly animals and bearing features that might have posed certain barriers to human habitation or maintained a check on human interaction with the environment. In this situation, the ancients might have devised ways of adapting to the environment. In view of these barriers, it is plausible to say that the ancients did not live in a perfect world. However, a reflection on our contemporary conditions which are characterized by technological developments, rapid depletion of resources, and speculation on future conditions may indicate that certain conditions in the past were better than our present and future conditions.

Rousseau's social contract theory relates to three stages of Western history. The first stage was the state of nature, in which men secured all their necessities with their strength and practical intelligence and by integrating their senses and reasoning to the fuller realization of their goals. The second stage was marked by the discovery of bows, fish hooks, and fire, which required and improved man's reasoning and further facilitated storage of food for future use. This accomplishment instilled a sense of pride in human beings. The third stage was marked by the development of new techniques for economic production, claims for property ownership, and the exclusion of non-members from the family group. The leader, the father of the family, acquired a property right. This economic inequality and interdependence transformed human desires and emotions. Men came to pity members of their own families, and pity coupled with sex gave rise to ties of love and affection between them. Language grew as a necessity for co-operative existence and expression of multiple desires. In addition, people developed vicious passions toward insiders and outsiders of the group. The love for others, the need for their approval, and the need for public approbation gave rise to the preference of some people over others, culminating in hurtful inclinations such as ambition, vengeance, jealousy, hatred, and cruelty or injustice (Price, pp. 336–337).

Rousseau also maintained that the transformation of a non-political state into a political state was necessitated by the desire for justice which emerged when landowners feared the loss of their property, small owners desired more
land, and non-owners of property posed a threat to both. Justice then emerged as an idea or a set of rules to regulate and ensure proper ownership and transfer. In addition, government and law emerged as instruments for enforcing morality and justice (Ibid., p. 337).

The above philosophers have elucidated socioeconomic problems and human insecurity, which necessitated the transformation of the “primitive” societies from the state of nature to into political states. But these perspectives raise a question of whether human beings constantly recognize their social nature as a basis for their state formation or whether this is reduced to insecurity and economic determinism.

Dewey conceptualizes society as a system of institutions whose subordinate parts fit together, and which as a whole can fit together with other societies (Price, p. 553). His notion of a homogeneous society accords with the American assimilation policy and the globalization process.

The above conceptions of human society reflect the European and American historical and cultural experiences. Some of these views were later applied to African societies by early Western explorers and by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Western anthropologists and social scientists. In the process, pre-colonial African societies were viewed as reflecting the European past, as primitive and static societies that must be transformed into civilized states through exploration, colonization, and exploitation. In consequence, some of these perspectives were later endorsed by African intellectuals and leaders during the African liberation struggle and African nationalism during the 1950s (Serequeberhan, 1994, p. 89).

A functionalist perspective (which also draws from the previous social theories) views human societies as complex wholes comprised of interrelated parts that singly and in unison contribute to the maintenance and survival of the whole. Functionalism further maintains that these interrelated parts must work smoothly for the system to operate efficiently and to enhance order and stability. Stresses associated with rapid social change may unravel these relationships to the point of temporary disarray. Countervailing measures are activated to restore a sense of equilibrium and order within society (Fleras and Elliot, 1996, p. 23).

Of particular influence on contemporary African societies is Marxism. The first part of Marxism, historical materialism, examines the relationship between the economic base (factors of production) and the superstructure (legal, political, and ideological institutions). The economic base evolves much faster than the superstructure and the superstructure poses a barrier to further development of the economic base. This leads to class struggle, a situation in which the factors of production are owned by the capitalist-ruling class who exploits the masses by appropriating their economic surplus for their own ben-
efits. In this situation, all social, political, and legal institutions are influenced by the ideologies of the ruling classes to justify and perpetuate social inequalities. Marxists, therefore, conceptualize ideology as a system of beliefs and practices which serves to maintain the asymmetrical allocation of economic and political power (Bullock and Stallybrass, 1988, p. 504).

Marxists envisage an egalitarian society with socialism as an alternative to capitalism, based on common ownership of the means of production. At its initial stage, the distribution of goods would be made according to the contribution of each individual. Later, this would be transformed to communism and would enable the famous principle of “from each according to their ability and to each according to their needs.” Marxists view the capitalist society as inherently unstable and crisis-ridden and doomed to inevitable collapse through a socialist revolution by its own offspring, the working class. This revolutionary upheaval would lead to a transition through dictatorship of the proletariat to a fuller realization of the communist society (Bullock and Stallybrass, pp. 504–505).

Marx’s perspective has been reinterpreted by conflict theorists who view human societies as complex systems of unequal groups organized around various criteria such as religion, social class, language, and territory, and who compete over scarce resources, including power, wealth, prestige, and sovereignty. Two variants of conflict theories prevail. According to moderate conflict theorists (Fleras and Elliot, 1996, p. 25), conflict is a normal and natural component of all societies. Relations between racial and ethnic groups are sorted out along axes of domination and subordination (Fleras and Elliot, p. 25). Groups that are economically and politically dominant will take steps to advance their own interests, by coercive means if necessary, or will seek control over key institutions through coalition building or through divide-and-conquer strategies to influence the values and attitudes necessary for maintaining their status quo (Jaret, 1995; Fleras and Elliot, p. 25). A more radical version of conflict theory reiterates the Marxist perspective on class struggle—the ruling class controlling the means of production while the working class sells its labor to the ruling class (Fleras and Elliot, p. 25).

The third sociological perspective on society is symbolic interactionism, advocated by Herbert Blumer (1969) who views human societies as socially constructed, negotiated, and made meaningful by human beings on a microsociological or intersubjective level and on a macrosociological or group level (cited in Fleras and Elliot, pp. 26–27). The intra- and inter-group dynamics lead to a collective definition of society, thus creating a process of dualism associated with internal divisions in the form of inclusion, exclusion, assimilation, and separation on the part of the dominant and subordinate groups (Fleras and Elliot, p. 27).
1.9 African Conception of Society, State or Nation

Traditional Africans conceptualize society as being comprised of the immediate family, clan, and lineage members who share common values, beliefs, and language within defined territorial boundaries such as a ward, village, town, or the entire state. However, these societies continue to expand (for voluntary reasons as well as for reasons of security) through internal and external cultural interaction: social mobility, marriage, influx of foreigners, trade, mutual friendship, and conflict. In some cases, the expansion of traditional African societies has involved the assimilation of minority groups. However, African societies maintain a sense of continuity through the lineage system: matrilineal and patrilineal systems of inheritance and communal living. These societies vary in size and modes of organization and range from small to large communities.

African societies cherish stability, order, peace, and social harmony (similar to the functionalist perspective). They pursue these values through communal living, dialogic and unanimous voices, consensus, repetition of activities, recognition of individual differences, and accommodating change through stability. There are social ethics that regulate the conduct of the members of various African societies and the Ewe society in particular. The relationship between an individual and the state varies from one context to another. Individuals are allowed limited freedom in the socioeconomic and political spheres. There are moments when an individual’s values preside over those of the whole group and moments when the values of the community preside over those of individuals and sub-groups. There are also moments when individuals voluntarily surrender their will for the welfare of the entire community and moments when the group adapts to the individual’s needs and desires. There is both public and private ownership, language, and space. On the whole, social values outweigh those of the individual. The physical environment further limits individual and group desires (similar to the Western conception of the natural law). The complexity of human interaction within the society may create ambiguities of determining the exact nature of individual freedom or justice. As indicated earlier, this varies from one context to another and may not be aimed at perfect justice or harmony.

Like Western societies, African societies were confronted with some sociopolitical and economic problems in the past leading to the emergence of conflicts/wars and the collapse and reformation of certain states. However, these societies placed higher value on the social bonds that unite them rather
than on conflicting economic and security values. The Ewe and many African groups maintain that a human being is a social being, born and raised in a social setting, and s/he returns to the spiritual world in a social setting.

The basis of African structural differentiation is social, occupational, political, and voluntary, and influenced by age, sex; this allows individuals and social groups to participate in the mainstream culture and within specific contexts. Although this may be perceived as hierarchical, in reality, classification may be geared towards social harmony through providing opportunities for people who share common values, skills, status, wealth, etc., to interact with each other as well as with the broader society. In spite of the fact that none of these modes of the social organization is perfect, the economic basis of social classification (the lower and upper classes) often degenerates into the exploitation of the lower class by the upper class, with a concomitant social crisis.

Although some African societies may be perceived as more democratic than others due to their seemingly egalitarian modes of organization, those that seem more hierarchical may allow greater freedom of social interaction through marriage and sharing, thus maintaining checks and balances. In particular, the Aŋlɔ-Ewe have fifteen clans, each of which has equal status. They include Loafe, Amlade, Adzɔvia, Bate, Like, Tovie, Bame, Klevi, Amea, Agave, Tsiam, Yetsofe, Wifeme, Dzevi and Blu (Kodzo-Vodoagu, 1994, pp. 8–11; Amegago, 2009, p. 4). Each clan is assigned certain social responsibilities, such as leadership, ceremonial duties, caretaking of state paraphernalia, and praise singing. Although two of the Aŋlɔ-Ewe clans (Yetsofiawo and Blu) were not assigned any exclusive duties during a particular historical period (because of their late arrival into the state), lack of special roles assigned to them might also be due to the recognition that those who performed such roles did so on behalf of the entire society, or it might have been due to the decline of the traditional political system due to foreign intervention.

In many traditional African societies, a chief, king, queen, or leader is usually regarded as a servant whose services are recognized and appraised. S/he is also served by the citizens and may be reprimanded, forgiven, or deposed for misconduct (depending upon the gravity of the offense).

One might say that the emergence of semi-specialists and the introduction of an exchange economy and a medium of exchange in African societies would create problems of income distribution, accumulation of surplus value, and economic inequalities. Indeed, such economic inequalities might arise but there is much empirical evidence to suggest that African societies of the past did not emphasize the accumulation of surplus values. Traditional African societies devised their own systems of redistributing surplus values based on the conviction that one who has should share among other members of group (a prac-
tice similar to Marxist socialism). In some cases, the redistribution of income or sharing constituted the basis for title holding: keeping an open house and being able to care for members of the community. This is not to suggest that everyone was willing to share.

Some contemporary critics argue that historical slavery enriched some African traditional leaders and certain members of communities. Some refer to the existence of domestic slavery prior to the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Although this is not the focus for this research, I would like to state that such a view requires proper scrutiny. Many of the informants in Aŋlo-Ewe society maintained that such a phenomenon would not have occurred under normal circumstances. The phenomenon was largely due to ambiguities created by the slave traders, especially through the use of coercive power, divide-and-conquer strategies, and brainwashing. Indeed, a large group of people was tricked and looted during music and dance performances in the Aŋlo-Ewe town of Atako, and in other coastal towns through conflict created by foreigners. Among the Aŋlo-Ewe, there were anti-slavery groups such as Adzima and Fofui who persistently resisted the trade (Klevɔ, 1981, pp. 4–5). I maintain that slavery rather depleted African resources, disrupted the development of African societies, and continues to generate tension in many African and African Diaspora societies.

Nevertheless, African societies were not perfect and such recurrent human problems would be addressed through time. On the whole, the social structural integration and conformity to social ethics provided a check on such socio-economic problems in the past.

The formation of African communities and states can be considered an open-ended process, which involves critical reflection on the experiences of individuals and social groups (including the new arrivals). It is obvious that many African communities have somehow settled and established a strong sense of connection to their immediate environs. This sense of connection to and identification with their environs as home may be because African groups recognize particular environments as suitable for their existence, and are aware that natural resources are limited in supply and that neighboring groups share the broader environment and resources with them. These views provide checks and balances to social mobility and excessive exploitation of the environment.

1.10 The Contemporary African Societies/Nations

Contemporary African nations have been reorganized to a great extent by the Western superimposition of new boundaries and foreign political systems
on the existing ones. Despite the similarities and differences between African and Western structures, such phenomena intensified ambiguities in the African sociopolitical systems which affected their unique formation.

The adoption of Marxist socialism by many African leaders as a way of restoring egalitarianism in African nation states conforms to African communal values. However, such a project was challenged by the emerging African cultural plurality, the complexity of contemporary African states, the cross-cultural interaction, the emerging global capitalism and the ambitions of the contemporary Africans to keep abreast with other nations. From the 1960s a professional middle class began to emerge, causing many African leaders, such as Dr. Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, to change their ideological perspectives on their conception of Africa as a classless society. For example, Nkrumah later endorsed a universalist ideology but failed to reconsider the historical particularity of the various class structures (Serequeberhan, 1994, pp. 33–34). In addition, the adoption of humanism by some African leaders, such as Leopold Senghor of Senegal (Serequeberhan, p. 20), was challenged by the social inequalities, uneven distribution of resources, and the capitalists’ exploitation, which place many African states and some social groups in disadvantageous positions. Nevertheless, the Marxist perspective continues to influence many African revolutionary movements. In this era of late capitalism and intensified cross-cultural interaction, many African societies are experiencing the emergence of (economic) class structure during their transition to new democratic states.

1.11 Contemporary African and Western Societies/Nations

As a consequence of the phenomena discussed above, contemporary African and Western societies are now composed of fairly homogeneous ethnic and racial groups in the local areas, amalgamated groups from the same ethnic or racial groups and heterogeneous groups drawn from the various communities, ethnic, racial groups and states, who now reside in the nation-states, regional, continental and global settings. These societies are further inhabited by sub-cultures, children, adults, students, employers, employees’ associations, etc. Most of the indigenous Africans living in the local areas are still engaged in agriculture while the elite and middle classes are engaged in clerical, political, and large-scale employment; their socioeconomic status often rises higher than that of their rural counterparts. Some of these upper-class members work for multinational corporations, or are working abroad with a relatively higher socioeconomic status.
The pluralistic or multicultural nature of contemporary African and Western societies challenges intercultural arts education and raises questions: What are the function of the arts and the role of artists within a complex society? How can arts education provide for specific and general needs of individuals, sub-cultures and the state? How can arts education produce people with natural aptitudes within a complex society? The Ewe-Ghanian/African nations maintain cordial relations with their local and international neighbors. The Ewe particularly share a common music and dance tradition, which serves as a unifying force and forms the core of new developments and education. This project would elucidate the contributions of Ewe to the African and global cultures and arts education.

1.12 The School and Its Location

The idea of a school continues to shift over time. Schooling is often considered synonymous with education. However, education is one of the main functions performed by schools. A school in the African context may be referred to as anywhere that learning takes place. This may be in an individual’s mind, an open field, a house, or under a tree or a tent; in religious, ceremonial and political settings or work places; at sea, on a river, or in a physical building designed for learning.

Referring to school, Dewey states,

“the first office of the social organ we call the school is to provide a simplified environment. It selects the features which are fairly fundamental and capable of being responded to by the young. Then it establishes a progressive order, using the factors first acquired as a means of gaining insight into what is more complicated” In the second place, it is the business of the school environment to eliminate, so far as possible, the unworthy features of the existing environment from influence upon mental habits. It establishes a purified medium of action. In the third place, it is the office of the school environment to balance the various elements in the social environment, and to see to it that each individual gets an opportunity to escape from the limitations of the social group in which he was born, and to come into living contact with a broader environment” (Dewey, 1944, p. 20).

The current African and Western schools are located in both rural and urban settings. In the case of arts education, schools located near the regional or local arts or cultural centers, an arts college, or a university may benefit from these
institutions’ resources and other contemporary art forms, while those established in rural settings may lack some of these resources but benefit from local artistic resources.

Some environments may best favor African music and dance education. For example, it would be more comfortable to hold African music and dance education outdoors, especially in the tropical countries. Rousseau rightly suggests natural education in the rural setting for maintenance of harmony and peace with oneself. However, this becomes problematic due to the current environmental conditions and due to urbanization, technology, media, and other means of human interaction. Due to the radical transformation of African societies and the establishment of institutions of higher learning comprised of various departments, faculties and disciplines, any sound-proof building would be suitable for African performing arts education (in such institutions), to avoid undue disruption of other classes. Also, the schedule of classes could be adjusted to accommodate African music and dance lessons. Many schools, especially in the developed countries, have gymnasiums or special music studios for music and dance education. Universities and colleges usually have well equipped studios for practical music and dance courses.

In the case of home schooling or community arts programs, some families and communities may have special programs and venues for music and dance education. However, some neighbors, especially in certain residential areas, may complain about undue disruption of their peace of mind. This may require negotiations for the adjustment of the schedules to accommodate individuals’ and groups’ desires, interests, and needs.

African music and dance education within and outside Africa would require the transfer of artistic resources and educators from one location to another. With the improvement in transportation and the introduction of distance education, this no longer poses a real obstacle. Students of African music and dance can undertake periodic field trips to various educational locations. The cost may be prohibitive for students in relatively poor locations or countries, but it can be overcome if we pool our resources together.

1.13 Epistemology

Another important aspect of the curriculum is its epistemological foundation. It should be noted that this section is not aimed at reviewing all the theories of knowledge, but only selected ones that are relevant to my project. The word epistemology refers to the theory of knowledge. This raises a question of the definition and scope of such a theory. Should this be based solely on liter-
ary theory or should consideration be given to oral and practical theories? It has become obvious that a more realistic approach to knowledge will consider the interaction between the particular, the common, and the universal human values as well as the oral and literary theories of knowledge.

Plato's epistemology reflects his conception of knowledge as a state of mind characterized by certainty on the nature of its objects in the metaphysical realm, his conception of the physical world as a copy of the metaphysical realm, his view of the physical world as continually changing and his assertion that through rationality, we can achieve the absolute truth, goodness, and a perfect world. His theory further reflects his conception of human nature and human desires during the Greek era and his conception of two modes of certainties: the hypothetical certainty, which relates to scientific, arithmetical, and geometric knowledge, and absolute certainty, which relates to the good (Conford, pp. 211–263; Price, p. 33). Hence, his emphasis on human rationality and his exalting of philosophers as kings.

Locke's epistemology relates to human beings exercising their power of understanding to combine and to distinguish ideas (either simple or complex ideas) with certainty. According to Locke, knowledge requires joining or separating ideas accordingly as they agree or disagree; their agreement or disagreement expresses the same relation about those things which the ideas represent. He proposes two modes of knowing: actual knowing, which refers to intellectual knowledge (through sensation and reflection), and habitual knowing, which refers to practical knowledge (Price, pp. 277–280). Locke's classic view of knowledge emphasized intellectual knowledge at the expense of practical knowledge.

Similarly, Rousseau's epistemology relates to the certainty of ideas and material objects, the existence of a God who governs the physical universe according to his laws and will, and knowing through observation, experimentation, generalization, reasoning, and inference (Price, pp. 350–352).

Dewey's epistemology is based on his view that all metaphysical entities lie beyond the ken of human experience and that all moral statements can be seen as true or false depending upon their utility and disutility through verification (Price, pp. 567–568). Dewey also critiques traditional Western knowledge as separating the knower from the known and views knowing as experiential or practical. However, his scientific approach to the evaluation of knowledge may thus be viewed as a deliberate and tactful attempt to eliminate so-called superstitious or primitive knowledge, which is not scientifically proven, from the American and global education curriculum. In this regard, his recommendation of experiential knowledge may, on one hand, be viewed as a sympathetic attempt to pacify the colonized whose cultural development has been
hampered and are now left with some elements of arts and humanities. On the other hand, this recommendation may be viewed as a process of assimilating or absorbing the new arrivals into the dominant culture.

1.14 Concerning the Western Representation of African Epistemology

Like other African cultural elements, African knowledge was defined by Western theorists in relation to Europe on the assumption that Europe was the center of universal civilization. In the process, binary and paradigmatic oppositions were created between African and Western epistemology, such as nature versus culture, superstition or magic versus science, myth versus religion or philosophy, folklore versus history, and primitive art versus civilized art. In this regard, African knowledge belongs to the first order such as nature/primitive, superstition/magic, and myth, and any pseudo- or second-order knowledge which is found on the African continent is attributed to foreign sources (Mudimbe, 1988, pp. 29–33, 46–53).

The state of nature was equated with the primitive. The term primitivism is defined by the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* as “an outlook of human affairs, which sees history as a decline from an erstwhile condition of excellence (chronological primitivism): or the view that salvation lies in the return to the simple life (cultural primitivism)” (Abusabib, 1997, p. 19). The idea of primitivism has been used throughout history in Western societies to connote different meanings. For example, the first doctrine of chronological primitivism appears in Hesiod’s writings on the myths of the five ages, which became the basis of the Greco-Roman conception of the Golden Age, in which the happy primitive people lived in luxury and peace. The second doctrine, cultural primitivism, as expressed in Greek and Roman Cynicism, takes nature as the norm and rejects luxury, property, and rules of social decorum (Abusabib, p. 19). The term was also employed in Christianity through interpretation of the Garden of Eden and the Fall as the beginning of the decline of man and nature. It was further expressed during the European Middle Ages and the Reformation in Europe by the Lutherans who advocated a return to an uncorrupted or primitive form of Christianity, and during the eighteenth century by Rousseau, who viewed the primitive man as the noble savage, childlike and spontaneous (Abusabib, p. 19). The concept further echoed through nineteenth-century Western literature (Novalis, Nietzsche, Wordsworth, and Coleridge), painting, visual arts, music, and cultural theory, such as those of D. H. Lawrence and Gertrude Stein, which exalt the primitive and the irrational. The concept was
further employed by Picasso, Braque, and other modern artists who were inspired by the so-called primitive arts (Abusabib, p. 19).

Commenting on the primitive art concept, Robert Goldwater, a primitive art historian maintains that

"primitivism presupposes the primitive, and an artistic primitivism assumes the knowledge of and an interest in the arts that are in some sense considered primitive. But such an interest—insofar as it takes for granted a curiosity about styles other than one's own and an ability to appreciate and make use of their particular aesthetic contribution—is in itself an issue of a more general orientation which the artist shares with others, that of a historical consciousness which finds stimulating the cultural manifestation of the past…. the scientific interest in the exotic arts, which began as an interest in origins and demonstrable evolution, transformed a historical orientation into a geographical extension …" (Goldwater, 1967, p. 52; Abusabib, p. 21).

Goldwater's view implies the representation of the viewer in the viewed since he maintains that anyone who desires to know more about the “primitive art” or develops an interest in it shares a general orientation with the “primitive artist”. Michael Bell states,

the term primitivism is the nostalgia of a civilised man to return to a primitive condition: a familiar characteristic of human nature that almost every step toward what would generally be regarded as increased sophistication of progress is accompanied by misgivings frequently leading to turns about a whole enterprise of human civilisation (Bell, as cited in Abusabib, p. 21).

Bell’s view posits the nostalgia of the West during its “civilizing” processes. In his 1986 History of Art, H. W. Janson states,

“‘Primitive’ is a somewhat unfortunate word [ … ]. Still, no other single term will serve us better. Let us continue, to use primitive as a convenient label for a way of life that has passed through the Neolithic Revolution, but shows no signs of evolving in the direction of ‘historic’ civilizations” (cited in Mudimbe, 1994, 56).

It is clear, however, that the original usage of the primitive concept was not negative, yet its application to other cultures often evokes negative meanings such as savage, barbaric, furious, irrational, or uncivilized and static.

The word magic is defined as the act of producing a desired effect through the use of various techniques such as incantation that presumably assure human
control of supernatural agencies or the state of nature (*Random House College Dictionary*, 1988, p. 804). Thus, magic relates to superstition, which is usually referred to as an idea or practice which is not scientifically proven.

Myth is defined as traditional or legendary stories usually concerned with deities or demigods and the creation of the world and its inhabitants, or beliefs whose truth or reality is accepted uncritically (*Random House College Dictionary*, 1988, p. 882). Myth is also referred to as orally transmitted and culturally selected narratives (which are relatively loose). Myth is said to be organized on the basis of binary opposites, such as good and bad, day and night, male and female, life and death, and to lack the sense of the world as autonomous (Sturrock, 1979, pp. 33–34; Egan, pp. 11–13).

This mode of representing Africa continues to shift through European self-criticism and African self-reflection but it still carries negative connotations in view of the fact that new generations of Western and African students continue to internalize and reproduce them. I will revisit some of the early representations of Africa by drawing mostly from the works of Mudimbe (1988; 1994) and other scholars.

In his critical reflection on the anthropology and historicity, Herskovits states,

“One may well ask, is not our knowledge of the civilizations of the paleolithic at best too scanty? Do we know too little of actual life of the people to judge it? In what sort of dwellings did these men live from the earliest time? What sort of language did they speak? What was their religion and their social organization? What clothing did they wear? What foods other than the meat of the animals whose bones we find in the refuse heap did they eat? These and numerous other questions will occur to one; it is unfortunate that most of them cannot be answered with anything more than guesses, shrewd though these be” (cited in Mudimbe, 1994, p. 41).

This statement elucidates the ambiguities inherent in the anthropological and historical methods of representing the “other.”

Similarly, Levi-Strauss, reflecting on historicity and anthropology, notes that

“the similarities existing between history and anthropology are more important than their differences. First, both disciplines are concerned with remoteness and otherness: while history deals with remoteness in time, anthropology deals with remoteness in space. Second, their goal is the same, namely, a better understanding of temporary or spatially different
societies and, thus, a reconstruction, “a rewriting” of “what has happened” or of what “is happening” in those societies. Finally, in both cases, scientists face systems of representations which differ for each member of the group and which, on the whole, differ from the representations of the investigator” (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 28).

He also notes that

“[anthropologists and historians] have undertaken the same journey on the same road in the same directions; only their orientation is different. The anthropologist goes forward, seeking to attain, through the conscious, of which he is always aware more and more of the unconscious; whereas the historian advances, so to speak, backward, keeping his eyes fixed on concrete and specific activities from which he withdraws only to consider them from a more complete and richer perspective” (Levi-Strauss 1963, p. 24; Mudimbe, 1988, p. 29).

Levi-Strauss goes on to state,

“The best ethnographic study will never make the reader a native … All that the historian or ethnographer can do, and all what we expect of either of them is to enlarge a specific experience to the dimensions of a more general one, which thereby becomes accessible as experience to men of another country or another epoch. And in order to succeed, both historian and ethnographer must have the same qualities: skill, precision and a sympathetic approach and objectivity” (Levi-Strauss, 1963, pp. 16–17; Mudimbe, 1988, p. 28).

Levi-Strauss further notes that “the historian’s techniques are based on precise data and documents whereas the anthropologist constructs an understanding of an “oral civilization” on the basis of observation (cited in Mudimbe, 1988, p. 29). This statement elucidates the aims, objectives, methods, and the institutionalized basis of the Western representation of other cultures. However, it raises the question of the actual skill, precision, and sympathy exercised by these theorists in the process of representing the “other.”

Levi-Strauss reflects critically on the anthropological notion of “the savage mind” through mythical analysis based on what he terms “mytheme”: the minimal elements in the myth. He organizes mythical correspondences into separate codes such as episodes reflecting the actions of heroes, their changing locations and social links (e.g., parenthood, marriage, chiefship, and friendship), and refers to the correspondence of two or more distinct mythical elements (signifier and signified) as the matrix of meaning (See Sturrock, 1979, pp. 40–42).
Levi-Strauss suggests parallel, symmetrical, asymmetrical, and inverse mythical relationships, and two modes of mythical transformation: genetic and intellectual. He maintains that genetic transformation occurs when myth tellers introduce either conscious or unconscious modifications into the myths they tell. He also notes that intellectual transformation occurs through relating the narrated myths to other myths, with modifications such as inversion, experimentation, etc. (Sturrock, p. 42). Levi-Strauss, however, concludes that there is no exhaustive method of mythical analysis.

Levi-Strauss argues that the primitive mind is not the mind of archaic humanity but reflects the undomesticated or untamed mind, that is, the mode of thinking of people within oral cultures (who are not constrained by the rules of literacy in order to increase the quantity and quality of their intellectual output) (Sturrock, 1979, p. 27). This view is similar to the usual critique of oral cultures as lacking criticism or critical distance. Levi-Strauss also argues against the notion that the primitive mind is incapable of abstract thought. He maintains that mythic thinking involves the use of concrete categories and the interplay of similitude and difference, and the primitive mind employs concrete categories or abstract synecdoche, involving symbolic usage of animals and other environmental objects in abstraction (Sturrock, pp. 33–35). Levi-Strauss contends that the untamed mind seems to order these elements well since they are not constrained by sociopolitical values other than those of the intellect; hence myth should provide an exceptional insight into the spontaneous insight of the human mind.

Levi-Strauss later claims that magic and science should not be considered as unfolding in two distinct stages of chronological evolution; they are two different but parallel systems of knowledge. Reflecting on the native or “primitive” conception of causality and the order of things, Levi-Strauss states that

“... the first difference between magic and science is therefore that magic postulates a complete and all-embracing determinism. Science on the other hand, is based on a distinction between levels: only some of these admit forms of determinism; on others the same forms of determinism are held not to apply. One can go further and think of the rigorous precision of magical thought and ritual practices as an expression of the unconscious apprehension of the truth of determinism, the mode in which scientific phenomena exist” (Levi-Strauss, 1966, p. 11).

Levi-Strauss continues to say that “in this view, the operations of determinism are divined and made use of in all-embracing fashion before being known and properly applied, and magical rites and beliefs appear as so many expres-
sions of an act of faith in a science yet to be born” (Levi-Strauss, p. 11). Here, Levi-Strauss seems to have perceived the roots or elements of science in the primitive cultures. One can infer from this analysis that in the process of self-defense and self-criticism, Levi-Strauss expands the horizon of the savage mind through proposing new possibilities of accessing it and further maintains a distinction between the “savage and civilized.”

These Western representations of the “other” are fraught with ethnocentric biases, influenced by the development of the printing press, common languages, the emphasis on human rationality, the idea of progress, and the linear conception of time and events. But it raises questions about Africans’ self-representation. I maintain that there are several possible responses to these ethnocentric, prejudicial and stereotypical representations; these may take the form of negation, affirmation, dialectical affirmation and negation, exaggeration, reconstruction, deconstruction, reverse representation, internalization, and displaced abjection.

Perhaps it is due to the challenges posed to the cross-cultural theorizing process that Herskovits advised:

[ ... ]make no mistake, cultural relativism is a “tough minded philosophy.” It requires those who hold it to alter responses that arise out of some of the strongest enculturative conditioning to which they have been exposed, the ethnocentrism implicit in the particular value-systems of their society. In the case of anthropologists, this means following the implications of data which, when opposed to our enculturated systems of values, set up conflicts not always easy to resolve (Herskovits, 1972, p. 37; Mudimbe, 1994, p. 41).

Despite these ethnocentric biases, some of these representations are empirical facts, as may be observed in the disparity between various cultural values in this contemporary era. However, the act of representing these cultural values within the primitive ideology as savage, primitive, static, immobile, and unreflective creates ambiguities and ambivalent attitudes towards them and continues to hamper their unique development. But this also draws attention to revisiting them. In the face of the ambiguities, Herskovits further proclaims,

there remains the challenge to take concepts and hypotheses into the laboratory of the cross-cultural field, and test their generalizing value, or arrive at new generalizations. Perhaps challenge is too austere a word for our implicit meaning. In the tradition of humanistic scholarship, it is an invitation to discover for the world literature and thought vast resources which will inform and delight us (Herskovits, 1972, p. 241; Mudimbe 1994, p. 52).
Herskovits might have implied verification of these cultural products, or modes of knowing through the Western positivist, scientific medium, which would reinforce such biases.

It does not necessarily imply that so-called primitive, savage, or mythic products and thoughts are totally absent from present Western societies; neither does it imply that all African products or modes of thought are primitive, savage, or superstitious. These cultural values have contributed to Western “rationality” and “civilization”.

Concerning the interplay of similitude and difference, such modes of knowing prevail in the so-called civilized, or contemporary societies. This depends upon the cultural values, the quantity of the prevailing knowledge, and the amount of knowledge a society desires to preserve. All modes of knowing ultimately involve the interaction between the concrete and abstract elements. Abstraction may not be meaningful without any experiential basis, or else it may lead to conflicting, random, and multiple interpretations and may result in alienation and loss of meaning. The notion of abstraction also challenges the view of certainty of knowledge. In addition, the notion of abstract synecdoche, which refers to symbolic usage of animals and environmental features, stems from the recognition of the self as interconnected with these creatures and the environment. Such a view enhances the meaning of life and is aimed at achieving social harmony.

Concerning the savage mind and its spontaneity or lack of critical reflection, the so-called primitive or pre-colonial or traditional African societies have norms that regulate individuals’ and groups’ utterances and expressions in various contexts. It is true that African cultures allow greater freedom of speech through flexibility, tolerance, and recognition of individuals’ and groups’ particular experiences. But these societies constantly engage in critical reflection on their experiences, which leads to the selection, elimination, and repression of certain experiences. Criticism emerges from the values or beliefs held by certain groups, and a foreigner who lacks knowledge of a particular culture cannot validly criticize the culture. Such a person may engage in radical criticism, thereby creating conflict in the culture. It is true that certain aspects of a given culture may outlive their usefulness but may be preserved because of cultural tension and the desire for continuity. But, it does not necessary imply that any knowledge that is not scientifically proven is superstitious or magical. Although Western science may elucidate some African experiences (especially because of colonization) just as the African cultures have done to the Western experiences, a tendency to view all African experiences through Western science would amount to Western scientific reductionism. Western science has failed to provide solutions to many human problems. Moreover, there is
no absolute knowledge but only an interaction between the particulars, commons, and universals.

In reality, Levi-Strauss’ analysis of “primitive cultures” and myths can be applied to Western cultures as well. Thus, Edmund Leach has demonstrated in controversial studies that Biblical narratives can lend themselves to structuralist analysis (Leach and Aycock, as cited in Mudimbe, 1994, p. 51). But in the case of Israel’s historical tradition, Ricoeur (1974, pp. 45–56) claims to have found a conjunction of historicities that does not seem to exist in totemic cultures. He distinguishes three historicities: the first, that of the hidden time, expounds in a mythical Saga Yahweh’s action as Israel’s history. The second, that of tradition, founds itself on the authority of the hidden time. In successive readings and interpretations of this authority, the tradition perceived its past and its becoming and reflects them as a Heilsgeschichte, or “salvation history.” Finally, there is the historicity of hermeneutics, which Paul Ricoeur refers to, using Von Rad’s language as “Entfaltung”, ‘unfolding’ or ‘development,’ to designate the task of the theology of the Old Testament which respects the threefold historical character of the Heilige Geschichste (the level of founding events), the Überlieferungen (the level of constituting traditions), and finally the identity of Israel (the level of a constituted tradition) (Ricouer, 1974, p. 47; Mudimbe, 1994, p. 51). Paul Ricouer’s argument elucidates his defense of the logical coherence of Western history in contradistinction to the historicities of “other” cultures. Such a view indicates his biases toward Western culture. Indeed, one can see a conjunction of African historicities in the process of reconstructing them (from the ancient times, through precolonial era to the recent past) as observed by Ricoeur in the Israel’s historical tradition.

1.15 Epistemology and Education

Three modes of knowing (which were influenced by the previous epistemological theories) came to dominate contemporary Western educational theories. These are propositional knowledge (knowing that), skill knowledge (knowing how), and knowledge by acquaintance. The relationship between these types of knowing has been much debated (Barrow, 1990, p. 165). Propositional knowledge is usually referred to as having a belief that is true, and which one has adequate evidence for, which is distinct from having a belief that is false. Barrow indicates that it is not suggested that every actual claim to knowledge meets these criteria, thus, it is sometimes debatable which evidence should count as adequate for establishing the truth of the belief (Hirst, cited in Barrow, 1990, p. 165). For example, some people may doubt the existence
of God while others may justify it by their own existence and the emotional, physical, spiritual, and intellectual security that they derive from this belief. Other modes of knowing, such as dreams and imagination, may or may not be substantiated by sufficient proof although they may reflect the subjective experience of the dreamers or those who imagine.

A number of educationalists, such as Paul Hirst (1974), Philip Phenix (1964) and Robin Barrow (1990), have tried to produce a more clear and specific account of the nature of knowledge. For example, Hirst defines knowledge on the basis of three criteria, including the concepts and logical structure unique to the subject and the manner in which claims are assessed for truth or falsity in the subject. He proposes seven forms of knowledge: mathematics, physical science, religion, philosophy, literature and fine arts, moral, and interpersonal (Hirst, 1974, pp. 54–66; Barrow, 1990, p. 168). According to Hirst, the natural sciences and mathematics each have their distinct central concepts and their own logic. For example, the method of determining whether a combination of two chemicals will have a certain effect is quite different from how one determines whether the square of a hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the opposite sides of a triangle. These claims contrast with stamp collection or geography, disciplines which do not generate propositions that have to be answered in a uniquely philatelic or geographical way (Hirst, as cited in Barrow, 1990, p. 1968). Hirst has been criticized on the ground that many forms of knowledge, such as morality, literature, and the fine arts, do not provide a clear basis of examination of their uniqueness (Barrow, 1990, p. 168).

Phenix (1964, pp. 69–256) proposes six realms of knowledge, which he claims to have based on the appropriate schemata: symbolics, empirics, aesthetics, synnoetics, ethics, and synoptics. Barrow refers to two forms of knowledge (empirical and logical), two forms of interpretative attitude (religious and scientific), and four kinds of awareness (moral, aesthetic, religious, and scientific), which he claims to be somewhat different from Hirst’s theory (Barrow, 1990, p. 169).

Furthermore, J. P. White defines knowledge as the activities that cannot be understood without actually engaging in them (communicating, appreciating art, the natural sciences, philosophy, and higher mathematics) and those that can (everything else). White contends that a person who on reflection chooses to do ipso facto worthwhile and the compulsory elements in the curriculum should concentrate on the first activities mentioned (Barrow, 1990, p. 169).

The term discipline is commonly used in the West to refer to those subjects that exhibit a distinct type of procedure, which may or may not be brought to bear exclusively on a limited subject matter, for instance, physics, history, sociology, and philosophy, not only because of their particular subject matter
but a particular kind of activity possible in relation to them. On the other hand, subjects such as French and Education involve treatment by a large number of disciplines which may be studied from multiple perspectives, such as psychological, philosophical, and sociological (Barrow, 1990, p. 167).

The above definitions of knowledge raise the problem of the authenticity, uniqueness, and logical coherence of the various realms of knowing. Sociologists of knowledge hold that knowledge is socially constructed and reflects the values of a particular social group or institution (Barrow, 1990, p. 166). Similarly, postmodernists argue that some historians select fragments of complex human experiences and reorder them to claim their coherency. They further claim that the historians represent the needs and interests of the dominant group and use history as an ideological weapon of social control to justify and reinforce their own socioeconomic and political status. In doing so, they distort the facts and repress or marginalize dangerous and alternative perspectives of history (Jordan and Weedon, 1995, pp. 16–24). Postmodernists further argue that archaeologists gather data from famous locations such as castles and other sites of historical and cultural significance, and restructure them to claim a coherent history (Jordan and Weedon, pp. 144–145).

These critiques are similar to those levelled against the “primitive/oral cultures or mythic cultures.” It is worth noting that events or life experiences may not occur only in isolation or in linear or chronological order. They may occur simultaneously, concurrently, or in cycles, and may involve crossovers and convergences. But amidst these multifaceted events and experiences, there may be an order, which may vary according to the perspective of various cultures and individuals. Therefore, the notion of logical coherence of any form of knowledge should be contextualized since the various modes of knowing involve constant participation and reflection on experiences, activities and events, and restructuring them through selection and elimination by groups and individuals. Provided such knowledge is agreeable to a particular group of people, it may be considered authentic and be subjected to periodic reflection. A problem may arise if such knowledge excludes or distorts the experiences of others.

Similarly, some contemporary critics such as Samuel Bowles, Herbert Gintis and Antonio Gramsci argue that education distorts reality by representing and transmitting the knowledge of the ruling class to protect their interests and the status quo. They maintain that education is inextricably linked with the economy and reproduces the social structure, culture or social inequalities (cited in Gibson, 1986, pp. 46–47, 51–57). It does this by mirroring the hierarchical division of labor through fragmenting knowledge, monopolizing learning, rewarding students through unequal grading and the awarding of
certificates geared toward their future careers, thereby promoting competition among students (See Bowles and Gintis in Gibson, 1986, pp. 46–47).

In every society, basic social structural differentiation is inevitable and may serve as a basis for achieving social harmony (by allowing individuals and groups to interact in specific contexts and in broader society). Competition basically stems from individual differences and may have its negative and positive aspects. A relatively low level of competition may be beneficial if it is geared toward fulfilling the common good. Ultimately, an intensified competition may be disastrous to the society or environment if it is geared toward fulfilling individualistic goals. There is bound to be a relationship between the economic, social, political, and educational systems. However, education should aim at representing the essential knowledge of the whole society rather than representing the values and interests of the dominant group. Resistance theorists such as Everhart, Spender, Humphries and McRobbies (cited in Gibson, pp. 58–61) argue against the notion of inequalities in the educational system by stating that such critics fail to recognize the daily interpersonal relationships and life encounters that occur in the classrooms. They maintain that such inequalities in the educational system are sustained, opposed, and resisted by groups who usually draw from their cultural sources.

Resistant theorists also hold that such oppositions reproduce structural inequalities in educational system. These oppositions may take the form of the resistant groups rejecting the dominant knowledge or creating distinctions between themselves and the dominant group, which in turn leads to the failure of the resistant groups. Resistance theorists, however, maintain that opposition can provide emancipatory strategies in education and requires the acquisition of critical thinking skills (See Gibson, 1986, pp. 58–61).

In addition, poststructuralists (e.g., Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jacques Lacan, Julia Kristeva, and Jean Baudrillard) critique the structural linguistic theory (initially proposed by Ferdinand Saussure), which views language as a closed system of signifiers (sounds) and signifieds (meanings), existing in arbitrary relation but fixed by social convention (Harvey, 1989, p. 49; Thomas, 1995, p. 15). They maintain that the relationship between the signifier and the signified is never fixed but is continually breaking apart and reattaching in new combinations. Poststructuralists also view a shift from logocentrism to decentering the speaking subject, where cultural existence is seen as a succession of texts which converge with other texts. In this situation, writers create texts on the basis of all other texts they have come across and readers read on the same principle. This collage/montage effect or intertextuality has an existence of its own and gives rise to multiple or unintended meanings, thus leading to the death of the author (traditionally cast as the privileged speaking
subject who creates the text) and the birth of the reader (Thomas, p. 16). Post-structuralism, according to Terry Eagleton (1983, p. 143), “was a product of that blend of euphoria and disillusionment, liberation and dissipation, carnival and catastrophe, which was 1968. Unable to break the structures of state power, postructuralists found it possible instead to subvert the structures of language” (Eagleton, p. 143).

It is obvious that new mediators of meaning, readers from diverse cultures, and new experiences and events have emerged in this era of intensified global cultural interaction, marked by an emphasis on individualism and innovation. It is also true that a given linguistic structure is not absolutely fixed but shifts according to place and time, in relation to the interlocutors (similar to oral conversation, in which a given linguistic structure continues to shift in relation to interlocutors). The contemporary phenomena would inevitably lead to the constant shifting of knowledge and interaction between various linguistic structures or knowledges. However, the older structures would continue to retain some of their essential components, which are inextricably linked to peoples’ historical and cultural experiences. Certain elements of a given linguistic structure may be unintelligible to new mediators until they have gained a deeper insight into the culture. Moreover, linguistic structures alone cannot provide absolute knowledge to new readers since some cultural experiences lie beyond the scope of language.

Referring to the problem of the logical coherency of knowledge, Barrow (1990, pp. 166–167) points out that subjects such as mathematics may exhibit clear logical structure. But, such a view may depend on the modes of knowing within a given culture. Obviously, propositions such as “all adults were born” and “there is only one sun in our solar system” would not have any logical contradiction because of their validity, universality, and coherence despite the differences in cultural languages. The same applies to general ideas about human beings, the moon, the stars, and the earth. The ambiguities of knowledge have led some philosophers such as Descartes to conclude that, at any rate, “I know, therefore I exist” (cogito, ergo sum), thus affirming his own existence, based on his thinking ability and self awareness (cited in Barrow, 1990, p. 165). Barrow (1990, p. 169), however, concludes that despite arguments about the precise logical structure of knowledge, it seems widely accepted that education should involve bringing individuals to recognize logically distinct kinds of questions and issues for what they are. The educated person should not confuse a moral question with a religious one or treat either of them as if they were open to examination in the manner of the empirical sciences (Barrow, p. 169). But this is still problematic within a cross-cultural context since some societies may not differentiate between moral and religious values.
1.16 African Epistemology

African epistemology manifests in the oral traditional documents, and in anthropological and postcolonial theories. Following the epistemological shifts, the process of representing the self and the other was replaced by cultural relativism in the work of succeeding generations of Western and African scholars. Nevertheless, such negative representations of African knowledge continue to appear in some contemporary writings in view of their internalization and reproduction by the succeeding generations. Such a shift involved the restructuring of African cultural values from a cultural relativist’s standpoint. Thus, subjects such as ethnomusicology or comparative musicology, African art, African history, African oral tradition, African religion, ethno-philosophy, Bantu philosophy, African education, African psychology, and postcolonial theory emerged in this contemporary era. These phenomena generate debates on the nature of African knowledge, African philosophy, the African origins of Greek knowledge, and other topics.

In the process, some members of the first generation of African intellectuals who were educated in the missionary institutions, such as Hountondji and Kwasi Wiredu, became skeptical about the existence of traditional African philosophy (cited in Gyekye, 1997, p. 236). Such skepticism reflects in the title of Hountondji’s book, *African Philosophy: Myth and Reality* (1983) and Wiredu’s critique of traditional African thought (1980). The skepticism also stems from the Western definition of philosophy as an individual’s inquiry, which tends to undermine its sociocultural milieu. On the other hand, Gyekye admits to the existence of traditional African philosophy within the oral cultures but which needs further articulation (Gyekye, 1987, pp. 3–43). I concur with Gyekye on the existence of traditional African philosophy and knowledge which requires constant reflection to stand the test of time. Philosophy need not be a lengthy rhetorical subject or discipline. Its validity lies in the meanings and solutions it provides to specific and general existential issues or problems.

On the nature and authenticity of African knowledge, some theorists maintain that any knowledge which is rooted in African cultures or reflects African historical experiences, regardless of the author’s origin, could be considered African. This is also problematic due to the intensified cross-cultural interaction, alienation, misrepresentations, and fragmentation of knowledge in this contemporary era.

Despite the ambiguities, it is the sum total of these literary, oral, and practical documents located within the various African cultures that constitute the African epistemological foundation. What is referred to as African art is integral to the whole cultural knowledge, whereas culture is often defined as the
totality of the peoples’ way of life or the best that has been preserved by any group of people. Culture comprises of the activities of the young and old in socioeconomic and political groups. For example, the Ewe word Dekonu literally means state’s neck, norms, or ethics, and generally refers to all forms of valuable cultural knowledge, including adanudowonawo (arts and crafts), lododowo (proverbs), gli (fables or folktales), alobalo (riddles), dzodzome nutinya (history or legend), afaduwo (Afa religious/philosophical universe or text), Yeve-nunya (Yeve divine knowledge), yletivimenunya, astrology, droefenuwo (dream thought), amlimatisitsi (miraculous act or mysticism), and tamesusu (imaginatory knowledge that is valid to the society and individuals).

The Ewe word nunya literally means a thing to know. The prefix nu refers to a thing while the suffix nya, when pronounced in a high tone, means to know. The same word, nya, when pronounced in a lower tone, may imply wash, and in Yeve dialect this may imply trace or depart. Descriptive terms such as Aŋlofe nunya (knowledge of the Aŋlo), Eveawo fe nunya (Ewe knowledge), Bokowo fe nunya (diviners’ knowledge), Yeve nunya (Yeve divine knowledge), afemenunya (household knowledge, and sukununya (school knowledge) are used to refer to the various domains of Ewe-African cultural knowledge. Nevertheless, the various forms of knowledge overlap and are complementary. The Ewes acknowledge the limits of knowledge, which they express in a proverb, nunya adidoe asi metune o, meaning “knowledge is like baobab tree; one’s hand cannot grasp it wholly.”

The above discussion elucidates the problems of defining knowledge and some ambiguities inherent in its definition. The problems are complicated by the emergence of multiple domains of knowledge, and by the fragmentation and eclecticism of various forms of knowledge in this contemporary era. It is obvious that the structures of knowledge and modes of knowing vary from one society to the other despite some similarities. These manifest in various activities, syntax, concepts, semantics, and phonology. African linguistic structures differ from one society to the other and from those of Western and other world cultures. However, a deliberate attempt to deconstruct a particular language may still lead to human desire for meaning-making and the re-emergence of certain linguistic structures through social interaction, thus indicating the significance of human utterances and language in social interaction and the knowledge formation process.

This project would no doubt involve creating a synthesis of African and Western knowledge. In this situation, seemingly analogous concepts may imply different things and two distinct concepts may convey similar meanings. It appears African linguistic structures are broadly distributed. Needless to say, a restructuring of the African epistemology may produce more or fewer structures
of knowledge than the Western ones. However, in an era characterized by inter-
action between various forms of knowledge, attempts should be made to
emphasize the various cultures’ perspectives in the theorizing process.

In this discussion, I have elucidated the nature and scope of knowledge and
the challenges posed to both Western and African epistemology. A question is
also raised about the definition of African arts in view of their integration with
the whole fabric of culture and knowledge. However, I will now endeavor to
highlight the artistic component of African epistemology.

1.17 Concerning the Definition of
Artistic Knowledge

The definition of the arts has generated debates over the years. Adopting a
metaphysical conception of art, Plato defines art as an imitation of nature. He main-
tains that artistic representation depends upon the location of the artist in rela-
tion to the object. Plato’s concern with the arts lies in his conviction of the unity
of all values as seen in his dissatisfaction with the functional and the relativist
conception of beauty as what is fineness, and his attribution of the title of fine-
ness to goodness. He disputes the ethical wisdom and religious insight traditionally ascribed to poets and critiques the notion that poets possess a rationally
inexplicable craft or artistry (techne) and are inspired by the divine (cited in
Cooper, 1992, p. 328). Plato argues that “if poets were inspired, they may offer
valuable experiences which cannot be scrutinized with consistent clarity, or ex-
pected to conform to predeterminable standards. If, however, poets do not know
how or what they create, their status as guides to life must be suspect, and the pow-
erful emotions which they undoubtedly evoke may be psychologically danger-
ous” (Cooper, 1990, p. 328). Plato’s critique of the poets and poetry reflects in
his emphasis on human rationality that would enable them to achieve the ulti-
mate good, truth, or perfect knowledge. However, he seems to have revisited his
perspective in the Cratylus where he began to focus his art theory on the concept
of mimesis (whose Greek senses include ‘imitation’, ‘representation’, and dramatic
‘enactment’). This new perspective views poetry, visual art, and music as analogous in their representational relation to the world (cited in Cooper, p. 329).

In the Republic (Bk. 2–3, pp. 376–403), Plato again attacks poetry by ar-
uing that poets like Homer and the tragedians express false and harmful views
of the world, which invite an insidious psychological identification (of reality)
on the part of the actor, hearer or reader (Ibid., p. 328). He maintains
that all arts are mere appearances that fall short of sensible reality and are twice
removed from the transcendent truth, and that poetry has the power to be-
witch the soul, hence the necessity to subject it to political control. However, he completes his indictment by readmitting the poets into the republic on moral grounds (Ibid., p. 329). Paradoxically, Plato concludes the Republic with an eschatological myth (the Myth of Err, in Conford, 1941, 348–359) that both emulates and offers to replace some of the myths of the poets. The fact that Plato had to resort to mythology to explain life after death implies his lack of absolute knowledge or truth.

Aristotle, on the other hand, accepts all mimetic and teleological activities, such as poetry, sculpture, carpentry, medicine, music, and dance as arts in the full Greek sense of techne, that is, the productive processes which follow controlled, intrinsically rational principles, and which do so in order to impose upon their particular material the form which is conceived by the mind of the maker (Cooper, p. 11). Aristotle refuses to lay down prescriptive criteria for the content of artistic mimesis. He maintains that all mimetic arts can represent any of these three things (as well as combinations of them): actual reality, past or present, (popular) conceptions of or beliefs about the world, or normative ideas of what ought to be (and could be cathartic) (cited in Cooper, p. 11). He also notes that correctness in poetry is not identical with correctness in politics (including ethics) nor in any other art, and that poetry is more philosophical and more serious than history, for it deals more with the universal while history speaks of the particular. Good poetry, according to Aristotle, would present vivid imagined particulars and register the operation of aesthetic pleasure even in cases where in life the subject matter would be displeasing (Cooper, pp. 11–12). It is obvious that Aristotle critiqued and elaborated on Plato’s definition of art.

Some traditional Western philosophers propose a real definition of art by trying to identify the features that all arts share in common and which are peculiar to them as well as their necessary and sufficient conditions. A necessary condition is a feature without which a thing cannot lay claim to a given title; a sufficient condition is a feature that if enjoyed by the thing ensures a given title (Battin et al., 1989, p. 4).

Other philosophers attempt to elucidate the unity underlying art’s enormous diversity of form. Thus DeWitt Parker states,

“art is itself so complex a fact that a satisfying definition of it must also be complex, that is to say must involve many characteristics. As the mathematicians would say, the characteristics must be not only necessary but sufficient. They must penetrate deep enough into the roots of art to meet the challenge of the pluralists and show that there is, after all, a significant sameness in all the arts—despite their differences in technique and media—connecting the fine with the applied arts, so far as the latter are
beautiful, and the realistic with the fanciful and the idyllic” (cited in Battin et al., p. 6).

Other (anti-essentialist) writers have argued that there are no common properties that define art but only strands of similarities. For example, an American philosopher, Morris Weitz, has argued that “we can never hope to isolate a single quality that is the definitive feature of all arts” (cited in Anderson 1990, p. 4). Weitz, suggests, “art can have only what Wittgenstein called ‘an open definition’. That is, the best we can ever do is note the several traits that commonly give a ‘family resemblance’ to those things that we currently think of as art. When we meet things with which we are unfamiliar, either because they are new or because they come from alien cultures, they are judged to be art according to the degree to which they share these familial similarities—or else the repertoire of family resemblance will itself evolve” (cited in Anderson, 1990, pp. 4–5).

Two major schools of thought came to dominate the Western definition of art. The first defines art on the basis of its intrinsic values or its internal or formal qualities. The second defines art on the basis of its external or socio-cultural functions. The former definition of art is reiterated by Joseph Margolis and Maurice Mandelbaum, who suggest that artifactuality is a necessary condition of art. Mandelbaum also points out the significance of the nonexhibited characteristics of art for the definition of “art”. Weitz rejects artifactuality as a necessary condition because “we sometimes make statements such as, “This driftwood is a lively piece of sculpture”. We do sometimes speak this way of natural objects, but nothing follows from this fact” (cited in Werhane, p. 464). According to Dickie, Weitz is confused because he takes the driftwood remark to be a descriptive statement and it is not. Weitz himself quite correctly distinguishes between an evaluative use and a descriptive use of “work of art” and once this distinction is understood it can be seen that the driftwood remark is an evaluation of the driftwood” (Dickie in Werhane, pp. 464–465).

The pragmatic definition of art also generates debates on the status of non-Western art forms located within cross-cultural milieus due to lack of an empirical basis of their origin and intended functions. A similar criticism is levelled against the work purported to have been created by chimpanzees in the Baltimore zoo (Werhane, p. 468).

In the face of these ambiguities, George Dickie proposes to define art as “(1) an artifact (2) upon which some society or sub-group of a society has conferred the status of candidate for appreciation” (cited in Werhane, pp. 466). Dickie elaborates on this definition by stating:

“1. An artist is a person who participates with understanding in the making of a work of art. 2. A work of art is an artifact of a kind created to
be presented to an artworld public. 3. A public is a set of persons the members of which are prepared in some degree to understand an object which is presented to them. 4. The art world is the totality of all artworld systems. 5. An artworld system is a framework for the presentation of a work of art by an artist to an artworld public” (cited in Battin et al. p.8).

It can be inferred from the above definition that Dickie has reconceptualized art both as an artifact and a social construct. He has also located the artist and artworks within broader social contexts. Yet still others continue to define art on the basis of its originality, imaginative character, extraordinary nature, techniques, skillfulness, beauty, finesse, and goodness.

Some of the above definitions of art, such as those proposed by Aristotle, Weitz, and Dickie, seem to be more accommodating, especially in relation to African cultures. However, the problems of defining art still remain: both the imitative and institutional theories may create a tendency to disregard certain objects that do not resemble the original object represented, or satisfy the institutional criteria as art. Similarly, the objectivist’s notion of art may also create a tendency to bestow the status of art on certain objects that may otherwise not be regarded as art. The same applies to the pragmatic view of art, which may create a tendency to disregard non-utilitarian objects as non-art. The problems of defining the work of art will be addressed in the latter sections, especially under aesthetics. I will now apply the concepts to the African context before proceeding to the next section.

1.18 Concerning the Definition of African Performing Arts

The concept of African performing arts, such as music, dance, drama, and poetry was rejuvenated in Ghana during the introduction of these cultural elements in the contemporary Ghanaian educational system. These activities constitute part of what Western societies deemed the “primitive” African knowledge. Recently, some African writers such as Kwabena Nketia, Akin Euba and Bode Omojola have applied the term “African art music” to works created by some African elite scholars, thus creating an impression that the traditional African music is not, or is no longer art.

Applying the concept of artifactuality or objectivity to the African performing arts would elucidate the fact that African performing arts are embedded with unique forms and structures which are shaped by human beings
in various cultural contexts, and which perform significant cultural functions (although one may conceptualize them as abstract). These structural elements shift in place and time due to the levels of human interaction in the creative/performative process. Concerning the possibility of artworks by animals, evidence exists in African and many world cultures about the contribution to the arts made by animals, birds, trees, and the natural environment (as will be discussed in the latter sections). I will now review the definition of African music and dance from a comparative perspective.

1.19 Concerning the Definition of African Music and Dance

Music, as defined by Webster’s Encyclopedic Dictionary (1993, p. 660), is “the art of combining tones so that they are pleasing, expressive, or intelligible; or sounds that have rhythm, harmony, or melody; or sounds that are agreeable”. A similar definition of music is offered by the Random House College Dictionary (1988, p. 879) as “the art of combining and regulating sounds of varying pitches to produce composition expressive of various ideas and emotions; or a written or printed score of musical composition; or any sweet, pleasing, or harmonious sounds”. The above definitions do not specify the composer of the sounds but they highlight certain terms, such as tones, pleasing, expressive, intelligible, rhythm, harmony, and melody. They further indicate that the sound under consideration should be agreeable. The notion “agreeable” implies a collective agreement on the specified sound. Dance is defined by Webster’s Encyclopedic Dictionary (1993, p. 252) as “the art of performing a rhythmic and patterned succession of bodily movements, usually to music; or a social gathering; or a successive group of rhythmical steps or bodily motions, or both, usually executed to music”. According to these dictionary definitions of music and dance, these two forms of human expression share common elements, such as purpose, rhythm, organization, and agreeableness or aesthetic values. The definition of music further includes tonal and melodic qualities because of its unique sound devices. However, while dance may be accompanied by music, the reverse may not apply according to the definitions.

Dance is defined by Judith Lynn Hanna as “human behavior composed, from the dancer’s perspective, of (1) purposeful, (2) intentionally rhythmical, and (3) (culturally) patterned sequences of (4a) nonverbal body movements (4b) other than ordinary motor activities, (4c) the motion having an inherent and aesthetic value” (1987, p. 20). Hanna’s definition elucidates the multidimen-
sional nature of dance. Although Hanna’s definition of dance, which views rhythm as integral, does not include vocal melodies and instrumental sounds, she further indicates that in Africa—for example, among the Akan, Efik, Azande and Kamba—dance involves vocal and instrumental music including drums (with the exception of groups such as the Zulu, Matabele, Shi, Ngoni, and Tukana who do not use drums, but employ other rhythmic and sound devices) (Hanna, p. 19). However, whether the Zulu and other South African groups (reported not to be using drums) continue to dance without drums in this era of intercultural influences is liable to future investigation.

Traditional African societies recognize individual performers, semi-specialists, and structural elements of their performance. However, these societies emphasize integrated and collaborative performance. The emphasis on integration is demonstrated through the performers’ gnashing of teeth, tapping of feet, and engaging in multiple activities, such as playing drums, singing, dancing, and displaying expressions of feelings, emotions, or thought. In most cases the drummers also dance and serve as the choreographers. African performances are multisensory modalities which highlight holistic integration of the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual faculties of performers and other sound devices and visual imagery. In this situation, the definition of African music and dance should take into consideration its integration of the various elements. As a move toward redefining African performing arts, I will add the musical component to Opoku’s definition of dance:

“To us life, with its rhythms and cycles is Dance. The Dance is life expressed in dramatic terms. The most important events in the community have special dances to enhance their meaning and significance. To us, the Dance is a language, a mode of expression, which addresses itself to the mind, through the heart, using related, relevant and significant movements which have their basic counterparts in our everyday activities, to express special and real life experiences in rhythmic sequences to musical and poetic stimuli. For a deeper insight into our way of life—our labours, material culture, aspirations, history, social and economic conditions, religious beliefs and disbeliefs, moments of festivity and sadness ...” (Opoku, 1965, p. 19).

The above definition conceives of dance/music as an integral part of African life—a mode of communication and dramatic enactment of the peoples’ historical, social, economic religious, ceremonial, and political values. However, it reflects an African perspective.
1.20 Concerning the Dichotomy between Traditional and Modern/Contemporary African Music and Dance

The emergence of new categories of African performing arts and the fragmentation of time in this era lead to a distinction between traditional and modern or contemporary African music and dance. Tradition is usually viewed as containing a large proportion of experiences, beliefs, and practices inherited from the past, which are static or resistant to change. For example, the British historian H. B. Acton defines tradition as “a belief or practice transmitted from one generation to the other and accepted as authoritative, or deferred to without argument” (cited in Gyekye, 1997, p. 218). In addition, American sociologist Edward Shills defines tradition as “anything which is transmitted or handed down from the past to the present” (cited in Gyekye, p. 218). Samuel Fleishchacker defines tradition as “a set of customs passed down to generations and a set of beliefs and values that endorse those customs” (cited in Gyekye, 1997, p. 218). Etymologically, the word tradition is derived from the Latin word *traditum*, meaning what has been handed down from the past (Gyekye, p. 218). The conception of tradition as handed down from the past to the succeeding generations has been reiterated by the various definitions; however, none of these specify the exact time of its development (whether it is primordial, or from the remote or immediate past). Obviously, some of these cultural practices transcend generations due to their continuing relevance to social experiences. However, it does not imply that these African cultural values are static.

African societies cherish continuity, order and stability but they constantly reflect on their cultural experiences leading to the selection, elimination, and recapitulation of certain cultural values (as indicated earlier). The conception of tradition as authoritarian may be valid if these cultural values are perceived as the bedrock that sustains cultures through times of change. The degree of change varies from one society to another due to environmental and cultural factors. Some societies may strive for stability and order by resisting change while others may be more receptive to change. However, no culture changes wholesale instantly; both the older and newer cultural values continue to interact in various contexts.

The term modernity is said to be characterized by technology, science, mass media and some artistic developments such as realism, representation, cubism, surrealism, and hyperrealism (Appignanesi and Garratt, 1995, p. 6). The word modern is said to have been derived from the Latin word *modo,*
meaning just now, and is purported to have been initially used by Abbot Suger (around 1127) during his construction of the abbey church at St.-Denis (now in a suburb of Paris), which looked neither classically Greek nor Roman nor Romanesque. Not knowing how to describe it, Suger fell back on the Latin word “opus modernum,” meaning a modern work (Appignanesi and Garratt, 1995, p. 6). According to this definition, for an event or human experience to be modern, it must occur just now. Such a view would imply constant innovation, displacement, and/or relegation of any antecedent creation or artwork to an archaic status. However, for societies that cherish continuity and stability, such a view would be problematic. I maintain that the older African music and dance forms are not static since they are constantly re-created or modified through constant performance. It does not necessarily imply that any newly created artwork supersedes the older ones. What is considered “modern” or new in Western societies may not be totally new but may consist of traditional Western cultural elements and those of other world cultures.

Furthermore, the term contemporary is often used to refer to the current state of African societies, characterized by the coexistence of African, Western, and other foreign cultural values. Nowadays, a distinction is usually made between traditional and contemporary African arts, music, dance, and drama. Traditional music and dance is what is mostly performed by the indigenous people. Some of the traditional forms are also taught in some performing arts institutions and are sometimes categorized as neo-traditional music/dance. Contemporary African music and dance forms are works created through a fusion of African and Western (and other) cultural elements. These are mostly presented in urban areas and taught in some African performing arts institutions and theaters. They include highlife, or popular music/dance of Ghana, Juju music/dance of Nigeria, Soukus music/dance of Zaire, and the works of some elite artists and scholars. However, although one may observe some differences between traditional and contemporary music and dance forms, these two categories continue to influence one another, especially in urban areas. It is worth noting that the composers who are currently operating within the traditional medium are also living in this era and are bound to take inspirations from their culture and other cultures over time. The question is: how do we identify or categorize the so-called contemporary music and dance forms that are passed down from one generation to the other?

The term postmodernism is used nowadays to refer to the cultural dominant, or cultural logic, of the third great stage of capitalism, late capitalism, which originates in post World War II era (Jameson, as cited in Featherstone, 1991). The term came to be associated with a cultural transformation process that has continuously gained momentum in Western societies since the Second
World War. The prefix “post” in postmodernism designates its relation to modernism. Postmodernism, then, designates shifts in sensibility, practices, and discourse formation (see Huyssen in Thomas, 1994, p. 13). According to Kohler (1977), and Hassan (1985), the term postmodernism was first used by Federico de Onis in the 1930s to indicate a minor reaction to modernism (cited in Featherstone, 1991. p. 7). The term became popular in the 1960s in New York when it was used by young artists, writers and critics such as Rauschenberg, Cage, Burroughs, Barthelme, Fielder, Hassan and Sontag to refer to a movement beyond the “exhausted” high modernism which was rejected because of its institutionalization in the museum and the academy. It gained wider use in architecture, the visual and performing arts, and music in the 1970s and 1980s (Ibid, p. 7). The central features associated with postmodernism in arts include:

“the effacement of the boundary between art and everyday life, the collapse of the hierarchical distinction between high and mass/popular culture; a stylistic promiscuity favoring eclecticism and the mixing of codes; parody, pastiche, irony, playfulness and the celebration of the surface “depthlessness” of culture; the decline of originality/genius of the artistic producer; and the assumption that art can only be repetition” (Featherstone, 1991. pp. 7–8).

The term postmodernism is also associated with the cultural and artistic developments characterized by information technology, the aestheticization of everyday life, the fragmentation of time, and the eclecticism of cultures/arts, while postmodernity is said to be characterized by the social, political, and cultural configuration of which “postmodernism” is a configurative element (Thomas, 1995, pp. 11–22). The postmodern phenomenon is perceived as a radical break from modern conditions. But it is the modern conditions such as the development of technology and media, colonization, institutionalization, classification, marginalization, and the rejection of traditional values in favor of constant innovation, that have paved the way for postmodernism. Some of the distinctive features of modernism also manifest in postmodernism, as elucidated by Baudrillard:

An aesthetic self-consciousness and reflexiveness; a rejection of narrative structures in favour of simultaneity and montage; an exploration of the paradoxical, ambiguous and uncertain nature of reality; and a rejection of the notion of an integrated personality in favour of an emphasis upon the destructured, dehumanized subject (see Featherstone, 1988, p. 202; Thomas, p. 17).

I would state that, due to the pluralistic nature of African societies, communalism, and internal and external cultural interaction, African societies had
been experiencing some of the “postmodern” conditions before postmodernism gained momentum in Western societies. What distinguishes this experience from the mundane African experiences is the development in technology, electronic media, transportation, the late capitalism, and the heightened individualism. However, adopting the term “postmodernism” would imply the creation of new categories of African performing arts (that may be referred to as the postmodern African arts). I maintain that the distinction between traditional, modern, contemporary, and postmodern becomes problematic due to the interaction between the various cultural elements and art forms and the African’s desire for continuity and stability of cultural values. But since the terms have now been established and are used categorically to distinguish between the indigenous art forms and the new developments (which display more foreign influence), I will refer to them to clarify this theory where necessary.

1.21 Ethics

Ethics is concerned with the good and the right. Goodness is normally attributed to persons or states of affairs while rightness is a property of action. For example, teleological theories see rightness in terms of goals and consequences being attained (they are concerned with behavior which is morally productive). Deontological theories see rightness as a property of certain actions regardless of consequences (these theories are concerned with the notion of the individual as a moral agent). Moral language is usually thought to be partly prescriptive and partly emotive, and essentially universalizable. Moral utterances involve our own emotive support for objection to the actions or state of affairs or person in question, which indicates our empathy and sympathy toward others or our concern for the well being of other people (Barrow, 1990, p. 117). For example, Plato’s ethics relate to the harmonious cooperation of individuals and classes to achieve a good, just, and happy society (Price, p. 32). Locke’s ethics relate to the nature of justification of propositions of morality manifested in social conduct governed by natural, civil, and customary law (Price, p. 292).

African societies have ethical values that regulate individual and social conduct. These values are shaped by the interweaving of biological, social, political, religious, judicial, and economic values. In general, these include goodness, obedience, respect, caring, sharing, hospitality, and truthfulness to colleagues, elders, ancestors, divinities, and the Supreme Being. The Ewe particularly abhor thievery, murder, adultery, gossip, and falsehood. Most African societies maintain that conformity to social ethics/virtues ensures the stability,
order, balance, harmony, and continuity of the state. Hence, Togbui Sroe II of the Anlo-Ewe (who reigned from 1907–1957) proclaimed:

My children, do not forget the saying
Evildoers are the ruins of nations
Set your children on the right path
Their is the nation
We live today but tomorrow we will not
In the virtue of our children will lie
The growth of our country in wisdom, love and bravery.
The obedient children are the ornaments of their parents
And of the whole nation
Sapphire and coral are they; they are also pearl and gold
And the adornment of states.
In their virtue is wisdom itself
Through which the people strive.
It increases joy of life beyond the grave.
Truly he who lives according to God’s law
Is a pillar of the state.
Therefore, my children, let every crime be punished,
And the wayward be corrected.
The liar must acknowledge the sovereignty of truth.
Debt must be discouraged.
Thievery adultery and the evil practices of sorcery,
Must never be tolerated in our land of Anlo.
Our nation and these culprits
Would not share the same precious cowry,
Unless they have repented (cited by Ametfe in Agbodeka, 1997, pp. 219–220, with my interpretation of some of the statements from the Ewe oral tradition).

The excerpt above exemplifies aspects of the Anlo-Ewe ethics while other elements will be elucidated in the discussion of Ewe performance ethics.

Contemporary African educational institutions have ethical values which reflect the blending of African and Western elements. These values include academic honesty, integrity, hard work, respect, enthusiasm, empathy, and warmth. However, African music and dance education in the West would no doubt create a problem of ethical relativism in view of the particular historical and cultural contexts of various artistic developments. Despite the similarities of ethical values across cultures, certain values reflect particular cultures’ perspectives. Conformity with social ethics would depend upon groups’ and
individuals’ experiences within a broader social setting. Hence, the maintenance of social harmony would require favorable opportunities for the individuals, sub-groups, institutions, and the entire community, or state, or institution to function. This would involve constant negotiation and compromise, tolerance, flexibility, and critical reflection within the various contexts.

In this chapter, I have reviewed various theories of human nature, human development, society, family, school and its location, epistemology, and ethics. In doing so, I have elucidated the essential humane values, needs, and desires, and the challenges these pose to African music and dance education. In view of the fact that art education does not occur in a vacuum but takes place within the process of creating art, in the following chapter I will reconceptualize the African music and dance creative process as part of the conceptual framework.
Chapter Two

Reconceptualizing the African Music- and Dance-Making Process: The Ewe Contextual Framework

2.1 On the Concept of Creativity and Originality

In the West, the concept of artistic creativity came to be regarded as the creation of an original, new, extraordinary, or special work of art. Creativity is seen to involve that which is new, divergent, and disconnected with the usual, the ordinary and the accepted, and is thought to involve a radical break from the past and tradition and to herald a fundamental change in conceptual frameworks (Bailin, 1994, pp. 1–5; 7–31). Accordingly, the artist or originator of the work came to be regarded as a genius. Some theorists relate the notion of genius to insanity or neurosis. For example, Cesare Lombroso, a late nineteenth-century psychiatrist (who approaches the concept from biological theories of human behavior) relates genius to insanity caused by degeneration of the brain (Lombroso as cited in Rothenberg and Hausman, 1976, p. 79). The genius is said to exhibit certain behavioral and physical characteristics such as apathy, loss of moral sense, impulsiveness, psychical inequalities owing to the excess of some faculties (memory and aesthetic taste), or defects of other qualities such as exaggerated mutism or verbosity, morbid vanity, excessive originality, excessive preoccupation with self, the tendency to put mystical interpretations on the simplest facts, abuse of symbolism, deficiency of beard, asymmetrical face or head, disproportion of the body, sexual precocity, left-handedness, stammering, rickets, and excessive fecundity (Lombroso in Rothenberg and Hausman, 1976, p. 80).

This conception of creativity reflects a historical shift from divine, imitative, representational, impressionistic, and pragmatic sources of Western arts. The term creativity is also used in the West to describe innovations which occur in
the domains of educational research, curriculum development and implementation, and in the sciences. “Thus we have another basic belief of the contemporary view, that creativity is not characterized essentially by the production of a valuable product, but rather by a specific mode of thinking or process…. Ordinary thinking, according to this view, is characterized by logic, habit, rigidity, strict judgment, and the adherence to previously established rules and patterns. Creative thinking, on the other hand, is marked by leaps of imagination, irrational processes, rule-breaking, the suspension of judgment, and the spontaneous generation of ideas” (Bailin, p. 3). These views have been influenced by Edward De Bono’s claims about the existence of two basic modes of thinking; vertical and lateral thinking:

“The former is used in logical thinking to solve type problems and to check the reasonableness of solutions. It is the sort of thinking which one uses most frequently in problem solving, and involves remaining rigidly within a given framework and thinking along established paths. Moreover, it is essentially selective, judging what is produced according to the criteria of prevailing patterns. Lateral thinking, on the other hand, is strictly generative, producing new ideas without evaluating them, and is, thus characterized by a suspension of judgement. It involves going outside the framework for the solution to the problem or for an idea which will lead to a solution, and making leaps between established paths and new connections among them” (De Bono, as cited in Bailin, p. 66).

Despite the cultural specificity of De Bono’s claims, the distinction between the various thinking processes seems problematic since the processes may not be easily assessed (despite technological mediations in the thinking processes). Some contemporary critics question the notion of genius and equate creative thinking with the ordinary thinking process. Critics also argue that a new or original work of art may share some similarities with its antecedents and may also differ from them to some extent. They contend that some works may share a lot of similarities with the existing ones while others may differ radically from their antecedents (Bailin, pp. 9–32). Should the work that differs radically be regarded as original? Critics further note that the so-called original work of art may be historically linked to a given artwork, style, subject matter, or experience, thus exhibiting its connection to the existing tradition (Bailin, pp. 8–32).

In applying the concept of originality and creativity to the African performing arts, I would like to clarify that it is difficult to determine the exact origin of the earliest African music and dance forms, due to lack of empirical evidence on their origins. However, investigation into African oral documents, including music and dance, the Ewe language, and literary texts, would eluci-
date certain aspects of their origin and the concepts of originality and creativity.

Many Ewe composers would trace the ultimate source of their compositions to Se, destiny, law or law giver, or Mawu, God whose attributes include Segbolisa or Sogbolisa, (Sogbo and Lisa refer to the sun and the moon and symbolize the male and female attributes of the Supreme Being), or Mawu kitikata, God omnipresent, or Aṣaṣe, the most crafty one or artist who created hands and feet (i.e., all things). Some Ewe would attribute their compositions to inspirations received from Hadzivodu or Akaya, the composing God symbolized with precious cowries strung around a gourd rattle or on strings, placed in a special container and held sacred. Some composers would claim to have inherited their creative talent from their maternal or paternal lineage. Many Ghanaians believe that the condition a pregnant woman undergoes affects the infant. Pregnant African women usually participate in music and dance performances until their delivery period, and a newborn child is believed to have absorbed these performances before birth. The notion of heredity may create ambiguity due to intercultural and interracial marriage within the historical process. But the belief in both paternal and maternal inheritance lessens this ambiguity. An individual whose immediate parents or ancestors are not recognized as composers or drummers may exhibit the creative/performative talent; this may lead to skepticism about the origin of his or her talent. But the Ewe would either trace it to his/her genealogy, or regard it as his/her innate quality (or sefenu or sefenunana, endowment from Se, destiny, law giver, or God).

The belief in innate or metaphysical origins of artistic talent is reinforced by the Ghanaian conception that music and dance are a prerogative of the living (stated by Ampofo Duodu in a lecture in 1985). Right at birth, the first gesture exhibited by an infant and the cry that accompanies it are considered music and dance.

Further investigations reveal that most of the earliest music and dance forms originated with the adelawo, hunters, through imitation of neighboring creatures and physical environments. An informant told me, “a hunter went to hunt and came across a group of monkeys (kese) or dwarfs (aziza) playing instruments, dancing, and singing.” On his return, he narrated or shared his experiences with members of the community. This being the case, however, the hunter might not emulate every animal’s action or behavior but only the aspects that appealed to him. In re-enacting these experiences for the community, the hunter would incorporate his idiosyncrasies and would perhaps repress some experiences that might conflict with social ethics. He perhaps also preserved some of these experiences as his professional secret, or as a way of main-
taining solidarity with the neighboring creatures and the environments. Hence, an Ewe proverb states, *Adela megblɔ wo kata o*, which means, a hunter does not say all.

The attribution of the origin of the African music and dance to hunters may be due to their special roles as leaders in the early migrations of social groups, and founders of states, in securing the welfare of the society by protecting citizens from wild animals and providing them with a means of livelihood, hence, the existence of hunters in almost every Ewe lineage. Hunting demands special skill and art and a hunter may be likened to a craftsman, an artist, a warrior, and an explorer. Hunters were exposed to many environmental creatures and features, such as animals, the moon, and the stars that they studied in various contexts. African hunters are knowledgeable because of their vast experience in studying the physical environment and neighboring creatures.

The hunters’ attribution of African music and dance’s creative source to some neighboring animals and environmental features may also be due to their recognition of the self as interconnected to those creatures and features, the aesthetic values they observe in these contexts, their desire for novelty, and their desire to mystify the source of creativity. Most of the music and dance forms which are reported to have originated from neighboring creatures actually developed during the earliest stages of African cultural formation. The hunting profession has declined in present day African societies but tribute is still paid to the ancestral hunters.

Some musical melodies are believed to have been inspired by birds, such as the *Ako* (parrot), *Aloe* (sparrow), and some other local birds. Some music and dance forms are believed to have originated by the *mawuviwo* (small gods), *mawuawo* (gods), and *trɔwo* (divinities) through their interaction with human beings, while others were reported to have originated by human beings in communication with the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors (*tɔgbɛawo/mamawo*). Examples of these are the many religious music and dance forms, such as the *Yeeyu*, the music and dance suite of the Yeeye religious group; *afavu*, the music and dance performed by members of Afa religious sect; and *adzohu*, a sacred and religious music and dance of the Fon-Ewe of the Republic of Benin.

Other music and dance forms revolved around certain historical episodes; these include *Atamga* (an older version of *Agbekɔ*), which refers to the highest oath of solidarity and patriotism sworn by the Ewe during their historical period; *misẹgo*, meaning gird your loins or tighten your belt, which the Ewe employed during their exodus from *ŋɔtsie*, walled kingdom in the present day Republic of Togo during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries); and *attrikpu*, *agbadza*, and *kpegisu* which are said to have originated from war experiences.
Some other music and dance forms are said to have originated from dreams and humans’ instinct while others emerged through social interaction and the desire for innovation. Some of the music and dance forms which originated in specific contexts later developed through various contexts. For example, *agbekɔ*, which is said to have originated through the inspiration of neighboring creatures, later developed through socioeconomic and political contexts to become a recreational and theatrical music and dance. Other contextual performances such as *adzogbo* and *agbadza*, which originated in the context of religion and defense, also developed through various contexts to become social and recreational and unique performance styles.

Investigation of Ewe linguistic concepts would elucidate additional concepts that the Ewe employ to identify the makers of activities or objects that may fall under the Western definition of craft, art, music and dance. The Ewe word *aɖaŋu* (as stated in the attributes of God) implies skill, craft, or art. Thus the verb *dze aɖaŋu* or *wo aɖaŋu* is translated by Westermann (1928; 1973) as to be clever, able, skillful (cited in Fiagbedzi, 2005, p. 2). Similarly, the word *do aɖaŋu* means to advise or counsel; the noun form *aɖaŋudodo* refers to the act of counseling. Thus, the words *aɖaŋutɔ* (literally meaning the possessor of skill in craft or art) and *aɖaŋudɔla* both refer to counsellor (see Fiagbedzi, 2005, p. 3; Agawu, 1995, p. 84). Related to *aɖaŋu* is the word *aye*, meaning cunning. Another word which is related to *aɖaŋu* is *aɖaŋu adahu*, meaning deliberation; and the noun form, *adahudede*, refers to the process of deliberation or brainstorming (during the final arbitration process among the Ewe). Further, the words *aɖaŋuwɔwo* and *aɖaŋudzedze* (the noun forms of *wo Aɖaŋu* and *dze Aɖaŋu*) refer to skillfulness, craftiness, artistry, and finesse (Fiagbedzi, p. 3). Thus the word *aɖaŋuwoła* refers to a person who does craft or artwork; *aɖaŋudwoła* refers to one whose work involves craft (or art); *aɖaŋudɔ* and *aɖaŋudɔwoña* both refer to craft work(s) or artwork(s). The word *aɖaŋudwoła* generally refers to carvers, song composers, drummers, and an individual whose works are viewed to have involved or exhibited certain skills, craft or art. Related to the word *aɖaŋudwoławo* is the word *gudowɔlawo*, which generally refers to hunters, carvers, blacksmiths, mechanics, and people who utilize certain technologies, tools, or metals in shaping other tools, metals, or engines (and wood). *Gu* or *Egu* is also considered a divinity responsible for metal or iron works.

Apart from the general concepts discussed above (which are seldom used), there are specific concepts that the Ewe usually employ to identify composers and their works. For example, the Ewe word *hasiŋo* refers to a song composer while the word *henɔ*, or *dzɛnɔ* (literally meaning song’s mother) refers to a cantor or lead singer. The word *atsyiadɔto* or *atsyiadola* refers to one who creates
or performs a style, while *adzawutɔ* refers to one who displays style. In addition, the Ewe word *vudode* literally means planting a drum or performance and refers to the formation of a music and dance group. The word *kpa*, if expressed in a middle tone, literally means carve, compose, or create. *Kpa ha* means to compose (a) song; *kpa atsyia* to compose style; *kpa ye* means to compose dance; *kpa vu* means to carve or construct a drum; and *kpa atsi* means to carve wood. The word *kpa* refers to the composition of new artistic elements, as distinct from the word *du ye*, dance, or *dzi ha*, sing a song, which refer to the singing of an existing song. Conversely, the term *wo ame*, literally meaning create a person, refers to God’s creation of the human.

The word *ha*, expressed by breathing out or releasing air from the stomach, translates to mean a song. Similarly, the word *dzi ha* literally means give birth to a song, also means sing, or sing a song. The same word *ha* refers to pig. The word *ha*, if pronounced in a higher tonal range, means yawn. The word *ye*, expressed by releasing some air from the stomach with a slight tension in the body, literally means dance. The same word refers to the sun. This word is closely related to *ye*, pronounced with the back of the tongue touching the soft palate. *Ye*, if pronounced in a high tone, implies break; when pronounced in the lower tonal range, *ye* means to utter a painful sound. The word *vu* (a bilabial fricative) pronounced like blowing over the lower lip, translates to mean drum, music/dance or performance and suggests the sound of the wind and some drums.

The foregoing examples have elucidated the Ewe concepts that relate to Western concepts of creativity and originality. They have also revealed the metaphysical, environmental, social, physical, intellectual, historical, and individual origins of African music and dance. The attribution of the ultimate origin of creativity to God involves the interaction between God and humans. Similarly, the hereditary basis of African artistic talent involves the interaction between parents and children just as the imitative origin of certain music and dance forms involves the interaction between hunters, animals, and the physical environment. The implication is that any form of originality involves the interaction between subject and object or subject and subject. The recognition of the original work of art depends upon its evaluation by a social group or an individual. What seems original or extraordinary within a particular context may seem ordinary in another context. This also implies that originality is relative. Nevertheless, it could be traced to specific contexts of certain artistic developments.

Many Ewe composers usually refer to their songs as *agoha*, literally meaning velvet songs, or *atsyiaha*, stylized songs, or *atsyiahu*, stylized performance. Such references reflect the values the Ewe/composers and their societies attach to their music and dance compositions.
Among the Ewe, any newly created music and dances are regarded as continuations of older creations. Hence, an Ewe proverb states, *kaxoxoawo nue wogbea yeyeawo do*, literally meaning it is on the older ropes patterns that new ones are woven.

For the purpose of differentiation, the Ewe may distinguish between *haxoxo*, an old song, and *hayeye*, new song, and *sevadzi*, literally meaning, a song heard or borrowed (from another locality and sung in one’s own locality). Some Ewe songs belonging to the same style or genres may share similar phrases, melodies and rhythms, or be accompanied by similar movements. But these songs may differ in their over all themes, contents and forms. In this situation, what may be considered an original Ewe composition may not be entirely new. It may share some similarities with its antecedents but differ from them to some extent. On the whole, it is the synthesis of the older and the newer elements that contribute to the uniqueness of any new artistic creation.

### 2.2 The Present Composers of Traditional Ewe Music and Dance

In present-day Ewe communities, performing groups are organized at the level of the community, ward, village, town, school, and state. These groups are further organized within the contexts of age, sex, socialization, occupation, religion, ceremony, and politics. A given community may have between five and fifteen performance styles. Each community, society, or school has its own *hasinɔwɔ*, song composers, *henɔwɔ*, or *dzenɔwɔ*, cantors, and *aza-gunɔwɔ*, drummers (who may generally be referred to as *aŋəŋwɔləwɔ* or *aŋəŋwɔtɔwɔ*, creative people or artists) who usually mediate in the group’s organizational and compositional process. In the absence of any leading composer or drummer, a composer or choreographer in a neighboring village or town may be invited to help mediate in the creative process.

Despite the emphasis on integrated performance, the Ewe usually focus on vocal music during the creative process. In particular, the Àŋlo-Ewe’s creative process usually revolves around *hasinɔ*, a song composer/poet who may also be *henɔ*, a cantor. The *hasinɔ* or composer may specialize in composing certain music and dance styles or components, or s/he may be *henɔ*, a cantor, *aza-gunɔ*, a drummer, or *yenua/yedula*, a choreographer/dancer. The versatile artists are those who usually compose integrated performances, such as *agbekɔ*, *atsyia*, and *adzogbo*.

Among the renowned traditional Ewe composers (and performers) are Wemasmenu, Kɔbła Hofe and Vinɔkɔ Akpalu, composers in the *nyayito* style),
Dunyo and Ekpe (noted for their halo, songs of insult); Seke and Kpogo (composers in the kinka style); Atsǐfose Amegago, Kpligii Agbakpe, and Deya Duga (composers of adzida, agbadza, misego, dunekpo songs, etc.); and Francis Nuatro, a composer/choreographer in Bɔbɔbɔ style. The emerging traditional Ewe composers who perform in groups and in solo include Kpatsavi Junior of Togo, a composer, singer and dancer of agbadza style, and Gbessi Zolawadjii of the Republic of Benin, a composer, singer and dancer of agbadza style. The Ewe female composers include Dzenawo (of Atiavi), Atsugbota (of Alakple), and Dzatugbui Sonefa (of Anloga). Other renowned Ewe composers/choreographers and master drummers who operate in the Ghanaian and world’s performing arts institutions include Kobla Ladzekpo, Alfred Ladzekpo, C. K. Ladzekpo, Midawo Sogbo, Foli, and C. K. Ganyo and Godwin Agbeli. The Ewe composers also include Phillip Gbehoe and Ephraim Amu, the composers of the Ghana national anthems; and Walter Blege, a composer in both traditional and Western musical traditions, and the leader of Dumedef performing group of Ho, Volta Region. Mention should also be made of the Ewe composers and singers of popular music, or highlife, such as Agboti Yao, Aaron Cici, Dela Deladem and Mafi Bensa all of Togo. This list can be expanded. There are young composers who may not be recognized by the elders in the communities although some of them may be popular among their peer groups.

2.3 Qualities of Ewe Creative People

Nketia enumerates certain attributes of African composers, most of which relate to Ewe composers as well. They include sensitivity, clarity of mind, retentive memory, ability to concentrate, knowledge of the cultural history, possession of good voice, and the ability to improvise (Nketia, 1974, pp. 53–56). Awoonɔ notes additional characteristics of Ewe composers, such as bright eyes, pleasantness of personality, and anxiety or worry (Awoonɔ, 1974, pp. 18–19). One may also add craftiness or artistry to the qualities of Ewe composers. The craftiness of a composer may be deduced from evaluative terms, such as heno sia ami le tagbo nae, this composer has chemical, grease or oil in his/her head; heno sia Aɖagui le tagbo ne, this composer has art in his/her head. These qualities are said to manifest from infancy to adulthood. A potential child-composer would be perceived as concentrating on tasks, being inquisitive, making philosophical utterances, and showing keener interest in music and dance performances relative to other children in the community. However, these qualities are nurtured by the social and the physical environment. For example, a composer’s sensitivity may stem from his or her social experiences of joy, hap-
piness, suffering and worry, sympathy, empathy, and needs within a given social environment. Such experiences form the basis of his/her unique expression and imagination. On the contrary, the perceived creative or artistic child or youth may not develop the skill for composing or performing certain musical types or instruments if the musical or instrumental resources are not available in his or her environment.

Ewe composers may be inspired by heightened human experiences that require outward expression. Lack of avenues for such expressions may affect the composers physically and psychologically. Hence, the Ewe would say, “ha de ame gbe,” literally meaning, song sends a person (composer) to the field. There is much empirical evidence that some Ewe composers who are anxious to compose songs wander to their relatives and friends in order to share any new composition with them.

Memory plays a major role in developing the composer’s sensitivity and in shaping his/her oral knowledge since most of the cultural experiences have to be memorized for effective sensation, reflection and expression. The composer’s memory span is reinforced by his role as a mediator and custodian of the cultural knowledge. The various participants in the creative and performative process provide cues and clues which serve as memory aids to all and sundry. In this regard, the participants constantly engage in storing and retrieving artistic elements from long-term and short-term memory. Therefore, we may say that the composer’s memory span is socially constructed. Nevertheless, his/her innate memory skill is recognized.

The development of a broader memory span and the ability to store oral artistic compositions in memory depends upon constant performance. Hence, Ewe composers/performers usually document most of these elements in their memories through constant practice. An individual’s memory may be refreshed or relieved from overloading through clues and cues that are embedded in the artmaking process and through sequential or simultaneous processing of the artistic materials by the sensory organs. Human memory has a limit and can wane through time, especially during old age, hence the need for subsequent generations to continue the oral creative/performative process. The introduction of Western literary theory to African contexts challenges the oral creative and documentary process but it also serves as a memory aid to the elite composers, performers, and scholars (which in turn enhances oral compositions).

The composers’ improvisational skill enables them to extemporize, ornament their compositions, and respond to the demands or problems that arise in the artmaking process. An intensive knowledge of the culture (including language) enables African composers to assume multiple roles as artists, social mediators, authors, historians, philosophers, communicators, cultural crit-
ics, entertainers, and social workers. The quality of a good and smooth voice enables the composers to compose pleasing songs. However, a composer who lacks these qualities is usually assisted by other composers or cantors. Concerning the possession of bright eyes and pleasant personality, as noted by Awoonɔ, some Ewe composers would be considered to possess these qualities based upon sociocultural values. But composers who lack these qualities would not be disqualified from being composers.

2.4 The Purpose of Creating Ewe Music and Dance

The purposes of creating African music and dance may be related to the multidimensional functions of African arts and the role artists play in African societies. African music and dance provide a means for socialization, social integration, communication, social critique, historical and cultural documentation and preservation, dramatic enactment of the people’s way of life, therapy, entertainment, and education. One or more factors may inspire the creation of a particular African piece of music and dance, song, or dance.

For example, a composer may desire to express historical, cultural, and social experiences such as beliefs about the metaphysical universe, ethics, social vices, migration, state formation, and political themes. A composer may express feelings and emotions such as joy, happiness, praise, love, ridicule, humor, anger, insult, hatred or critique through the unique artistic medium.

Composers may desire to express their views on environmental features such as the earth, moon, stars, earthquakes, floods, droughts, rainfall, bush fires, etc. A composer may also desire to express lullabies, game songs, didactic songs, or storytelling songs to educate and entertain the youth, as well as treat occupational themes such as farming, fishing, and hunting through the artistic medium. Further, a composer may create to overcome the limitations posed by the artmaking process, or to serve as a deviation from the existing styles. For example, among the Aŋlo-Ewe, vusedede, the banning of drumming before or after certain ceremonies, led to the invention of dakago vuwo, box drums, which are played during this period.

African youths may create new artistic works to satisfy their curiosity or to serve as a departure from the existing art forms. They may collaborate with their teachers to address social problems of drug abuse and teenage pregnancy; or to revive significant past achievements/events, curricular activities, games, and physical training; or they may condense various experiences in the creative process. Students may create for inter-school music and dance competi-
tions, speech- and prize-giving days, festivals, and other cultural events. These and other factors may inspire African creativity and may be shaped by the composer’s subjective experience and imagination.

2.5 Ewe’s Creative Setting

The attribution of the ultimate source of creativity to the Supreme Being and the identification of African music and dance with life, suggest that the African creative process begins in the metaphysical realm, continues in the physical world, and returns to the metaphysical realm. Within the physical environment, the Ewe’s creativity/composition occurs in the mind of the individuals, in bed during dreams, at home, under a tree, in the street, in the classroom or playground, on the beach, on the farm, in religious settings, in the chief’s palace, and in public and private space.

2.6 Ewe’s Creative Process

The Ewe’s creative, performative, learning, and teaching processes are interwoven. The formation of a new performing group usually involves consultation with parents, community leaders, and patrons of the arts. These leaders may defer the proposal (for about a week or two) in order to deliberate on the issue. Based upon the leaders’ consent, the group may begin their creative process by holding meetings, selecting interim patrons, deciding on an appropriate venue for rehearsals, and setting dates for a rehearsal schedule, dress rehearsals, and the inaugural ceremony.

The criteria for selecting the group’s leaders include the age of the leaders in relation to those of the performers, and knowledge and enthusiasm about the music and dance. In the case of youths, middle-aged male and female leaders are normally selected. An adults’ performing group would select elderly patrons who are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the music and dance form or style. The creative process may begin in a composer’s house or yard and then move to abloame, the public performance arena. Rehearsals are organized around market days, which occur every four days, and take place every evening approximately between 8:30 and 11:00 p.m., excluding market days, rainy days, or days marked by public emergencies. The entire creative process may last for about six months to over a year depending on the performance style and circumstances. The rehearsal period would be extended if additional time is needed to accomplish the project.
Prior to group rehearsals, the hasinɔ (composer/choreographer) will reflect on relevant themes and begin to compose new songs through selection, elimination, and modification of ideas and themes, melodies, or movements. The following is an account given by Atifose Amegago about the process of composing songs among the Ewe.

Hakpakpa nyafɔkpe wonye. Ne emlɔ anyi za woawɔ abe ame ye le gbɔ wo ene
ahanɔ hadzim kpli wo, alo abe wo ntɔ wo susue nya gbɔm nawo ene,Ne eva nyɔ, ne etsi tame na woa ye ne gbɔgbɔge na amewo. Ne ekpae vɔ, ye ne amewo fia ge woawɔ edzim kpli wo. Ne wodzi vɔ woma nu na woa hafi miedzige. Le ekpakpa mea wo deka koe kpa ge, mele be ame nanɔ gbɔ wo anɔ nu fom na wo.

Meaning
A song composition is a structuring of utterances. When you are in bed at night it would occur as if somebody comes to you and is singing with you, or your own mind is talking to you. When you wake up, what remains in your mind is what you recount to people. When you finish composing it, it is then that you teach people. When their mouths are used to it, then you perform it. In the process of composing, the song would not like anybody to be with you (a conversation with Atifose Amegago, 1997).

Another account on the Aŋlo-Ewe song composition/creative process is provided by Fiagbedzi as follows:

“Composing is, I believe, a gift from Mawu (God). Quite often thoughts that may not have struck me before do occur to me in bed making me sit up. The next moment may find me joining one nyagbe to another, trying the song out. At times many nyagbewo may come into my head, and if I try to sing with as many all at once, I often forget the earlier ones. Therefore, even if the nyagbewo fall fast, I sit up, select three or four, and sing them (te gbe wo nu) till they feel easy on the lips. To these I would then add another nyagbewo, turning them till they fit nicely, after which I go over the two sets of nyagbewo. Then I would put the entire song out of my mind for a while, coming back to it to see whether I recollect it. If I do then it sticks in my mind. The next step is to go back to the opening or hadododa phrase for a suitable nyagbe for introducing the song, and to decide on a point of entry or the haxefe for the haxe, the assistant cantor who takes up the introductory solo and on the par-
ticular nyagbe which should “raise” the melody high up at that point. The haxefe must first go up and then descend. Composing may be likened to road making, for the road that climbs straight up all the way is a bad one. Therefore, the nyagbe and the haxefe first ascend, and then they must descend. This succession of ascent (korkorun) and downwards slope (abudidi) continues till the song ends. When the song is complete, I must find someone to sing it to, for then we can both remember it afterwards” (Fiagbedzi, 1977, pp. 245–246).

It can be deduced from the above accounts that the Ewe song composers usually engage in the process of reflection on their life and social experiences consciously or unconsciously, and restructure these experiences through integrating language, melodies, and other artistic devices.

The group’s creative process usually begins with have, which literally means two songs, and refers to selected songs. This is also referred to as havolo or havolul, which is a (social) gathering to deliberate on the initial compositions. The have or havolo or havolul is attended by akametsiw, ringleaders, in order to review the initial compositions, and is followed by hakpa, the main rehearsal, which is attended by vuviviwo, group members (literally, the performing group’s children). The group’s creative process involves a leader reviewing a song (referred to as hawuwu) and teaching the group members the lyrics and melodic patterns. For example, the composer may introduce the call section, which is referred to as hadododa, which would be repeated by cantors a number of times. He or she may also teach haxefe, the responsorial section, which would be sung by the haxeawo, chorus (or assistant cantor), a number of times until they become familiar with the lyrics and melody. The composer would interline the chorus section with the continuation of the melodic pattern, and introduce additional melodic patterns that form part of hadada, the main song, which may be sung repeatedly by both the leader and chorus, singing in unison (homophony) with some individual variations.

After the group has become familiar with the main melodic patterns, the composer would introduce hatsoto, the concluding section of the song. The song may be sung with or without instrumental accompaniment, but usually gakogui (double clapperless bell) and atoke (boat-shaped) bells provide the guiding principle or timeline for the chorus, melody, or dance. The entire ha or song is repeated over and over again until group members have become familiar with the lyrics and melodies before another song is introduced. There are moments of explaining the song text, moments of lyrical or poetic recital, moments of dramatizing the song text, and moments of clarifying individual and group melodic patterns and questions regarding vocal range.
Other lead singers and dancers sometimes emerge during the rehearsal or creative process and assist the (main) composer(s). The process also features individuals and small groups based on sex, or on voluntary and other modes of role distribution. This provides opportunities for individuals and groups to improve upon the parts and improvise and create in the process. Cognitive learning strategies are adopted by individuals and groups who reflect on the songs in their minds and come together outside the main rehearsal period at anywhere deemed appropriate to rehearse the artistic elements. This also enhances the participants’ freedom to improvise or create within the song/performance structure.

The composition of integrated music and dance styles such as *agbekɔ, adzogbo, gadzo,* and *atsyia* usually involves collaboration between the lead drummer-choreographer and other participants. In the process, the leader reflects on the relevant themes and composes certain rhythms, melodies, and movements. A leader introduces certain drum patterns or texts and demonstrates movement figures that correspond to the rhythmic patterns. He may also introduce a melody that illustrates the meaning of such instrumental patterns or texts and dance movements. On the other hand, a choreographer may introduce some movement patterns, which a drummer would observe and reflect on for some time in an attempt to create corresponding rhythmic patterns to illustrate their meanings. Similarly, a song composer may reflect on the movements and the rhythms and compose a melody that complements or contributes to the meaning of the movements and rhythmic patterns or texts. These artistic elements are taught to the various participants repeatedly, simultaneously, and sequentially.

The composers-choreographers-drummers may continue to create additional songs, instrumental patterns and movements, and introduce them after the participants have mastered the previous elements. In doing so, they strive to establish a clear sense of the composition’s beginning, continuation, climax, and finale. The composers coordinate the instrumental, movements, and vocal sections to ensure that they blend harmoniously. In the creative process, the lead drummer-choreographer could be inspired by the dancing, drumming, and singing of the various participants, which s/he would shape into a unique music and dance composition. Similarly, other participants could be inspired by the works of the leading figures, or by their colleagues or peers, and create unique artistic elements through ornamentation and improvisation to contribute to the entire composition or repertoire. Innovations continue to take place in the creative process until the inaugural and even through subsequent performances.

In the process, a veteran composer may invite the leaders of the group to his/her house, or may attend the group’s rehearsal and suggest modification of cer-
tain melodies, lyrics, movements, and drum patterns and rhythms. Similarly, the patrons may pay sporadic visits to the rehearsals, listen, observe, advise, or suggest solutions to problems that may arise in the creative process. The creative process also involves the construction or purchase of musical instruments (such as drums, bells, rattles and clappers), costumes, stage properties, flags, visual imagery, and furniture. Divination may take place in consultation with the spiritual forces, to inquire about the group’s welfare.

When the group is satisfied with the composition or performance, the elders are informed about fieuwufufo, an evening performance. This may take place at ablɔme, the community’s performance space, may last from one to three days, and is normally attended by community leaders, who upon evaluating the performance, may advise the group to put finishing touches to it or allow the vuhehedego, inaugural performance. Finishing touches to the performance would continue until the inaugural date. The final preparations would involve sending invitations to neighboring performing groups and patrons, general cleaning, decoration of the performance setting with flags, large umbrellas, and other visual imagery, and the arrangement of furniture.

On the inaugural day, the performers wake up at dawn and walk to Gbedzi, a suburb about five kilometres away from the inaugural setting, where they begin to stroll through the town, making sporadic stopovers in neighboring villages to exhibit song excerpts from their repertoire (this is referred to as hadzadzra, song or group selling). About two kilometres away from the inaugural setting, the performers form about three or four lines and begin vulilo (which is a slower version of the performance) as they process towards the inaugural setting (ablɔme). In this procession, some female (and male) members of the group carry the drums on their heads. The procession features hand- and stick-clapping, singing, drumming, and dancing towards the inaugural setting.

On approaching the inaugural setting, the performers are ushered in by female volunteers, spreading dzatsi (“holy” corn-floured water) in front of them to walk through to signify well wishes, coolness, or peace. At the setting, the inaugural ceremony continues with a short demonstration of the main performance for about thirty minutes to an hour. This may be followed by a prayer of gratitude and commemoration of the Supreme Being and ancestors, and another short demonstration. At about 11:00 a.m. or noon, the morning performance will come to an end.

During the period between the morning and afternoon performance, drum and bugle signals are played by leading musicians from their houses at regular intervals to remind the performers of the evening session. The afternoon session begins with vulilli at about 2:00 or 3:00 and may last for about three to
four hours. The entire performance may occur in series: there are usually three or four sections of integrated drumming, singing and dancing, each of which may last for about forty-five minutes or an hour. These sections are usually interspersed with *hatsyiatsyia* section, featuring the singing of lengthy philosophical songs or songs of advice, criticism and social commentary. There may be public announcements, prayers, or tributes to the Supreme Being, divinities and ancestors, presentation of gifts and drinks, etc., during this section.

Total performance time varies from one society to the next, and may depend upon the performance type, motivation of the performers, and audience’s reaction to the performance. The entire performance features the performers, patrons, and audience; drumming, singing, dancing and bugling; and exhibiting short dramatic sketches and visual imagery symbolic of divinities, cultural heroes, and heroines. The inaugural ceremony may last from three to seven days, excluding market days. After the inauguration, the performing group is recognized in the community, town or state and may be invited to perform on public occasions.

2.7 Creativity in the Local Schools:
A Case Study

This case study is based on students’ creative process at Keta Business College and Aŋla Đɔŋbɔ Junior Secondary School. Most of the student compositions occur in daily school activities, in children’s games and storytelling activities. However, this discussion will refer to student compositions within music and dance groups. Over the years, Ewe youths have created distinct music and dance styles such as *gota*, *bamuri*, *bɔbɔbɔ*, and *babashiko*, but most of their compositions are lost while others have been subsumed into adults’ performances. The youths’ compositions in schools usually involve a recreation of the prevailing music and dance forms such as *gota*, *ga hu* and *bɔbɔbɔ* and some adults’ performances such as *agbekɔ*, *gadzo*, *atsyia*, *adzogbo*, and *adevu*.

The ages and the number of participants vary in relation to context but student groups generally involve selected students from the entire primary, upper primary, middle school, or secondary school, based on students’ desires, interest, abilities, and upon teachers’ requests and recommendations. Traditional artists, teachers, or cultural officers usually serve as facilitators. In some cases, two or more traditional artists would collaborate to facilitate the process.

Students may create within a classroom, at playgrounds, in teachers’ houses, and traditional composers’ houses. Their rehearsals are usually scheduled
around the two first or last periods of classes, or after classes, and may last between one and a half to two hours each day, twice a week. The overall process lasts between three months to over a year, depending upon the context of creativity.

The youths’ creative process is similar to the mainstream process discussed above. However, students usually combine both oral and literary modes of creativity in the local and foreign languages. They employ classroom resources such as tablets, chalk, and colors to visually represent and express sociopolitical, economic, and school themes and images. Students are usually divided into smaller groups, according to their assigned roles and sex. They also come together voluntarily to rehearse and compose new songs, movements and instrumental patterns in the creative process. They undertake field trips to collect some environmental materials for designing their own costumes and props. The facilitators in the students’ creative process welcome suggestions from other members of staff for the improvement of the pieces or compositions. Students organize dress rehearsals and final performances which are usually mediated and attended by the facilitators, school staff, peer groups, parents, and other members of the community.

2.8 New Developments in Ghanaian First and Second Cycle Students’ Creativity

Since the late 1980s there has been a shifting emphasis from students’ recreation of traditional performances to compositions based on specific themes such as drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, puberty rites, bringing yesterday’s knowledge to tomorrow’s vision, and Ghana’s political independence. For this reason, many schools in traditional settings invite professional cultural officers or graduates of the Ghanaian performing arts institutions to facilitate the creative process. Due to language and cultural barriers, most elementary schools invite specialists from the same ethnic group who speak the local language. The secondary schools that predominantly employ the English language as a medium of instruction usually invite specialists from the same or different ethnic groups. In both cases, the specialists are assisted by members of staff in translating certain artistic concepts from the local language into English or vice versa and in coordinating the students and offering constructive suggestions.

The contemporary Ghanaian (first and second cycle) students’ creative process is similar to those I have already discussed. However, a few aspects can still be pointed out. For example, the facilitator focuses on developing artistic works/pieces based on specific or various themes and employs traditional artis-
tic materials in creating new music and dance forms. This involves instruction and casting individuals or groups of students for specific or various roles. It also involves structuring the artistic elements through selection, elimination, modification, and incorporation of suggestions from the members of staff. Students work as individuals or in small or large groups. The process also involves collaboration between the facilitator and students, and organization of dress rehearsals and stage or public performances that are usually attended by peer groups, colleagues, staff members, parents, and guardians.

2.9 Other Creative Processes

The above discussion is based on the mainstream and students’ creative processes. However, consideration should be given to other processes that are interwoven into the artistic endeavor: domestic activities, fishing, farming, hunting, religious, political, and individual activities. Although the main process of creating and rehearsing may appear to be more elaborate and guided by rules and regulations or social ethics, which would in turn shape the performances, other creative processes satisfy the artists and performers’ specific aims and objectives. Since such processes are interwoven into the activities, they may last as long as the activities. These contextual processes are regulated by the activities and ethics observed in specific contexts. For example, net owners, prominent hunters, priests, priestesses, and traditional rulers may serve as patrons in these contexts. Similarly, an individual composer/performer may be guided by his/her conscience and social ethics (despite the revolutionary nature of certain artistic creations).

Concerning the organization of the creative process, even though an individual or a group of students or teachers may desire to achieve continuity, avoid undue disruption by controlling the creative environment, or conform to specific time schedules and aesthetic values, some contingencies such as rainfall, sporadic visits of friends, students’ disruptions, movement back and forth, sporadic digressions, and occasional breaks may impinge on the creative process. These phenomena may inspire further creativity. Therefore, the notion of systematic organization of the creative process should be contextualized and treated with some flexibility and consideration for the perspectives and circumstances of the composers, participants, and patrons.
2.10 Continuity of the Ewe Music and Dance Creative Process

The continuity of the African artmaking process involves constant performance practice, modification of some of the older components, innovations within the existing structure, revival of older performances, and incorporation of borrowed elements. Strictly speaking, every performance may be referred to as a new creation, except insofar as they retain traditional elements. The creation of new music and dance forms, or components which add to the existing repertoire mostly occurs in adult or youth social performances, such as agbekọ, adzogbo, atsyia, gadzo, and bɔbɔbɔ, and in adult social performances, such as agbadza, adzida, gohu, and nyayito, through constant revival by the older and younger generations. Innovation occurs less frequently in religious, ceremonial, and political performances due to the ethical, moral, and sacred values attached to them. Innovation within performances that are integrated with fishing, hunting, and farming may occur on the spur of the moment. The repertoires of the various music and dance forms expand over time. Excessive borrowing and adaptation of the existing artistic elements without any effort to create and contribute to the creative process may be held in check through critiques or comments from within and outside the group.

The rate of creativity/composition varies from one society to another. Generally, about four to six distinct musical styles may be created or revived within one human lifetime. On one hand, the gradual decline of traditional African societies is leading to a reduction in traditional Ewe creativity. On the other hand, the existence of most of the older music and dance forms is limiting the level of Ewe’s creativity. These days, schools also serve as perpetuators of traditional African creative processes, but works produced in schools usually reflect a fusion of Western and African elements.

The continuity of older music and dance forms also depends upon patronage and their ability to withstand competition or stand the test of time. Current emphasis on innovation and a partial rejection of traditional music and dance by some Christian groups is contributing to the decline of traditional African artmaking processes and patronage. Needless to say, traditional music and dance forms provide the bedrock of new developments. To survive, these music and dance forms require continual re-creation, modification, and performance.

Considering the number of people who participate in the traditional creative process, if all these people could create at least one artistic element, they would produce a tremendous amount of material. Such a project would involve recon-
ceptualizing traditional African creativity. It is worth noting that the traditional African mode of creativity is mostly teleological, and overemphasis on (new) creativity would lead to permanent and radical displacement of the older music and dance forms and significant cultural values. For these reasons, students of African music and dance should be led to understand that the notion of creativity is context-bound and does not necessarily imply creating an entirely new artistic work. While some societies may emphasize individual creativity and arts ownership, African societies emphasize communal participation and meaning-making through their arts. Therefore, in this contemporary era, recognition should be given to individual and group creativity that occurs within the prevailing music and dance forms as unique modes of African creativity in line with African communal values.

2.11 Improvisation as an Aspect of African Creativity

Improvisation is defined as the art of composing verse, music, or movements on the spur of the moment, extemporaneously, or suddenly (Random House College Dictionary, 1988, p. 670). When applied to African performance, the term often creates an impression that these performances are mainly improvised. There is no word in Ewe that exactly corresponds to the English word improvisation. The Ewe word that comes close to this phenomenon is *mla*, which literally means to ornament or embellish or exaggerate. Ornamentation, embellishment, and exaggeration are tolerated as an aspect of an individual’s creativity and a continuation of the creative process. It does not imply that the entire African performance is improvised. The level of improvisation depends upon an individual’s role and the purpose of the performance. As indicated earlier, this act of embellishment or improvisation may be a sharp response to problems that may arise in the artmaking process. Improvisation also demonstrates the performer’s ability to ornament the performance, coordinate the various performers and the entire performance structure in conformity with the aesthetic values. For example, the lead drummers, cantors, and lead dancers are usually allowed greater freedom of improvisation due to their roles as leaders, coordinators, and problem solvers in the artmaking process. Improvisation also takes the form of rhythmic, textual and melodic variations and dialogue, which exemplify the various performers’ idiosyncrasies and creativity, create interest and harmony, and augment the existing repertoire. With time, such ornamental and improvised patterns may become recognized as part of the main compositions.
The degree of improvisation, however, depends upon the structural accommodation, the instruments used in the performance, and skill of the performer. Some contextual performances do not provide much scope for improvisation because of their structural limitations and the need to conform to performance/social ethics. Some performers are highly skilled at improvising due to their innate ability, skill acquired through constant practice, and favorable environmental conditions. Others may lack improvisation skill due to physical or environmental limitations.

2.12 Concerning The Idea of Progress in African Creativity

The idea of progress, which is usually referred to as an advancement or improvement in human endeavors, is usually applied to artistic creativity. However, the evaluation of progress in the Ewe’s creative processes raises questions of whether this should be based on the quantity or quality of the individual or group’s innovation in the creative process, the duration of the creative process or on the factors that inspired creativity? The notion of progress is context-bound and depends upon the environment; structural accommodation; the aims and objectives of creativity; the ideological framework of creativity/performance; groupings by age, gender, and sex; the quantity and quality of pre-existing and newer artistic elements; and individuals’ or groups’ estimation of the product at a given time.

Comparing the collaborative mode of African music and dance creativity to that of an individual’s creativity, one may say that, on the average, a group of people may spend more time than an individual artist on a given music and dance composition, due to the level of human interaction in group situations. One may also assume that, at a given period, more artistic elements may be created by individuals working alone compare to those working in groups. However, groups may execute complex artistic designs, harmonious sounds, and movements which are beyond the ability of a single individual. The collaborative styles reflect Africans’ communalism and desire for sharing, stability, and harmony. To a great extent, African societies provide scope for individual creativity in the group’s creative process. However, both the individual and group’s creativity/performance are limited in space and time.

One may regard adbekɔ, adzogbo, and atsyia, which closely integrate drumming, singing, and dancing, and whose movements are marked by turns designed to bring the dancers to a new beginning, as rigid or standardized. However, these music and dance forms should be treated as unique African
styles and modes of documentation. They also accommodate structural variations in place and time. In this situation, the evaluation of progress should be contextualized.

2.13 Ownership of Ewe Music and Dance

The Ewe recognize individual composers but cherish the sharing of their music and dance compositions with the larger community. Individual Ewe composers are inspired by social experiences. Some composers would dedicate their songs to their relatives, or attribute them to their fellow composers. Some may take pseudonyms to conceal their identities, or avoid the consequences of their actions in operating as social critics. Hence, many Ewe composers remain anonymous. Community leaders serve as the custodians of the music and dance forms. Any remuneration or token received by a member of the group during performances is shared among the various participants. In this contemporary era, many leading (and professional) artists are given due recognition, which identifies them with their compositions, and protect their ownership rights. But due recognition should be given to every contributor in any creative or performance process.

2.14 Bases of Identifying Ewe Music and Dance

A newly created Ewe music and dance form is usually identified to serve as a point of reference for the creators and the entire community. This is based either on recognizable elements, such as performers, musical instruments, songs, instrumental rhythm, movements, and performance context, or it may be based on the whole art form. The common basis of identification, particularly among the Ewe, is naming, contextualization, categorization, classification, and description. Examples of these modes of identification are provided below.

2.15 Naming of Ewe Music and Dance Elements

Naming as a reference system is a way of identifying environmental features, material objects, trees, rivers, animals, human beings, spirits, events, human experiences, etc. Names usually have cultural significance. They may reflect the nature and manner of birth, the order of things and their physical characteristics, ancestry, clan, category, vocation, religion, or social, economic, or
political status. Names may also reflect human experiences such as joy, happiness, virtues, gratitude, surprise, hardships, sufferings, forbearance, mischief, and ingratitude. An individual or object may have more than one name. Names may reflect the interconnection of human beings, neighboring creatures, and the natural environment. Some neighboring creatures may bear the names of certain human components while some human beings may also bear the names of some of these creatures and features (such as animals, plants, and other objects). Ewe names may be short or long (with appellations); they may be multi-layered and have real, symbolic, and multiple meanings; or they may serve as a synecdoche, metaphor, or metonym of things, events, and people. Some names may lose their contextual meanings and become conceptualized as abstract or they may eventually be abandoned.

Language provides a basis for naming things, material objects, human beings, events, and supernatural forces. Language and names may reveal or conceal human experiences, but they provide a basis for meaning-making across cultures. Some Ewe names that have been derived from performance practices are analyzed below.

Among the Ewe, a music/dance form or style may derive its name from its contextual function. For example, ahiauvu refers to courtship or social music and dance, whereas plasivu (a Western derivative) and modzakadevu refer to pleasure or entertaining performance, music, and dance. The term avlevu refers to comic music and dance belonging to the Yeve religious suite. A performance type may be named after the dominant age or group that performs it, for example, amegagoxo refers to a music and dance type of the elderly people, deviuwuo refers to youth music and dance, and sukuwu generally refers to music and dance performed by students (in schools).

The material used in constructing an instrument may lend its name to the group or performance. For example, atigo literally means tree-log, and refers to drum constructed of hollowed out log. The song style ziziha is linked with zizi or zizikpo, the redwood tree from which the staff of office symbolic of royalty and of Togbui Nyigbla, a war god, is made (Fiagbedzi, 1997, p. 159).

The dominant instrument in the ensemble may lend its name to the performance. For instance, the name akpevu, literally meaning clapper’s performance, is derived from the stick clappers or hand clapping that dominate the performance. Similarly, the name axatsevu or gohu, literally meaning rattle or gourd music and dance, is derived from the rattles that dominate the performance.

Some performance types or groups may be named after the era in which they were created or formed, for example, the names Freedom, Freeman, and Liberty, identify groups that were formed during Ghana’s independence era.

Some Ewe music and dance types derive their names from the aesthetic or ethical values attached to them. For example, atsyia refers to stylized per-
formance or stylization; agohawo refers to velvet songs; misego or ego literally mean gird your loins or be alert; gahu, wealth music/dance, derived its name from the expensive costume, make-up, and properties used in the dance/music (this is also attributed to the airplane that was reported to have flown over the performers during the process of creating the performance). The atamga, great oath, another name of agbekɔ, was derived from the highest oath of solidarity and patriotism sworn by the Ewe during their historical period; the name agbekɔ, literally meaning life’s neck or life is clean or clear, refers to or symbolizes some ethical values of the Ewe; adzogbo or adzohu derived its name from the sacred/religious and defensive values held by the Fon-Ewe. Similarly, the name agbadza is derived from the leather girdle or belt worn by the ancient Ewe warriors (it is also interpreted by some people to mean life is pure), while dugbadza, literally meaning state-agbadza, refers to the widespread or popularity of agbadza. Other names include, lbɔnu, freewill; nunesɔ, let the mouth unite; minonudɔɔ, be alert; nyavedzi, literally meaning a word painful to the heart; and adzida, bravery.

Many performances associated with the Ewe religious practices derive their names from God or other divinities with whom the performance is associated, for example, YeYeYe, Yeve religious performance; Afαυ, Afa religious performance; Xsευ or Christovu, Christian performance.

The aflui, akufade, and akom (Akan derivatives), and brekete (which originated from Northern Ghana) retain their original names with some changes in their pronunciation. The term miziki generally refers to imported Western musical types. A particular music and dance form may have more than one name while two distinct music and dance forms may be referred to by a single generic name (See also Nketia, 1974, pp. 24–26).

### 2.16 The Concepts that Relate to the Construction of Ewe Musical Instruments

The concepts that relate to the construction of the Ewe musical instruments are derived from the names of the materials used, the source of material, and the process of making the instruments.

The term vuɔkɔlɔ or vuɔblaɔ refers to the carver or maker of musical instruments (the latter applies to one who utilizes a template or pieces of wood and fastens them together with metal straps and nails to construct drums).

The term vuɔbishi refers to the drum-making process, which involves placing avegboe gbale, antelope skin, or sade gbale, deer skin, or gbɔ gbale, goat skin, and aghako, a hoop made of twine, rope, or wire on vugo, a drum-log or
drum-wood, and sewing it with "ka," rope or string, around the notched head of "tsotsiwo," the drum pegs which serve as tuning devices.

The term "vushiashia" refers to the drying of a drum after constructing it. The term "tsokakana" refers to tuning, which is done by hitting the drum pegs proportionally inside the peg holes to enable the drum to produce the desired sound. Similarly, the term "tsotsihoho" refers to the loosening of the drum skin by pulling the drum-pegs out with a suitable device. This may be aimed at producing relatively lower sound or removing the skin from the drum-wood.

Also, the term "tsidede" refers to pouring water into the drum wood while turning it upside down for a few minutes and laying it on the ground and rolling it around for a few more minutes before pouring out the water. This is done to wet the membrane in order to restore elasticity to the drum, which enables it to produce normal sounds. Drums constructed with template wood are likely to crack or lose the desired sounds due to unfavorable environmental conditions. This mode of tuning enables the wood to expand and fill any cracked spaces between the template wood. The term "asidodounu" refers to another mode of tuning the drum, which involves pressing the membrane with one's palm to enable the drum to produce a relatively lower sound.

2.17 Naming of Musical Instruments

Most Ewe musical instruments derive their names from the materials used in constructing them, their positioning, playing techniques, the player's location, timbre, and function. Most of these names revolve around the word "nu," drum music or performance.

The name "atimevu," literally meaning tree-inside-drum, refers to the Ewe lead drum which is between five and six feet tall and is usually leaned on "vudetsi," a wooden drum-stand, before being played, for proper resonance. In the past, the "atimevu" would be leaned on a forged stick, a practice which prevails in some forest areas of Ghana.

"Gboba," the lead drum in the Ewe "gahu" and "olenke" music and dance and a bass drum in "kinka" music, derived its name from the low bass sound it produces.

"Sogo," another lead instrument in some Ewe music and dance ensembles and a supporting drum in many of the larger repertoires, derived its name from the "logo azagu" tree (silk-cotton tree). There are two types of "logo:" the savannah species is called "dzogbe logo," while the forest species, which is believed to contain "sokpe" (thunder stone) or "ahlihakpe" (ahliha (special) stone) in its stem, is known as "logo azagu." The word "So," when pronounced in the low tone, means thunder, or sun.
Kidi, another supporting drum, is named according to the dominant sound it produces. Kagan or vuvi, the smallest drum in the Ewe instrumental ensemble, is named according to its distinct high-pitch sound. The totodzi or klodzi and kloboto drums employed in the agbekọ ensemble are also named according to their sounds. They are usually regarded as brothers. The supporting drums are collectively called asivui, meaning hand drum, because of their size and easiness to handle (with hands).

Gakogui, literally meaning a single iron or metal, refers to the double bell used in keeping time in most Ewe music and dance ensembles. The name gakogui is often abbreviated to ga, literally meaning metal, iron, bell, and a person. Anaga, a small clapper bell used in the Ewe religious settings, derived its name from the phallic appearance of its resonator. Axatse, the rattle, is named according to its rattling high-pitch sound.

Similarly, patenge, the small double-headed metal drum which is used to accompany the kinka and gahu chorus section, derived its name from the high-pitch sounds it produces. Foreign instruments such as the Western bugle or trumpet may be called biglo or kpe, while the brekete and dondo of Northern Ghana origin, and atompani, of Akan, origin retain their original names with some phonetic changes.

2.18 Naming of Performers

The word vuviwo or vuaviawo refers to the performers or members of the group. The concept umega refers to male patrons, while udadawo refers to female patrons of the group. The word atsinua literally meaning whisk leader; and dzidao or shiṣọ (in Yewelanguage) refer to the disciplinarian in the performance setting.

The word azagunọ (originally derived from the Yewelanguage) is a generic name for a drummer as distinct from the common word vufola, drum player. The word azagunọ is also related to the logo azagu, the silk-cotton tree used for carving some of the drums. The suffixes ga, literally meaning big or great, and vi (or kpe which is derived from the Yewedialect), may be added to azagunọ to denote superlative and diminutive statuses. Thus, azagunọvi or azagunọkpe refers to a young or apprentice drummer, while azagunọga refers to a leader or veteran drummer. Similarly, the Fon of the Republic of Benin may employ complementary terms, such as adzidatọ or adzidahutọ, which means brave person and refers to the energy displayed by lead drummers. The term tonuglawo refers to ring leaders who play the rattles, clap with sticks or hands, and sing and dance in tome, inside the circle or performance setting.
2.19 Categorizing/Classifying Ewe
Music and Dance

Classification may be referred to as an act of ordering objects, living things, human beings, cosmological features, and beings (usually according to hierarchical order). Classification may reflect an individual’s or group’s perception or conception of the natural order of things. In addition, classification may stem from an individual’s or group’s desire for uniqueness, or desire to surpass or know other human beings, objects, or forces on the basis of their differing and similar characteristics. Furthermore, classification may reflect the age, sex, grade, skill, knowledge, status, wealth, quantity, and appearance of groups of people, individuals, and natural objects. Classification may reveal or conceal the degree of social interaction, social stratification, discrimination, tolerance, flexibility, and harmony. Ultimately, classification is a social construct, reflecting the values and beliefs held by a particular group of people. The emergence of new generations and events and the development of new perspectives towards life may lead to a shift in social classification tendencies during different periods in history.

Classification may overlap with categorization, which refers to the grouping of things, human beings, events, or experiences on the basis of common characteristics, appearances, era, sex, gender, age, place, clan; categorization of people may be applied on a voluntary or arbitrary basis for purposes of establishing collective identity, providing instruction, or assigning responsibility.

Like the various types of African social organization, African societies differ in their modes of classifying or categorizing music and dance forms. Nketia (1974, pp. 53–54) notes that the Hausa and the Wolof of Senegambia classify musical instruments and musicians according to the ranks or status of the chiefs who patronize them. He further notes the existence of royal musicians in traditional Akan courts. However, ordinary people are allowed to participate in court performances in conformity with the social ethics. The Yëwe religious group of the Ewe also has both private and public performances which provide scope for expressing its people’s sacred values as well as for sharing part of their experiences with the public. Performances associated with the males, females, youths, and professionals often provide scope for any willing participants.

Among the Ewe, performing groups are broadly categorized under the era of their formation, the age group of their performers, their contextual functions, and the predominant instrument used in performing the groups’ reper-
toire. These include blemauwu (ancient music and dance forms), amegaxox-
ouwu (elders’ music and dance forms), deviuwu (youths’ music and dance
forms), and modzakadewuwo (performances that eradicate boredom). Some
music and dance forms are also categorized according to the dominant in-
strument used to perform them, for example, axatsevu, literally meaning rat-
tle performance, refers to the music and dance types that feature the playing
of many rattles; and akpevu, literally meaning clapping or clappers perform-
ance, refers to the music and dance type that involves the use of many clappers.
It is worth noting that despite the dominance of rattles and clappers in axatse
vu and akpevu, the lead drum’s sounds usually stand out, especially when heard
from afar. Other categories or descriptions are vutsotse, fast performance type,
and vublewu, slow performance type. The naming, categorization, and stylistic
basis of Ewe performance identification overlap. For example, the youths’
music and dance performances that were created in the remote past may also
fall under blemauwu, ancient performances, and the same music and dance
form or style may bear different names. The Ewe’s mode of identifying and
categorizing music and dance performances reflect a degree of flexibility and
tolerance, and some categories may be perceived as mere descriptions.
Other categories or descriptive terms that emerge through cross-cultural
interaction include recreational music and dance forms, so named because of
the regular performance, structural accommodation, or creativity that occurs
during their performance. Some music and dance form are labeled as cere-
monial/occasional, cradle songs/lullabies, domestic, and occupational on the
basis their contextual framework.
Due to changing modes of creativity and the functions of the music and
dance forms, many of these performances may now be considered unique styles
which are still relevant to various educational levels, especially university ed-
ucation. The current educational system is modelled on classifications based
on the age or grade and sex of the students (from kindergarten to university)
which is similar to but more stratified than the traditional African educational
system. Both African and Western educational systems emphasize broader so-
cial values.
In this chapter, I have reconceptualized the African music and dance mak-
ing process, focusing on the Ewe’s contextual framework and drawing from
their notions of creativity and originality. I have also discussed the sources of
African creativity, attributes of African creative people, the creative process,
the idea of progress, and ownership of African music and dance. I have fur-
ther provided the bases of identifying the music and dance. In conclusion, I
would like to reiterate that the notion of creativity is context-bound and reflects
the values of a particular people, influenced by environmental conditions at a
given time. The emergence of new experiences/events and new technologies of creation are generating new perspectives towards African music and dance creativity. However, knowledge of the cultural contexts and the prevailing music and dance forms, categories, and styles can provide the basis for further creativity and education. In the following chapter, I will justify African music and dance education.
Chapter Three

Justifying African Music and Dance Education: Considerations for Selecting the Curriculum Content

A number of factors have been enumerated by contemporary educational theorists as deserving consideration for selecting curriculum content. These factors have been derived from their views of human nature, human development, human needs, and human desires or values. They include intrinsic value; use, relevance and reality; needs; interest; intellectual values; and cultural representation (Barrow, 1984, pp. 73–92). I will address these factors before presenting the conceptual framework.

3.1 Intrinsic Value

It is said that the curriculum content should have intrinsic value, which is usually referred to as the values inherent in the activity or subject. The notion of intrinsic value raises the question of whether the activity can exhibit this value without any subjective judgement. An awareness of the intrinsic value of a particular object, art form, or knowledge no doubt involves the interaction between the subject and object and value judgements of a particular individual or group. For example, the majority of people may agree on certain activities or subjects as more worthwhile than others, based on institutional or cultural values. But such an agreement may not necessarily be a good judgement; neither does it imply the total absence of dissenting views. Obviously, certain activities that are perceived as having intrinsic value may also have cultural significance and educational values.

In applying the notion of intrinsic value to African music and dance, these art forms have structural components which are shaped by their contextual
framework (as noted earlier). In view of the cultural functions of African music and dance, the selection of African music and dance curriculum content should take into consideration their contextual framework or sociocultural values that shape them, for such values are worth more than the intrinsic abstract or individualistic values.

3.2 Use, Relevance and Reality

It is usually argued that the curriculum content should be useful or relevant to the reality of students or society. This raises the question of the criteria for determining the usefulness, relevance, and reality of the curriculum content. It further raises the question of whether students are able to evaluate the activities/subjects on the basis of their use, relevance, and reality, or whether parents, educators, employers, or government official would determine such values for them. Students’ ability to make meaningful decisions on the curriculum content may depend upon their educational levels and their awareness of the aims and objectives of education. Curriculum specialists or educators in respective fields may be able to make meaningful decisions about the usefulness and relevance of the curriculum to students’ educational level. However, the use, relevance, and reality of curriculum content should not be considered with respect to students alone, since education provides broader social functions. Therefore, consideration should also be given to the use, relevance, and reality of curriculum content to the broader society. This would require negotiation between educators, parents, students, and other members of the society.

In this contemporary era characterized by global industrialization and capitalism, some employers and special interest groups may expect educational institutions to relate their curriculum to their industrial and institutional demands. For example, the government of Ghana now emphasizes skill training in schools to counteract its former emphasis on training service providers. Needless to say, skill can be defined on many levels. Activities which were not formerly regarded as skills, may now be considered skills/vocations. The arts and other humanistic subjects are also skills in themselves. The emphasis on skill training raises the question of whether education should be geared solely toward providing skill training to feed industry, government, and special interest groups. Obviously, education should relate to the broader socioeconomic and political system rather than satisfying the needs of special institutions and interest groups. Therefore, designing the curriculum towards the provision of skilled labor for industry at the expense of other cultural knowledge would
undermine the significance of other cultural experiences and create an imbalance in the society. For this reason, due consideration should be given to the arts and other humanistic subjects in the curriculum development and implementation process.

Concerning the notion of relevance, certain activities may be considered generally relevant to students' educational levels while others may be perceived as relevant to their specific developmental stages. However, what seems irrelevant today may provide a basis for future needs or undertakings; thus, ultimately everything could be relevant to a student's life. The notion of relevance is further challenged by students' exposure to the hidden curriculum (unintended or taken-for-granted experiences or knowledge) and other forms of knowledge through the mass media, some of which would otherwise be deemed irrelevant to specific students' educational levels. While relating the curriculum content to specific students' educational levels or contexts, a consideration should also be given to students' past, present, and future experiences and social responsibilities.

It is further argued that the curriculum should relate to the real or the actual world of the learners. The word reality may mean different things to different people and may vary over time. Some students may limit their reality to their household experiences, or their experiences with their age groups, or to perceptual and conceptual objects and features in their immediate or external environments. Others may relate their reality to the prevailing socioeconomic conditions while some may relate it to their past, present, and future experiences. Similarly, teachers may have their own realities, which may relate to or conflict with those of students.

Given the fact that various students, teachers and schools may have multiple realities, especially in a multicultural classroom, this raises the question of determining the reality that should be represented in the curriculum. Indeed, subjects such as arts, cultural studies, and sciences may exhibit both common and multiple realities. However, the notion of reality as a criterion for selecting curriculum content is problematic and requires negotiations between the specific, common, and multiple realities of learners.

Since African arts provide scope for creativity, students' specific realities would manifest in the various educational contexts. On the whole, while the various perspectives of usefulness, relevance, and reality may be considered in selecting the curriculum content, we should be careful not to direct the school curriculum to satisfying the needs of certain interest groups and institutions at the expense of other social groups. The integration of African performing arts into the social fabric, and their multidimensional functions, point to their usefulness, relevance, and reality to the various educational contexts or levels.
3.3 Needs

It is further proposed that the curriculum should cater to the needs of the students. Needs may include the basic survival needs such as food, clothing, and shelter, as well as physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual needs. Needs may vary from one individual or social group to another in relation to particular situations, and may depend upon the nature of their evaluation and the ability to make genuine assessment. For example, an individual may possess or be given something that s/he does not need. There are certain things that an individual may need without knowing it and things that s/he may need in the future. Certain activities and things which were once considered luxuries may now form part of the urgent needs.

Students can determine some of their basic needs, such as food, shelter, and clothing, and some physical, social, emotional and intellectual needs, but their ability to make a meaningful assessment depends upon their age, educational level, and guidance from parents and educators (in line with the aims and objectives of the institutions). Needless to say, teachers may underestimate or overestimate students' needs. The notion of need is further complicated by the interaction between the various students in the classroom, which renders it problematic in assessing the exact needs of an individual student. However, African societies emphasize communal needs rather than individual needs, and what may be referred to as an individual's needs may be shared by various members of the community. African music and dance may not directly provide students' basic needs such as food, shelter, and clothing but they can enhance the realization of such needs through the ways they function in socioeconomic activities. In addition, African music and dance can cater to the physical, social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and creative needs of students. The integration of African performing arts with life and their multidimensional nature reinforce their significance in catering to various students' needs at the various educational levels. Despite the above-mentioned challenges, I will consider the specific and broader social needs in selecting the intercultural African music and dance curriculum content.

3.4 Interest

Interest is usually referred to as one's feeling or attitudes of concern, involvement, or curiosity as aroused by something or someone (see also Dewey, pp. 124–134). Interest may relate to the developmental stage of an individual student or group of students. A student may develop an interest in a particu-
lar activity as a result of his or her enthusiasm, motivation, love for or involvement in the activity, or through the influence of peers. A student may demonstrate an interest in a particular activity from infancy but may later lose interest in it, or s/he may cultivate an interest in new activities through growth, exposure to, or involvement in those activities. Furthermore, groups of people may have common interests.

The factors discussed above raise the question of the exact interest of an individual or group of students. Barrow points out that the view that we should develop our curriculum on what interests students might be based on one or two different assumptions: that as a matter of fact what interests children tends to be worthwhile, or that the criterion of worth in an activity is that people have an interest in it. However, the mere fact that people want to do something may not make it worthwhile. It might be suggested that the reason for letting children do whatever interests them is that this will lead to their greater psychological security and happiness (Barrow, 1984, p. 84). Nevertheless students’ psychological security and happiness may not imply a total absence of discomfort in view of the challenges that are inevitable in the learning process, which may lead to loss of interest in certain activities in the future.

Despite the introduction of new games and athletic activities in the contemporary African educational system in which students develop new interests, it appears most Ghanaian/African students continue to express interest in music and dance. The same may apply to some North American students although some of the male students usually gravitate toward African instrumental performance. In view of the broader social goals of arts education, a consideration should be given to common interest of students, but scope should be provided to cater to individual students’ interest. Therefore, I will attempt to bridge the gap between groups’ and individual students’ interests in selecting the curriculum content.

3.5 Training the Mind/Intellectual Value

The criterion of intellectual value is usually considered important in education. Barrow suggests the need to distinguish between the general notion of developing the mind and a more specific idea of seeking to train the mind, the latter implying some regimen, or some experience of an activity, or a set of procedures whereby the mind becomes a better-tuned instrument (Barrow, 1984, p. 85). Some subjects such as classics, mathematics, and languages have been defended on the ground of providing good and intellectual training for the mind. The proponents of intellectual criteria have attempted to provide
an empirical confirmation for something that could not in fact be a matter of simple logic or intransferability of knowledge. Another school of thought relates critical thinking, logical powers, and creative thought to certain physical activities. They emphasize the transferability of intellectual knowledge acquired from one domain of knowledge to another (Barrow, 1984, pp. 85–86).

Despite its practical emphasis, African music and dance can be approached from intellectual and multidisciplinary perspectives to encompass broader realms of human experience such as physics, science, literature, mathematics, history, religion, geography, and ethics. However, the notion of transferability of any form of knowledge may depend upon its definition, scope and modes of knowing. Some intellectual skills acquired in one domain of specialization can be transferred to the others, but their effective transfer would depend upon the relationship between such skills or knowledge and other domains of knowledge. Nevertheless, the arts should not be treated solely as intellectual subjects or disciplines. Attempts should be made to bridge the gap between theory and practice. Hence, in selecting African music and dance curriculum content, I will attempt to bridge the gap between the practical and intellectual aspects of the arts and their relevance to other forms of knowledge.

3.6 Artistic or Cultural Representation

Having discussed the issues of intrinsic value; use, relevance and reality; needs; interest; and intellectual value, I will now consider the issue of representing African music and dance forms and cultures in the curriculum.

The multiplicity of African cultures enriches the arts by providing a wide range of artistic materials. However, this poses a major challenge for a curriculum developer for s/he would have to consider the artistic contributions of households, wards, clans, communities, and nations; males and females; religious, economic, and political groups; and individuals (including the music and dance forms created within cross-cultural settings).

The uneven distribution of African music and dance forms creates a problem of their selection and incorporation in the curriculum. It further raises the question of the criteria for their qualitative and quantitative evaluation and the formulators of such criteria. The quality and quantity of African music and dance forms are shaped by interwoven environmental, biological, social (age and sex groups), spiritual, emotional, economic, and political factors. For example, it is through human interaction with spiritual forces; physical environments, such as trees, mountains, forests, grasslands, deserts, and coastal areas; seasonal variations such as day and night, and the rainy and dry sea-
sons; neighboring creatures; human endeavors such as hunting, fishing, farming, planting, and harvesting; and technologies of production—through interaction with all of these together African music and dance forms are shaped, and the criteria for their evaluation and selection for the curriculum determined. For example, the Southern Ewe, who now live in the Republic of Benin, Togo, and Ghana and continue to interact due to geographical proximity, have developed unique music and dance forms/styles. Similarly, the Northern Ewe, who have been separated from the Southern group by distance and live close to the Akan, have also developed unique music and dance forms, some of which reflect the Akan influence.

Generally, cultural groups that live in the coastal areas of West Africa have developed athletic and acrobatic dance movements, whereas groups living in forest areas, surrounded by rocks and vines, have developed relatively restrained and multiple systems of movement. Societies in the Northern Savannah areas have developed sharper and more athletic movements. The Ewe in general create many social/recreational music and dance forms due to the values they attach to music and dance, the role the music and dance play in their history, and cultural formation (communal gathering, expression, migration and settlement, etc.), and their environment which favors music and dance performances.

Contextualization of African music and dance raises the problem of representing in the curriculum certain performance types or components that belong, for instance, to the Yeve, an esoteric religious group, without violating their ethics. When asked whether some of these performances should be considered for the African music and dance curriculum, Nketia responded (in an informal interview in 1997) that since schools are organs of the society and perform broader educational functions, it is imperative for a researcher to include what s/he considers important about these art forms in the curriculum. Such a process of representation would require negotiations between the traditional religious institutions and contemporary educational institutions.

Internal cultural dynamics and Western influence are contributing to the disappearance of some traditional contexts and their associated music and dance forms. Hence, some of these performances may now take place outside their original contexts. A question is raised as to whether a researcher should declare these performances as fossils or include them in the curriculum. Since African music and dance provides a form of historical and cultural documentation and a basis for future creativity and education, it is imperative to represent the essentials of these art forms in the curriculum. Due to Western influence, there exists a duality of traditional African and Western structures (religious, military, and educational). Ghana has undertaken the initiative of
introducing some of its traditional music and dance forms in the contemporary institutions to ensure their continuity. The traditional music and dance forms form part of the African cultural heritage, and these art forms continue to appeal to many people. The representation of these art forms in the curriculum requires their careful selection and restructuring to make them more appealing to present and future generations.

The contextualization of African music and dance further raises the question of whether African music and dance curriculum should be designed by specific social (age, gender), religious, occupational/professional, and political groups. As indicated earlier, representation is a multidimensional process and depends upon the aims and objectives of the cultural bearer, ethnographer, curriculum specialist, or institution. In theory, the youths and some members of the society may not be able to develop an African music and dance curriculum, however, their artistic experiences should be included in the curriculum. A competent or versatile composer or performer, ethnographer, or curriculum specialist may effectively represent the essential artistic contributions of various people in the curriculum.

While in-depth knowledge of the African music and dance cultures may be essential for their effective representation in the curriculum, it may not be suggested that the development and implementation of African music and dance curriculum be confined to the cultural bearers. Anyone who is well versed in the subject or discipline may represent this knowledge in the curriculum.

Since some African music and dance emerged in specific contexts and later developed through various contexts, it raises the problem of categorizing/labeling them under specific cultural contexts and educational levels. This may require representing them under the relevant educational contexts while clarifying the historical and cultural contexts of their development.

Some African music and dance forms such as agbadza, gakpa and atrikpui do not exhibit a variety of dance elements (though they exhibit many songs and other components of the performance), whereas others such as agbeko, adzogbo and atsyia of the Ewe, adowa of the Akan, and bawa of the Dagarti exhibit varied music and dance elements. A question is raised as to whether we should consider variety of dance elements as a criterion for selecting them for the curriculum. A balance should be created between the less varied and more varied elements (on the basis of their contextual values) in the curriculum.

Commercialization of the arts raises the problem of including in the curriculum some African music and dance forms that are created for their market value, and the kind of compensation that could be provided for the composers/choreographers. Indeed, education fulfils broader social functions but the incorporation of these elements in the cross-cultural music and dance
curriculum requires negotiations between curriculum specialists, institutions, and composers/choreographers.

Internal and external cultural interaction reflects on some of the music and dance forms. For example, the interaction between the Ewe and the Akan inspired the creation of the Ewe music and dance forms such as aflui, aku fade, and asafo. Some newly created music and dance forms such as tap dance and African jazz, highlife, hi-life, Soukous Afrobeat, and Juju reflect a fusion of African, African-American, European, and other world cultures. This raises the question of their authenticity. Needless to say, authenticity is relative. What is now considered unauthentic may be regarded as authentic in the future. Certain elements of the so-called authentic music and dance forms may later be abandoned while new elements may be incorporated. This does not imply a radical departure from tradition but the notion of authenticity should be viewed from the culture's perspective. The foreign-influenced music and dance forms reflect the experiences of certain individuals and social groups, and deserve consideration for the curriculum (depending upon the aims and the objectives).

The issue of qualitative and quantitative representation of African music and dance remains a dilemma for most researchers (despite their particular aims and objectives, ideological frameworks, tastes, and preferences). In both practice and theory, some ethnographers (ethnomusicologists/musicologists, dance ethnologists, etc.) focus on specific contextual performances such as those performed by youths or adults, or focus on specific themes in the arts such as religion, war, and occupations, while others provide an overview of African music and dance. Ethnographers such as David Locke initially focused on music and dance forms such as agbekɔ and adzogbo and represented them as war dances/music. Indeed, some cultural bearers may hold such views. However, as noted earlier, agbekɔ was originated by hunters through imitation of neighboring creatures, and later developed through history to include oath swearing, games, and occupational, military, and curricular activities. Ethnographers who focused on war dances tended to underrepresent other aspects of these multidimensional performances. They also failed to include some typical military music and dance forms such as arikpui and buga. Perhaps, from the Western point of view, such ethnographers perceived a lack of artistic values in these (military) music and dance forms. In reality, most African music and dance forms can be represented on many levels because of their open-ended creativity and the multifaceted themes they express. However, a focus on certain music and dance elements at the expense of the others would create unbalanced representation.

Owing to the communal participation in African music and dance and the desire to preserve African cultures, many researchers and ethnographers rep-
resent these music and dance forms as pertaining to specific cultures. This raises the question of whether the composers or participants of such performances desire or deserve to be represented under cultures. The act of representing African music and dance under cultures is not necessarily wrong since African composers are inspired by sociocultural experiences. Despite the fact that some of these composers remain anonymous, African societies recognize many of the past and present composers and performers, and since the West cherishes individual representation, individual African composers and performers also deserve recognition where appropriate. Needless to say, in this contemporary era, some individual African artists are now gaining recognition but many contributors to collaborative music and dance continue to be underrepresented. Therefore, attempts should be made to adequately represent the various contributors to African music and dance. This would involve negotiations between the researcher and various contributors to African music and dance.

Theoretical representation of African music and dance raises the issue of recategorizing or reclassifying them. As noted earlier, new categories of African music and dance such as social, recreational, ceremonial, and occasional performances emerged in this theorizing process. The term social is used to describe performances which are mainly performed for socialization. Similarly, the term recreational refers to youth or adult performances which are not ceremonially bound and which accommodate constant innovation in their structures. Some performances are labeled ceremonial or occasional because of their association with traditional African ceremonies, religion, and politics, and the occasional nature of their presentation.

For the purpose of differentiation, Nketia describes African performances broadly as either spontaneous or organized. He states that spontaneous musical performances are formed when a group of people who are not in an associative relationship come together on their own accord to perform music for a specific occasion. This may be performed by only a section of the community (Nketia, 1974, pp. 35–36). He further refers to organized performances as those exhibited by groups who exist solely for music, or by voluntary associations that perform distinct music of their own (Nketia, 1974, p. 42). Nketia also provides the names and occasions for such performances. Nketia may be searching for the relevant concepts that best describe the African music/dance performance types and processes in a cross-cultural theorizing process (fraught with problems of interpretation) but his usage of the term “spontaneous” as opposed to “organized groups” may be interpreted on other levels, even though he has clarified his meaning of the concept. This is because the term spontaneous is often used by some scholars in derogatory ways to imply irrational, un-
conscious, or childlike, hence, the need for consideration of its contextual usage and further clarification where necessary.

The issue of cultural representation also applies to the representation of African melodies, instrumental sounds, and dance movements in the Western notation systems. This involves transcribing or notating samples of songs, instrumental sounds, and dance elements in the Western notation systems, and leaving a vast amount of artistic material in archives or untapped. Indeed, some researchers such as Locke (1985), Fiagbedzi (1977), Avɔgbedɔ (1980), and others provide a fairly elaborate transcription of some Ewe songs and instrumental sounds. Other Ghanaian researchers and art practitioners such Opoku and Adinku, Odette Blum (1973), and students of African music and dance notated some Ghanaian dance movements with the Laban notation symbols, but these constitute only a fraction of the Ghanaian/African music and dance elements. Part of the problem of notating African music and dance is that there is a vast amount of artistic material in the oral tradition, and that Western notation systems were not originally designed for African music and dance. Adequate knowledge of the systems and cultures’ conception of music and dance, and of the cultures’ conception of the performance structure, timing, and phrasing, etc., are required in order to transcribe or notate these artistic elements from the culture’s perspective. Such notations usually involve modification of some of the performance components, and are influenced by individual scholars’ perspectives.

It should be stated that modification occurs in traditional African performances through ornamentation, improvisation, creativity, and individual idiosyncrasies. Other variations may be due to auditory and perceptual errors and may serve as a continuation of the African creative process. However, the notated versions of the music and dance do not usually include variations or improvisations and creativity that continue to take place during the performance process. Hence, they may create an impression that these artistic elements are static.

Obviously, the notated versions of African music and dance may preserve these artistic materials in a unique way and serve as a source of reference, inspiration, and a tool for cross-cultural educators, composers, and arts practitioners. However, understanding of the cultural values and the acquisition of the performance skills would facilitate appropriate rendition of such notations. Care should be taken not to disqualify veteran composers and performers and cultural custodians who utilize the oral, practical, and other modes of documenting, preserving, and disseminating the music and dance forms. Where preference is given to music and dance notations at the expense of oral performances and documents, this may lead to the desue-
tude of African oral modes of documentation, performance, and education as unauthentic despite the fact that these constitute the cultures' basis of documentation, representation, and transmission of the artistic knowledge. This also raises the questions of authorship and authenticity of the works that were originally composed by traditional artists as well as that of the contemporary researchers and scholars.

It is worth noting that despite the emergence of new modes of documentation, human beings will continue to document and transmit some of their essential knowledge through oral, practical, and other literary modes. For many years, African societies have been transmitting a vast corpus of their music and dance experiences orally across generations, although they have undergone a natural selection and elimination process similar to the archival and editing process in the literary tradition. Despite the challenges posed to the traditional African educational system due to Western influence, there still exist specialists of memory who desire to perpetuate the oral performance, documentation, and educational processes. The orientation of traditional African composers and performers to the Western conception of music and dance would inevitably affect their compositions and performances. For if traditional African composers/choreographers had been operating within the premises of Western music and dance composition and notations, their music and dance compositions would have been very different from the prevailing ones. Pertaining to the notation, the various African societies have symbols and syllables that they use to describe and represent timbre, rhythmic patterns, song melodies, phrases, dance elements, and their dynamics; some of these symbols/syllables can be elaborated to serve as specific symbols of notating African music and dance where necessary.

In view of the emphasis on practical performances that integrate the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual human qualities, due consideration should be given to oral and practical performances and documents in the artmaking and teaching process while allowing room for the various modes of representations to complement one another. For example, CDs, DVDs, and VHS tapes could complement the music and dance performances' notations and various modes of teaching. In a democratic system, it is imperative to accommodate diverse creative and teaching methods. Over-reliance on Western music and dance notation systems may weaken people's memory skills and affect the aesthetics of African performance. It is important for African music and dance educators to develop linguistic concepts and analytical methods that adequately describe and represent African music and dance in both theory and practice to emphasize the African perspectives and facilitate cross-cultural arts education.
The issue of cultural representation also relates to the selection of the relevant educational materials: literary texts and audio-visual material on the subjects or topics in the various educational contexts. Currently, there are relatively few educational resources on African music and dance. Therefore, curriculum specialists and educators will have to develop or find the relevant African music and dance resources to enhance the teaching and learning of the subject or discipline.

In view of the historical and cultural factors that continue to shape African music and dance, and the uneven distribution of artistic resources, one may resort to the African philosophical concept of sharing, based on the notion that societies who possess more artistic resources should provide more and share with other societies who lack these artistic resources, thus maintaining a balance. However, this still raises the question of adequate representation of other cultures in view of the cultural significance of the music and dance.

Today, as African societies and institutions are emphasizing individual’s creativity, in the face of the constant emergence of new generations and new artistic creations in the democratic educational process, the problems of cultural and artistic representation are now magnified. A curriculum specialist will have to consider adequate representation of the experiences of the various individuals, groups and sub-cultures that exist within a given society.

In light of the factors discussed above, it is plausible to conclude that cultural/artistic representation varies in place and time, from individuals to social groups and educational institutions, and depends on the availability of the materials/resources, familiarization with the culture, the goals and objectives or ideological framework, and the values, interests, tastes and preferences of the researchers, scholars, and educators. Absolute representation of a given culture’s art form is unrealistic. Adequate representation of a particular or various cultures may not be seen in one curriculum project or educational contexts but in multifaceted contexts and projects. For instance, practical performances/creativity, audio-visual materials, textual representations, and subsequent representations may complement the existing representations. Any form of representation may lead to some biases toward a particular art form or culture. However, due consideration should be given to the various contributors to the culture/art forms and their perspectives, the prevailing artistic resources and the participants in the learning process. The implication is that a curriculum specialist or an educator will have to move back and forth, from the original cultures to the prevailing music and dance forms, and speculate on the new developments to ensure continuity of the process of representation.
3.7 Re-Adapting African Music and Dance Forms to the Intercultural Context

The entire process of developing a cross-cultural African music and dance curriculum requires constant adaptation of the African music and dance to specific environments. Ghana has undertaken some initial challenges of adapting her art forms for intercultural performance and education. In the process, problems have arisen. Some of these are in the areas of traditional performance conventions; performance duration; the development of new listening habits; the new basis of appreciation in new contexts; the development of eclecticism, which accommodates the diversity of pitch found within African music; new relationships between the performers and their audiences based on shared knowledge, shared musical values, and shared critical standards; and the development of intercultural norms according to which performers on different melodic instruments from different areas have to perform in the same ensemble of traditional instruments (see Nketia, 1974, p. 245). The process further involves theorizing on the subject(s), negotiating between traditional African and Western ethical and aesthetic values and hybridizing African and Western cultural elements. Perhaps this mode of adaptation has facilitated intercultural African music and dance education in Western or Western-influenced societies and institutions. However, African performing arts seem to be losing some of their essential qualities in the process of adapting to other cultures. In this situation, it is imperative to emphasize the African perspective by reconsidering the traditional African modes of creativity, performance, and education to maintain a balance between the two, or various cultures. My project is a process of reconceptualizing, restructuring, readapting, and re-representing African music and dance for new educational contexts.
Chapter Four

Restructuring the Contextual African Music and Dance for the Curriculum

In this chapter, I will restructure African music and dance forms for the curriculum. In order to do so, I will begin by reexamining their form, content, style, and contextual framework.

4.1 The Form and Content of African Music and Dance

The form of African performance may be perceived differently by different people, and on multiple levels. The content of African performance may be described as the sum total of its structural elements. Form and content intertwine and it is the content of a given performance that shapes its form. The form and content of African music and dance are further shaped by their functions. We can, therefore, conceptualize form and content on a holistic, partial, analytical, conceptual, or perceptual basis.

There are latent and manifest elements of African music and dance. Latent elements include intellectual, spiritual, and physical elements that may not be readily perceived by an observer or listener (although some of these elements may be represented visually in symbolic forms). Manifest elements include the visible, perceptual, and conceptual elements such as human beings, instruments, props, visual imagery, sounds, and movements. Both the form and content of African performance may shift due to the complexity of human interaction and structural variations in the creative/performative process. However, African societies recognize unique structural components that together identify their music and dance forms.

Integrated Ewe music and dance forms highlight visible structural elements such as ha (song), ye (dance), adzadada or ayehudada (preparatory movement
that begins or rounds off the dance), *atsyiadodo* (stylization), *atsyia* (style), *vulblo* (performance procession), *vufobo* (drumming or music and dance performance), *gafobo* (playing of bell), *axatsefofo* (playing of rattle), *akpedada* (hand clapping or playing of clappers), *banyinyi* (music and dance tribute to the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors). Other elements include *adzokpui* (an introductory drum and dance-dramatic section), *vutsoto* (an introductory section of the performance), *vugbe* (drum sound, syllable, or language), *hagbe* (song text or melody), *gagbe* (bell sound), *axatsegbe* (rattling sound), and *akpegbe* (clapping or clapper’s sound). The content of Ewe performances further includes *vuyowfo* (performance calling — this involves the singing of sustained melodies that may be accompanied by a rattling sound), *hawuwu* (song review or run through), *vutsoshawo* (songs that introduce the main performance), *vuyoyro* (drum roll or signal), *hododuioo* (a shout that heightens the effect of the performance or highlights the introduction of new drum patterns/rhythms, songs and movements), and *kpekuku* or *dzekuku* or *ketekuku* (trumpet/flute/w whistle blowing).

Other components of integrated Ewe music and dance include *ayodehawo* (prelude/throat-clearing songs), *hadododa* (introduction of songs), *haxexe* (responsorial or chorus section of a song), *hatsyiatsyia* (the singing of the main [poetic or philosophical] songs which intersperse every drumming, dancing, and singing section), *hadada* (literally meaning song’s mother; the main section of *hatsyiatsyia*), *hatsotso* (song-conclusion), and *halododo* (song poetry, usually accompanied by body movement or gestures and the sounds of *gakogui*, a double bell, and *atoke*, a boat-shaped or banana-bell (see also Fiagbedzi in Agbodeka, 1997, pp. 153–154). Some of the above structural elements are in unique forms or shapes but they form part of the entire music and dance. The spatial organization of the performance may highlight horseshoe, semicircular, circular, linear, zigzag, and other complex forms, and designs. In view of the fact that many of these performances are gradually becoming unique styles, I will highlight their stylistic, structural, and contextual characteristics in this contextual framework.

### 4.2 Style in Ewe Music and Dance

Style is defined as a particular kind, sort, or type with reference to form, appearance, and characteristics; or a particular, distinctive mode of action or manner of acting; or a mode of living, expression, thought, writing, or speaking that is characteristic of a group or a person; or a fashion (*Random House College Dictionary, 1988*, p. 1306). Similarly, *Webster’s New Encyclopedic Dic-
tionary (1993, p. 1028) defines style as a mode of expressing thought in language characteristic of an individual, period, school, or nation; a custom or plan followed in spelling, capitalization, typographic arrangement, and display; a mode of dressing; or a distinctive, characteristic manner or method of acting in a performance, especially in accordance with some standard. According to these definitions, style ranges from an individual’s to group’s unique expressions/writing, actions, modes of dressing, etc. These definitions also suggest an interaction between form, type and style.

Over the years, African societies, in particular, that of the Ewe, have developed various music and dance forms as a way of re-enacting and documenting their cultural experiences and values, fulfilling their artistic desires, and responding to their environmental conditions. These art forms exhibit distinct features, some of which constitute the basis of naming, categorizing, and expression. Such distinguishing characteristics may be observed in a composer’s or singer’s language, dialect, song types, themes, sectional structures, melodies, and vocal mannerisms. Distinguishing characteristics of a drummer might include his or her techniques and rendition of drumming patterns; dancers might use different movements, facial expressions, repetition and numbers, costumes, make-up, props and other contextual values.

As indicated earlier, the Ewe word *atsyia* refers to an individual’s or group’s unique music and dance expression in place and time. *atsyia* is also the name given to Ewe music and dance types such as *atsyia*, *atsyiagbeko*, and the male *adzogbo* dance suite. It is also attributed to *gohu* and *takada* music and dance forms that exhibit unique characteristics manifested in their combination of the various performance components. However, there are other Ewe performances that exhibit unique characteristics and, therefore, merit consideration as styles. Referring to style, one is bound to talk about individual style, group style, main style, sub-style, multiple styles, and common stylistic features.

4.3 The Contextual Framework of African Music and Dance Curriculum: The Ewe Conceptual Scheme

The contextual framework of African music and dance curriculum refers to the organization or restructuring of African music and dance forms and structural elements, drawing from the various performance contexts.
Ewe Mainstream/Social Music and Dance Form/Style

Agbadza

Agbadza is one of the oldest Ewe music and dance forms/styles which is believed to have originated from the old military dance called atrikpu. It had developed through the historical period to become a social or popular or mainstream music and dance (du-gbadza, agbadza of the town, state or mainstream). Agbadza is performed in many Ewe communities of the Republic of Benin, Togo, and Ghana and is taught and performed in Ghanaian, Togolese, and Beninois performing-arts institutions. The agbadza style is characterized by the positioning of the hands by the sides of the body (at the waist), the contraction and release of the upper torso along with the expansion of the shoulder blades and a movement of the feet upward and downward along with the hands movement downward and back to place. Other distinguishing characteristics of agbadza are its featuring of sogo as the lead drum; its featuring of songs that reflect military, social, and topical themes; and its featuring of short songs that are integrated with the main drumming and dancing section as well as relatively longer songs during the interval between the main drumming and dancing section with or without any instrumental (bell) accompaniment.

The version of agbadza called ageshe is mainly performed by youths and features relatively faster tempi. Recent innovations in agbadza include the playing of three to seven drums, especially as done by master drummer Midawo Sogbo Foli Alɔwɔyi, accompanied by bell and rattle players. A more recent innovation within the structure of agbadza is referred to as agbadza reggae. This version features a relatively faster tempo with an underlying feel similar to the 4/4 time within the seven-beat bell cycle.

The Youth/Adult Social Music and Dance Forms/Styles

Gota

Gota music and dance form originated from Republic of Benin and is broadly performed among the Ewe youths of Benin, Togo, and Ghana. Some researchers trace its origin to the Kabye ethnic group but this is liable to further investigation. Nowadays, gota is also performed by neighboring groups such as the Ga and the Akan. It is taught in some Ghanaian elementary and secondary schools and in the School of Performing Arts, University of Ghana. The stylistic features of gota include the use of percussive gourds which are semi-hemispherical in shape and turned upside down in bowls containing water, which produce a distinct rounded timbre; the positioning of both hands in front of
the torso while performing the basic dance movement (as opposed to the usual positioning of the hands sideways, as in the Ewe agbadza dance); the movement of both hands and feet from backward to forward simultaneously, and the featuring of youths’ social themes, domestic chores, and games. Nowadays, some gota groups in Ghana use atimevu or sogo as a lead drum, and combine kagan and kidi or kidi and sogo as supporting drums while others combine the traditional (calabash) gourd vessel drums with some of the Ewe drums.

Gahu

_Gahu_ is said to have originated among the Ewe migrants of Egun, a Western Yoruba state of Nigeria, as a social dance. It is now performed in most Ewe communities of West Africa and is taught and performed in some Ghanaian elementary, secondary schools, and performing-arts institutions. The stylistic elements in _gahu_ include its use of _gboba_ (with its unique bass sound) as the lead drum, its featuring of a five-beat bell pattern, _tin-ko-ko-ko-ko(tin)_ (derived from the seven-beat cyclical _agbadza_ bell pattern) that regulates the performance, the dancers’ positioning of their upper torsos in low position with arms flexed and held in front of the torso with bent knees and feet in a parallel position, its basic movement of dragging or sliding each foot two times forward, its unique _agbada_ costume loosely sewn in a Yoruba, West African fashion, and its performers’ wearing of elaborate headgear and sunglasses to express their aesthetic values of the performance. The integration of the various elements contributes to the unique _gahu_ style. Some contemporary Ghanaian art institutions and performing groups now use the _atimevu_ as a lead drum in _gahu_ instead of _gboba_.

Kinka

_Kinka_ shares some similarities with _gahu_ in its featuring of a five-beat bell pattern and its use of _gboba_ as a bass and ornamental drum. Other stylistic features of _kinka_ include its high-pitched _patenge_ , ornamental drum’s sounds featured during the _hatsyiatsyia_ (main singing sections), its relatively slow processional section (featuring a slower version of its music and dance), its featuring of two _hatsyiatsyia_ (chorus sections), _ayodehawo_ in slower tempo (accompanied by the seven-beat _agbadza_ bell pattern), and the main _hatsyihaowo_ in a relatively faster tempo (accompanied by the five-beat _kinka_ bell phrase) and its side-to-side movements or gestures performed by the female participants with handkerchiefs held in both hands (during the main drumming, dancing, and singing section). The combination of the various features contributes to the _kinka_ style.
Bobobobo

The Bobobobo originated among the Northern Ewe of West Africa at Kpando or in the Wusuta area in the late 1940s (and is usually credited to Francis Nuatro). It is popular among the youth and is performed in many Ewe communities and schools in the Volta region of Ghana and southern Togoland. The performance provides an avenue for the youth to express their social values and creativity. The Bobobobo is also performed and taught by the Ghana Dance Ensemble, the School of Performing Arts, other Ghanaian music and dance institutions and groups, and by some communities and institutions abroad. The stylistic characteristics of Bobobobo include its playing technique, involving the use of the legs in lifting the master drum upward and downward while playing it; its featuring of an underlying 4/4-feel bell pattern; the dancers’ use of handkerchiefs to extend and highlight the dance movements; the interweaving of its songs and dance movements; its expression of love and Christian themes; and its unique trumpet melodies and vocal surrogate.

Tokoe

Tokoe is believed to have originated among the Adangbe of southern-eastern part of Ghana. The performance was later adopted by the neighboring Ewe. It was originally performed during initiation of the youths to mark their transition to adulthood. Tokoe is now performed in some Ghanaian, North American and European communities on social and festive occasions. It is also taught in some Ghanaian, North American and European institutions. The stylistic features of tokoe include its unique supporting instrumental rhythms provided by kagan and kidi players in crisscross manner. Other stylistic features are its combination of the basic Ewe contraction and release movement with forward and backward steps, marked by hopping forward; its featuring of youths’ experiences such as pleading, obedience, washing, and endurance; and a unique movement that marks the end of every main dance movement, and leads to the execution of another movement.

Gohu

Gohu is one of the earliest Ewe music and dance forms that had undergone revival by a Dahomean king, Guezo, who reigned from about 1818–1858 (Nketia in Wachsmann, 1971, pp. 12–13). It is also performed in the Ewe communities and schools in the Republic of Benin, Togo, and southern Ghana. The stylistic elements of gohu include an attacking introduction pattern performed simultaneously by the gankogui (bell), axatsewo or ego (rattles), and sogo,
kidi and kagan, on a signal provided by a cantor. Other stylistic characteristics of gohu include the females’ use of handkerchiefs to extend the hand movements from side to side; the simultaneous playing of two or three master drums by different lead drummers during the introductory section, at the climax, or throughout the entire performance; the use of drumming, speech, and song surrogate to communicate some contextual values; the ostinato patterns provided by ego (a bigger rattle) to accentuate every downbeat of the bell and mark the end of every hatsyiatsia song. Other stylistic features of gohu include akɔg-bagba, a combination of hand clapping, chest beating, and singing, accompanied by quick footsteps and rhythmic movement of the upper torso in a counterclockwise direction, the recital of rhythmic poetry accompanied by bells and body movement, a relatively slow processional version of its music, and short dramatic sketches of social themes. The integration of the various structural elements contributes to the gohu style. (The above description is based on the gohu groups observed at Aglɔga, Tegbui, and Dzelukɔfe in Ghana, and at Lome in Togo).

Agbekɔ

Agbekɔ is one of the oldest music and dance forms/styles that was originated by hunters through their inspiration from the physical environment and neighboring creatures. It reflects the Ewe historical and cultural experiences such as hunting, the swearing of the greatest oath of solidarity and patriotism, military, social, occupational experiences, games, and curricular activities in contemporary schools. It is broadly performed and taught in Ghana, southern Togo, the southern part of the Republic of Benin, and in other communities and institutions abroad. Its stylistic characteristics include the introductory dialogue between the lead dancer/cantor and the dancers/singers, such as, kiniwe!!… yaa!!, or Kiniwe!! … Ziwe!!; wode akpakpo!, wo de abɔ!, its introductory (prelude) songs (and chants) sung in staccato manner. Other stylistic elements of agbekɔ include its interweaving of instrumental rhythms, movements, songs, and dialogues; its featuring of kpakpo, a turning movement that rounds off every movement figure and leads to the execution of another movement; its featuring of short dramatic sketches; its predominant linear spatial organization of dancers; its featuring of solos and small groups within the larger group; and its emphasis on the coordination of the various performance components.
Adzogbo/Adzohu

*Adzogbo* music and dance originated among the Fon-Ewe of Benin during the seventeenth century as a sacred, religious music and dance and was also performed within the context of communal defense. It is now performed on many social and ceremonial occasions and is taught by special groups in some Ewe communities and schools in the Republic of Benin, Togo, and Ghana, and in some communities and institutions abroad. *adzogbo* shares some stylistic characteristics with *agbekɔ*, *atsyia*, and *gadzo*, such as its featuring of unique introductory songs sung by separate female and male choruses (beginning in a call-and-response manner and ending by both male and female choruses singing in unison), and movements that mark the end of every main dance figure/theme. Other stylistic elements of *adzogbo* include the sprinkling of “holy” water by a lead dancer/singer during the introductory section of the performance to bless the occasion. The stylistic features of *adzogbo* also include its introduction of each main dance movement/theme by a lead dancer to be re-enacted by the group of dancers, its rhythmic turning and spinning movements three or seven times, its featuring of some acrobatic and gymnastic movements, its speech mode of drumming, its featuring of male and female dance versions (*kadodo* and *atsyia* or *le* or *todzo*, respectively) as well as short dramatic sketches.

Gadzo

*Gadzo* music and dance reflects the Ewe military and cultural experiences. It is now considered a social music and dance and is broadly performed in the southern part of Togo and the southern part of the Volta region of Ghana, especially by the Aŋlo-Ewe during festivals and ceremonies to herald the movement of the Aŋlo king, and on other social occasions. *Gadzo* is also taught and performed by some theater companies and schools in Ghana and North America. Its stylistic elements include the relatively slow processional section which contrasts with its fast drumming, singing, and dancing section; its rounding-off movement which leads to the execution of another movement; its linear spatial organization of dance; its featuring of *adzo*, short dramatic sections; and its use of the machete in dancing to depict its historical function.

Adzida, a Predominantly Adult Social Music and Dance Form/Style

*Adzida* is one of the Aŋlo-Ewe contributions to Ewe music and dance. The performance belongs to the *agbadza* family. It is usually performed in many Ewe
communities in southern Ghana and Togo and by some performing groups in Ghana and North America during social gatherings, funerals, and festivals. Its stylistic elements include the featuring of separate female and male choruses and the featuring of adults’ historical and philosophical themes during the _hat-syiatsyia_ section, as well as elaborate drumming patterns. Other stylistic features of _adzida_ include _lashidada_ (the rhythmic movement performed by groups of two or three male singers/cantors, each holding two horsetails, swaying or swinging them forward and backward (in the sagittal plane) while moving the alternate feet forward and backward), the dominance of rattles in its performance, and its featuring of magnificent _uxɔ_, a specially decorated wooden setting for the drums and drummers.

**Takada, a Female Music and Dance Form/Style**

_Takada_ is one of the artistic contributions of the Aŋ-ɔ-Ewe women of Anyako, as a form of collective expression and reaction to male dominance in Ewe drumming. Its stylistic characteristics include its featuring of female lead drummers, its use of horsetails in the dance, and its integration of drum patterns, songs, and movements.

**Atsyia, a Predominantly Female Social Music and Dance Form/Style**

_Atsyia_ is another Ewe music and dance form which is mainly performed by the Ewe women of Togo and the Volta region of Ghana (at Dzeluko, Keta, and Anyako). The version of _atsyia_ which is usually performed by the Ghana Dance Ensemble and other contemporary arts institutions in Ghana, North America and Europe draws mainly from the Republic of Togo. _Atsyia_ shares some similarities with _agbekɔ_, _adzogbo_, and some other Ewe styles in its integration of rhythm, songs, and movements. Its stylistic elements include, the predominance of female dancers, the dancer’s use of two horsetails to extend the dance movements and communicate cultural themes on a symbolic level, its speech mode of drumming, and its featuring of a movement designed to round off each main movement.
Nyayito, a Predominantly Elderly Music and Dance Form/Style

Nyayito (also known as leafelegbe, dekonyanu, atigo or akpalu) is mostly performed by adult males and females in the southern part of the Volta region but the female performers usually outnumber the male. Nowadays, some youths’ performing groups also feature nyayito or atigo in their repertoire. The stylistic elements of nyayito include its relatively slow drumming tempo and low timbre, its ornamental drumming patterns or phrases performed on kloboto or totodzi drum, and its two distinct complementary clapping patterns: one mainly in the performance and the second one to heighten the dance. Other distinguishing characteristics of nyayito are the predominance of elders in the performance, the featuring of philosophical, social, historical, and sorrowful themes, and its presentation mainly in funerals rites of deceased adults in the traditional setting.

Elderly Male Music and Dance Form/Style

Gakpa

Gakpa or ga is predominantly male music and dance form. Its stylistic features include its use of sogo and kidi drums for the drumming section, its relatively slow tempo, and calculated clapping that accentuates the downbeat of the bell pattern.

Historical/Ceremonial Music and Dance Form/Style

Misego

Misego music and dance was performed by the Ewe at Notsie (one of their principal settlements, surrounded by a thick and tall wall) in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century during their migration from Notsie, where they danced backward to conceal the direction of their movement. The major stylistic elements of misego are the relatively slow, duple bell pattern that provides the timing for the performance, the lengthy lead drum signal that alerts the performers about the beginning of the performance, the forward-backward dance steps performed by the dancers while moving backward, and the symbolic and representational usage of dance movements to reenact the Ewe’s historical and social experiences.
Female Ceremonial Music and Dance Form/Style

Zizi

Zizihowo are short lyrical melodies sung by the Anlo-Ewe women during the ceremonies of the Nyigbla divinity (of protection from war) and the celebration of the Anlo Hogbetsotoso festival that reenacts and commemorates the exodus of the Ewe from ñɔtsie and other former settlements. The stylistic features of Zizihowo include the repetition of the songs three or four times to symbolize the number of political divisions, divinities, and ritual activities in the Anlo-Ewe ceremonies, the featuring of ceremonial and political themes, the stamping rhythmic movements performed by the singers while moving in a counterclockwise direction, and the integration of the songs and movements with the ceremonial events.

Professional Music and Dance Forms/Styles

Futahawo/Atsyohawo and Adeu

The futahawo or atsyohawo (fishing songs) are short narrative songs that are usually sung by Ewe fishermen/women along the coastal areas of Ghana, Togo, Benin, and the Southwestern Nigeria. These songs are integrated with communal fishing activities, such as boat pushing, boat paddling, boat pulling, net dragging, fish hauling, and net carriage. Some of these songs feature hadɔ (socially repressed themes), since fishing takes place at the outskirts of the towns. Adeu, the hunters’ music and dance, is now performed by the Ewe in some communities in the northern part of the Volta region in Ho, Nkonya, Elavanyo, and other places to dramatize the hunters’ experiences. The stylistic characteristics of adeu include its reenactment of the hunters’ experiences; its featuring of movements that depict the training of young hunters; stalking, retreating and advancing movements that depict the hunting activity; other movements that express fatigue, celebration of victory, and sorrow; and its featuring of songs that express hunting activities.

Military Music and Dance Forms/Styles

Atrikpui

Atrikpui, the main military dance of the Ewe, highlights a unique instrumental section led by the sogo and kidi, and a symbolic tightrope-like dance movement with hands reaching centrally forward, along with leg gestures and a corpus of songs that express the Ewe’s historical, military, and sociopolitical experiences.
Religious Music and Dance Suites

Apart from the various performance styles discussed above, there are other music and dance suites of the Yewé religious sect of the Ewe, such as *tsitrenuhawo* (songs sung while strolling through the town to ritual/performance settings), *afovu* (the fast and vigorous music and dance suite that features the dancers dancing across the dance arena and back to the original place), *agovu* or *agoyiyi* (a relatively slow, processional dance accompanied by singing and the supporting *kagan* drum pattern, usually performed during the graduating ceremony of the initiates, and final funeral rites of a departed members of the Yewé sect), *adahu* (a meditative and ecstatic music and dance that heightens the ritual activities, especially during the final funeral rites of departed priests or priestesses), *sohu* (music and dance suite performed for spiritual consecration), *husago* (a lament similar to the historical *mísego*), *sogbadzi* (a suite that features the seven-beat *agbadza* bell pattern and the basic Ewe dance movement), and *avlevu* (a comic music and dance suite).

There are also the music and dance suites of Afa divinity which include *gakpa* (the slow version) and *vutsdotsoe* (the fast version), featuring *sogo*, *kididi*, *gakogui* and *axatse* instrumental ensemble and male and female dancers dancing separately in the same ring. The Afa religious sect has a vast repertoire of songs, some of which form an integral part of the divine texts. There are other Ewe social and ceremonial/religious performance styles such as *bamburi*, *gabada*, *egbanegba*, *adabatram*, and *avihawo*, dirges; *konyifahawo*, a lament; *brekete*, *aflui*, *akufade* and *asafu* (the Akan derivatives), all of which deserve consideration for inclusion in the curriculum.

In this chapter, I have provided a contextual framework for the intercultural African music and dance curriculum by reexamining the notions of form, content, and style of African music and dance. In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that the emergence of new music and dance forms, artistic categories, styles, and elements in the future would necessitate a revisiting or restructuring of this contextual framework. However, some of its components will remain stable and provide a basis for future restructuring.
Chapter Five

Structural Elements of Ewe Music and Dance

In this chapter, I will highlight the structural elements of Ewe music and dance by beginning with language which forms its bedrock.

5.1 Language as the Bedrock and Formative Element of Ewe Music and Dance

That language is the bedrock of African music and dance cannot be disputed. Human beings have the innate ability to utter sounds, and formulate ideas and concepts through social interaction within various environments. This linguistic potential manifests itself from infancy and transcends cultural barriers since human beings usually adapt to modes of expression in various sociocultural milieus (albeit with some biological and cultural limitations). This capacity to utter intelligible sounds and formulate concepts or ideas enables human beings to develop a unique culture. The acquisition of the language skill may be considered universal.

Language development may occur through a diachronic process of social interaction and expression in the form of utterances, dialogues, actions, and behaviors, which are structured through the selection, elimination, repression, and incorporation of new elements. These expressions may vary from one context to another in relation to one’s immediate interlocutor (male or female, child or adult), which leads to variations in syntax and semantics. This implies that human beings constantly engage in restructuring utterances in the social mediation process. However, the various utterances or linguistic structures may retain some essential elements needed for meaning-making in various contexts. The recurrence of such essential elements during social interaction also indicates the existence of basic rules in human utterances.

Language is a defining characteristic of the various African groups who claim common ancestry despite the cross-cultural interactions. Ewegbe is the
language spoken by the Ewes and neighboring groups who engage in this mode of communication. Standard or written Ewe draws from the various Ewe dialects.

Members of the Yewee religious sect have Yevegebe, a sacred language which they employ in their religious practices. Furthermore, the various Ewe groups such as Evedome, Toju, Anga, Ge-anyi, and Mina speak unique dialects. Similarly, members of Koku, a spiritual union, would express some Ewe words to mean their opposites. There are also individuals and household vocal mannerisms and speech genres.

The entire Yevegebe, Ewe language, syntax, and semantics may be deduced from the various nyagbewo (utterances), lododowo (proverbs), dzedodo (dialogue), gli (fables), nutinya (stories), Afaduwo (Afa religious and philosophical documents), mudzodzwo (occurrences or events), blemanyawo (legends/history), and deknunwo (culture/art forms) in various Ewe locations, and in some bilingual or multilingual communication settings and from Ewe literary texts. Although the Ewe literary linguistic structure may appear to be fixed, it is usually reinterpreted or restructured by various readers and theorists in their unique ways except in situations where people desire to cite or provide a verbatim recital of these texts.

Yevegebe is classified as a tonal language because the same linguistic utterance at different vocal ranges may convey different meanings. For example, the Ewe word gbɔ, when pronounced in the lower tonal range, means breathe, return, or a badly cooked food. When pronounced in the higher tonal range, the same word means beside or by the side. The word tɔ, when pronounced in a lower range, implies respond, or unfavorable sale; when pronounced in the higher tonal range, this would imply wait, stop, and pierce. The Ewe language is classified among the Kwa language group (according to Greenberg’s classification) which is comprised of Yoruba, Akan, Ewe and Ga (see Agawu, 1997, pp. 32–35).

5.2 Some Elements of Ewe Verbal Communication

Although an individual may soliloquize or engage in monologue, the Ewe mode of communication is usually dialogic and involves the interaction of two or more speakers. This mode of communication may involve dialogic utterances, unanimous utterances, reinforcing or complementary utterances, or overlapping and opposing speeches. One who engages in communication with an elder or a chief may use certain words to indicate a proper mode of conduct
or respect. The same applies to one who communicates with the Supreme Being, divinities, or ancestors. A triadic mode of communication is common, especially in Ghanaian social gatherings, household meetings, and political and religious settings. This mode of communication involves a second speaker, who is usually a witness, an orator, or a priest ventriloquiating the speech to the listener and is aimed at relaying the speech through a mediator, or involving a third person in the communication, or refining or reinforcing the speech, or avoiding direct confrontation (see also Yankah, 1995, pp. 6–26).

A sociocultural analysis of any language may reveal human interaction with the environment— earth, waters, trees, rivers, animals, skies; supernatural forces and divinities; human experiences such as supplication, joy, love, happiness, surprise, shame, and fear. In addition, this would reflect gestures, speech tones, speech rhythms, and vocal mannerisms.

Etymologically, there are idiophones or self-sounding words, onomatopoeia, and drum syllables that are expressed to clarify some intellectual, physical, emotional, spiritual expressions, or difficult or astonishing or ambiguous human experiences. Over the years, some foreign words have infiltrated into both spoken and literary Ewe while certain Ewe words have disappeared or lost their original meanings and have come to be conceptualized as abstract. Apart from the Arabic and Western letters which are currently used in Ewe literary theory, the drum syllables constitute one of the smallest units of the spoken Ewegbe. They are derived from the cultural/artmaking process and are used in clarifying performance concepts. Language is the bedrock of Ewe music and dance, it provides the basis for identifying and analyzing performances, and it is interwoven into the entire performance structure.

5.3 Ewe Songs or Melodies

Melody is defined as musical sounds in agreeable succession, or the arrangement or succession of single tones in a musical composition (as distinguished from harmony and rhythm) (Random House College Dictionary, 1988, p. 833). The characteristics of African melodies as described by comparative musicologists include their interaction with language or speech tones, their rhythmic, gliding, pendular, and interlocking melodic figures, and their polyphonic, antiphonal, and repetitive elements. Comparative musicologists further describe African melodic figures as either free and unregulated or as strict and regulated.

The Ewe word nyagbe refers to word-sound or utterance (as noted earlier), while the word ha or hagbe refers to song or melody, and hadzigbe refers to
the singing voice. There is often no clear distinction between the words that refer to melody and lyric within the Ewe traditional setting. However, *nyagbe* or *nyagbewo* may also refer to the song text(s). Descriptive terms such as *gbe ba* (low-voice or low-sound), *gbe vedomisi* (mid-voice or mid-sound), and *gbe kɔkɔ* (high-voice or high-sound) are often used to refer to specific melodic ranges. The melodies do not conform to strict ascending (*kɔkɔnu*) or descending (*abudidi*) order, as Fiagbedzi has noted (1977, pp. 245–246), but such terms may be employed to describe the Ewe melodic range where appropriate. Ewe songs or song texts may be short or long, ranging from a few lines to over one hundred lines, and are made of sectional structures which may be conceptualized as syllables, melodic phrases, sub-texts, and rhythms. They may also exhibit rhythmic groupings consisting of anywhere from two to six beats or more.

Nketia notes the existence of tetratonic, hexatonic, pentatonic, and heptatonic scales in African music. He further notes the use of heptatonic and pentatonic scales among the Northern and Southern Ewe, respectively (Nketia, 1963, pp. 54–63). Nketia also attributes the emergence of the heptatonic scale among the Northern Ewe to Akan influence, due to their geographical proximity. Obviously, these two Ewe groups now speak distinct dialects. Also, the majority of the Southern Ewe composers are adult males who usually compose or sing in a relatively low and relaxing vocal range. However, the singing of *konyifahawo* (laments) and *avihawo* (funeral dirges) forms a significant part of the Northern Ewe’s music and dance tradition. Furthermore, relatively more and larger instruments/drums are used in most Southern Ewe performances compared to those used in most Northern Ewe performances. These and other factors, coupled with the tastes and preferences of these two Ewe groups, may have influenced their unique melodic compositions. However, these two distinct melodic families complement one another and enrich Ewe music and dance.

It is now becoming difficult to determine the exact melodic range of the various cultural groups due to intercultural influences, modifications, and innovations that continue to take place in performances. Therefore, the above melodic scales may be regarded as approximations influenced by pitch-measuring devices and Western musical conceptions. The assessment of an individual’s or group’s melodic range in this contemporary era (with the same or new technologies) would lead to the discovery of other micro- and macrotones within and beyond the specified melodic scales. However, these melodic scales provide a point of reference and a source of inspiration for individuals and groups of composers, even though they should be treated with flexibility in order not to hamper people’s creative potentials.
Concerning the free and strict melodic patterns, Agawu (1997, pp. 77–82) rightly argues that African melodies are founded on speech and the so-called free rhythms are actually regulated by speech. These songs are also regulated by the emotions and thoughts of the performers; hence, they usually establish a clear beginning, continuity, rising, falling, and finale. African melodic rhythms are shaped by their composers’ life experiences and activities such as feelings, heartbeats, speech, eating, working, and walking.

Referring to African polyphony, Alexander Agordoh (1994, pp. 90–91) notes that since polyphonic practices are often related to scale types as a form of melodic organization, the Northern Ewe, who use the heptatonic scale, sing in parallel thirds throughout, while the Southern Ewe, who sing in the pentatonic tradition, sing in unison with sporadic fourths. However, Ewe polyphony may also be viewed on the basis of the multiple voices and instrumental sounds that blend in harmony. In addition, the dual male and female choruses that feature in *adzida* performances by the Aŋɔ-Ewe may be considered a unique polyphony.

Concerning the interaction between speech tones and melodies, Marius Schneider (1942, 1950, 1961), A. M. Jones (1959), and Elizabeth Tatar (1973), examined correspondences and deviations of melody and speech sequences and arrived at a number of rules to explain such phenomena (cited in Fiagbedzi, 1977, pp. 249–250). Jones and Schneider both consider parallelism of the musical tone and speech tone as the basic principle (cited in Fiagbedzi, 1977, pp. 249–250). Judging from the empirical data, Fiagbedzi states,

> “—both parallelism and non correspondence of speech tone with musical tone are regarded as two mutually related functions of melodic behavior. From this perspective, non correspondence is neither a deviation from a theoretical mean melodic center whether horizontal (as Schneider suggests) or in the form of waves (according to Jones), nor is it embedded as an axis in abstractions of tonal hierarchy (as Tatar suggests). Both are neither incidental to melodic behavior and are equally the result of melodic organization and not its generative principle” (Fiagbedzi, 1977, pp. 250–251).

Nketia (as cited in Fiagbedzi, 1977, p. 251) notes that

> “when texts in tonal language are sung, the tones used normally in speech are reflected in the contour of the melody. Thus, melodic progression within the phrases is determined partly by intonation contour, and partly by musical consideration. Sequences of repeated tones and the use of rising and falling intervals or of flexures (fall-rise and rise-fall patterns) in melodies may reflect the intonation patterns used in speech” (Nketia, 1974, p. 186; Fiagbedzi, 1977, p. 251).
Both writers have explained the interaction between African language and melody in one way or another. I would state that since language forms an integral part of African melodic expression, there is bound to be an interaction between the melody and speech tones. The song compositional process involves the shaping of feelings, thoughts and utterances into sounds desired by humans. The composers may or may not deliberately fit melodies to speech tones. Other factors, such as the composer’s desire to create contrasting sounds, the need to accommodate the various singers or to please the listeners, the instruments used in the performance, the tendency to vary or ornament the song or to improvise or heighten the effect of the song/performance, or end on specific notes/tones, may influence the interaction between Ewe melodies and speech tones. Thus, a low speech sound may be sung in a higher melodic range or vice versa. In addition, constant modification of the songs during performances may affect the interaction between speech tones and melody.

Further distinguishing characteristics of Ewe melodies, such as glides, are related to the manipulation of the Ewe syntax, speech tones, feeling, the composer’s desire to create contrasting and pleasing sounds, and the manifestation of individual idiosyncrasies. The pendular and interlocking melodic features may emerge from social interaction and the dialogic mode of Ewe communication or singing. These elements also exemplify the interconnectedness of performers with events and features of the universe. Repetition is essential in Ewe singing, for this enables the participants/observers to absorb the melodies and to reinforce, stabilize, and authenticate the songs. The downward sloping of Ewe melodies reflects a natural tendency to bring an activity/performance to a rest, thus indicating that whatever goes up must come down. A lead singer may raise the melody, to which the chorus may respond in a relatively lower range. However, some Ewe composers may end some songs in a relatively higher melodic range, which may serve as a stylistic device.

5.4 Ewe Vocal Qualities and Their Contextual References

The preferred voice qualities vary from one African society to another. For example, some societies in Northern Ghana, which are influenced by Islamic culture, sing with a tensed (tessitura) voice quality. The Akan, Ga, and Ewe generally sing with open voice quality. These vocal qualities are shaped by environmental factors, taste and preference, and stylistic considerations. However, the various African societies easily adapt to other modes or styles of singing (the interaction of the various modes notwithstanding).
The Ewe particularly cherish *gbe zoɔrɛ* (smooth voice) and *gbe nyui* (good voice). The male cantor would be expected to possess *gbe deto* (a projecting voice), while the female cantor would be expected to sing in a relatively higher vocal range. Several days preceding a performance, an Anloga-Ewe singer or cantor may eat *logbo* (silver fruit) to clear his/her throat in order to produce the desired voice qualities. Due to the communal or collaborative nature of African music and dance, an emphasis is laid on singing in unison (homophony), with variations that serve as harmonic devices. An analysis of individual vocal qualities would require a consideration of the age, sex, physique, skill, mood, vocal organs, style, and the distance between the performers and listeners in relation to specific criteria in time and place. This may be problematic to determine, for although certain qualities can be determined in the process, such an assessment would no doubt involve value judgements of an individual or group of evaluators.

Judging from the empirical data that I gathered from a close distance at Anloga during the annual *Hogbetsotsotso* festival (1997), the student-youths, who performed *gota, bɔbɔbɔ, dunekpoe, agbadza,* and *husago,* exhibited unique vocal qualities in various contexts (some of which are difficult to describe). Generally, the youth exhibited relatively higher voice qualities compared to those expressed by adult females in singing *zizihawo,* and by the adult male in singing *atrikpui* and *adzida* songs. Staccato and forceful voice qualities are expressed in the male *atrikpui* songs compared to the unique rhythmic melodies expressed in the female *zizihawo.* The introductory songs of *agbekɔ* are sung with attacking and staccato voices compared to the vocal sounds produced in its main drumming and dancing section. Relatively lower voice qualities are expressed in the male *adzida* chorus compared to those expressed by the female chorus. The elders’ *nyayito* songs exhibit relaxed, and in some cases, blurring voice qualities.

In most cases, among the distinct voices of the male and female cantors, the male voice with its relatively lower vocal range stands out. However, this observation does not take into consideration the differences in the age and physique of the performers. During students’ (10–19 years old) performances recorded at Anloga, the thin voices of some nine-year-old boys and girls stand out. Also, the *hatsyiatyia,* songs accompanied by bells and rattles, sound louder than the *vufohawo,* songs which are integral to the main drumming and dancing.

Individual idiosyncrasies manifest in these performances, hence some female and youth singers exhibit relatively low voice qualities which serve as harmonic devices in various contexts. There may be other distinguishing vocal characteristics that my investigation does not reveal but the qualities discussed above provide a basis for intercultural music and dance education and future research.
5.5 Ewe Songs and Their Contextual Reference

The Ewe songs reflect a wide range of human experiences, ranging from devimehawo (cradle songs/lullabies), jefehawo (game songs), and glimehawo (storytelling or folktale songs), to songs for domestic and occupational activities such as futahawo or atsyohawo (fishing songs), adehawo (hunters’ songs), vuhawo (songs which are integral to drumming and dancing or performance), zizihaowo (female ceremonial, praise and critique songs), subosubohawo (songs for worship), and avihawo (dirges). These songs express specific, general, and multifaceted themes.

For example, cradle songs/lullabies feature the interaction between children, parents and siblings, domestic animals, environmental objects, children's moods, their food habits, toys, parental occupation, love, and care. Didactic songs refer to the use of concrete images and body parts in number games. Game songs highlight children’s social behavior, conformity and deviation, etc. In addition, storytelling songs relate to behaviors and actions of specific characters and events.

Occupational songs reflect the various stages of fishing such as paddling, net dragging, fish hauling, the fishing setting, fishermen’s aspirations, and enjoyment of the benefits of their labor. Similarly, hunting songs may reflect the hunters’ experiences, courage, desire to catch certain animals instead of shooting them, their desire to spare some animals, tribute to the ancestors and divinities, their harassment by the animals, and their disappointment and victory.

Integrated youth music and dance styles such as gota, bobɔɔbɔ and gahu express themes such as greetings, seriousness, time consciousness, obedience, cleanliness, beauty, gratitude, love, happiness, and cleverness. They also express warnings about enemies within and outside the group and other socioeconomic and political themes.

Adult/youth social music and dance styles such as kinka and gohu express pertinent cultural practices such as puberty rites, marriage procedures, cultural change and contemporary youths’ behavior, courtship, warning, and advice to the youth. They also express group solidarity, love for performance, social relations, socioeconomic status, goodness to people, ingratitude of people, courage, determination, defense, internal conflicts and resolutions, predicaments, worries, desires for freedom and possessions, and philosophical and historical themes about human beings, the metaphysical universe, and reincarnation. They further express failures, comfort, unity, lament, physical impairment, composers’ imagination, and spiritual yearning or hope.

In addition, the female zizi songs express human interaction with the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors; the rising and sitting and movement of traditional leaders; duty consciousness; obedience to the leaders; praises and critiques of the actions of political leaders; repressed desires; topical themes; social
control; the process of arbitration and deliberation; desire for consensus, harmony and order; humor about the unity of the male and female; female caring for the male; intercultural breeding, etc. Other historical and ceremonial/sacred music and dance forms/styles such as *misego* and *adzogbo* express tribute to the divinities, desire for continuity, human sufferings and hardships, lament, loss, perseverance, hope, warning, advice, blessing, adornment, sacred values, and defense.

The military music and dance groups such as *atrikpui*, *vuga*, *aflui*, *asafo*, and a version of *agbekɔ* express themes such as courage, boasting, bravery, protection, security, insecurity, defeat, hope, love, disillusionment, and the transition to normal life.

There are also *halo* songs of social commentary, criticism and humor, and dirges and other songs that express overlapping and multifaceted themes. However, these examples provide a basis for understanding or experiencing the Ewe songs. The availability of a vast corpus of songs poses a challenge to a curriculum developer or arts educator who would have to adequately represent them in the curriculum but I will provide some examples of the songs from the various contexts to represent the multiple voices of the composers, performers, and cultural bearers. Given the scope of this project, it would be difficult and time consuming to provide versions of the songs notated with Western symbols. Such a project remains a future undertaking. The writer acknowledges the fact that due to the ongoing social, historical, and cultural transformation process, some contemporary youth/students may find it difficult to express some of these melodies.

### 5.6 Selected Ewe Songs

**Devimehawo: Cradle Songs**

1. Ewe

   L: Nye ƞutɔ fe dzedze vie loo
   C: Toboli
   Negagble ha nye dzi
   L/C: Megafa avi le za me nam o
   Nane naxɔ gbe le asiwo nam o
   Dzedzeyine lo Toboli.

**English**

It is my dear child, *Toboli*
Do not cry in the night for me
Something will take your life/voice away
My dear child *Toboli*
Whether she is short I gave birth to her *Toboli*
Whether she is tall I gave birth to her
She has a wide nose *Toboli*.

2. Ewe
Tutu gbɔvi
Dada mele afe me o
Papa mele afeame o
Aoo dzedzevi nye bɔ nu bɔ nu kwoo
Mekae fo wo, Paluvineye
Tuta mafui na wo Ao dzedzevinye
Bonubonu kpooo.

**English**
Away he-goat
Mother is not at home
Father is not at home
Aoo my sister stay calm
Who beat you, it is Paul,
Spit and let me beat him for you
Aoooo my sister stay calm.

**Didactic song**

1. Ewe
Eyi be ɲɛaɲɛaɲɛa
Eyi be doe wuwomea
Eyi be wɔ le waze me
Eyi be dae midu
Eyi be danye gbɔ matui nae
Degble fetsu esea sakple.

**English**
This (finger) says *nenene*
This says are you hungry?
This says there is corn flour in the pot
This says cook it for us to eat
This says mother returns I will tell her
Thumb, you report people.
Youth Gota Songs

1. Ewe
Eee milawoe
Gota husu milawoe husu milawoe
Gotavua mifoge, miano ye ha dum ale
Husu milawoe gota husu milawoe.

English
Yes, we shall do it
Yes, we shall do it, we shall perform goto
We shall perform goto and dance like this
We shall also do it, we shall perform goto.

2. Ewe
Yi dade kpana logo
Gowoe yi dade kpana logo ee
Yidade kpana logo
Gowoe yidade kpana logo.

English
It is the sharp machete that cuts Logo yes
it is the sharp machete that cuts Logo
It is the sharp machete that cuts Logo
Yes it is the sharp machete that cuts Logo

3. Ewe
Nufialanye nufialanye
Mado vevie nusroso
Ne mese ga wodi gbliin ko
Matso nye kpe afu du.

English
My teacher my teacher
I will be serious in studying
When I hear the bell sound gbliin
I will take my tablet and run.

Youth Bobobo Songs

1. Ewe
Miele Ago dom na Anloga dukwo
Agoo ooh agoo oo
Mawu fe nya la nenɔ mia dome
Ne mi ese efe agbenyawo la
Woatse ku gede le mia me
Agoo oo agoo.

**English**

We are knocking at Aŋlɔ state
Knocking ooh knocking
God’s word should be in your midst
When you hear his life words
They should bear many fruits in you
Knocking oh knocking.

2. Ewe

Ghanaviwo dzi nedzɔ mi mitso aseye
Mida akpe na Yehowa
Elabe edo atsyɔ na denyigba
Kpakple nu ɔɔsi gedewo
Fima amutaga la
Sika diamond kple bubuawo ken
Duko gede womakpo o womakpo o
Yayranu wonye na mi
Mawuga akpe na wo
Denyiɔgba lɔɔ akpe na wo.

**English**

Children of Ghana feel happy
Jubilate, give thanks to God
Because s/he adorns the mother earth
With many precious things
There lies the great lake and many precious things
Many nations may not see these, may not see these
They are blessings for us
Great God thank you
Lovely mother land thank you.

4. Ewe

Mieda kpe na mi kata dumegaviwo
adaŋynyuiwɔlawo mawu neyra mi
Akpe dɔ menya wɔna o kpe
Mina miawɔ deka dekawɔɔ enyo
Mawu neyra mi tegbe tegbe tegbe

**English**

We thank you all young state leaders
Good policy planners God bless you
Thank the work is not easy thank you
Let us unite unity is good
God bless you, forever, ever and ever

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**Gahu Songs**

1. Ewe

Gahu eeee gahu miedo gbe na mi loo
Gahu ee gahu miedo gbe na mi loo
Miedo gbe gahu miedo gbe
Gahu ee gahu miedo gbe na mi loo (2 times).

**English**

*Gahu yes gahu* says we greet you
*Gahu yes gahu* says we greet you
We greet you, *gahu* we greet you
*Gahu yes gahu* says we greet you.

2. Ewe

Miennyay kpɔ na
Gahuvioo Miennyay kpɔ na
Dzokoto ga le wosi wodona
Afɔkpa kpe de ɲu
Enya de dzɔ le Keta dume loo
Miinya kpɔ na

**English**

You look attractive
*Gahu* performers/children you look attractive
You have big *dzokoto* to wear
With shoes to match
A certain word issues in Keta town
You look attractive.
An Excerpt from Kinka Wufoha: 
Main Performance Song

2. Ewe
Kusaga mewua ame o
Kusaga mewua me o
Jole ku lema le xome na wo ee
Kule ma le xome nee eee
Gota hudehude xome nyaga.

English
Outside death does not kill a person
Loved one that is death in your room
That is death in your room ooh
The outside is sparkling but room messy.

An Excerpt from Kinka Hatsyiaha Main Poetic Songs
(Composed by Kpligi Agbakpe of Ayloga, 1970s)

2. Ewe
Etom ye mele, etom ye mele hee
Nyatefe tom nyea mele
Si mebe nuga ade le bubumea (2times).
Yea menye adze meda o
Etsa vayi hee hafi ụtsu nabe yeade srọ,
Elebe natu xọ, Eueawofleatu ha hee
Srọdeyia nava do
Nyọnu-megaxoawoe kpọ nyọnu la
Hesọna yia xome
Ye woxlea seawo nae la hee
Srọdeyi zu nusrọfe hee (2 times)
Fifia numawo mega li o emeawo tefe
Kpọdomehiawoe to ye mieva dzidzi ge
Si nekpọ nyọnu la ko nagblọ nae bena
Daavi wo wo wo
Ne matu xo na wo
Ye mede Adabafọ o ko ahiajbe la wu nu ho
Fovito nagblọ na davito bena gbekagbee nava?
Ede gbea tsọ hee
Danye melọ na nam be mado go o
Ne meyi na de asime ko mava to gbɔ wo
Agbo deme nu yae nye agbo hee
Atsi wotso vado kple dzɔkpleke ya de
Mehea nya o hee
Xexea fe akpa ade miedo doe nye yi hee
Dzila megagbea nya na vi ha o hee
Si nebe yeagblo ko wobe
Ganae miele Ganae miele Ganae miele hee
Ganae miele heeee
Wo ntowo ko hee.

**English**

Speaking it I am, speaking it I am
The truth is what I am speaking
As I say a great thing is getting lost
It is not a lie I have told
The past is gone
Before a man should marry
He must build a house
The Ewe would also buy gun
Marriage period would approach
The old women would lead the woman indoor
And enumerate the rules for her
Marriage time becomes a learning period
Now these practices are absent
Public love affairs have come into vogue and you are seeking
When you see the woman you will say to her
Small mother come, come, come, so that I tell you a legend
Not within a blink of an eye the love word is concluded
Young man will say to the young lady
When will you come?
Will any of them refuse tomorrow?
My mother does not allow me to go out
When I am going to the market I will pass by your abode
The ram that leans on a thing is the ram indeed
A certain part of the world we have come to, yes!
A parent does not scold a child ooeeeee
A vegetative tree and the grown-up with roots do not challenge one another
Dare you complain
They would say we are in Ghana
We are in Ghana
It is up to you.

An Excerpt from Mainstream Agbadza Songs

1. Ewe
Agbadza le mɔ de nu ame ade le sɔ dzi neu
agbo Mίu u agbo hee
Agbadza le mɔ de nu amede le sɔ dzi neu
agbo
Mίu u agbo hee mɔ de nu mɔ de nu
ame ade le sɔ dzi ne u agbo
Agbadza u agbo hee.

English
Agbadza is on a certain gate a horse rider
should open the gate open the gate yes
Agbadza is on a certain gate the horse
rider should open the gate
Open the gate yes on a certain gate on a
certain gate the horse rider should open the gate,
Agbadza should open the gate.

Adzida, Tonuhawo: Main Drumming and
Dancing Songs

1. Ewe
Ago mado mo, mado mo, mado mo,
Ago mado mo ne mada de hanye dzi
Unitiviawo, nanekel mele hame o,
Egaha mele hame o avɔ ha mele hame o
Gake mawoe ne woakpɔ
Ago mado mo, mado mo, mado mo
Ago mado mo ne mada de hanye dzi.

English
Excuse me to express my feelings
And be proud of my music
Unity performers, there is nothing in music
No money no food, no clothes in it
But I will do it for people to see
Excuse me to express my feelings,
to express my feelings, to express my
feelings and be proud of my music.

2. Ewe
Anyie do ho loo anyie do hooo anyie do ho anyie do ho
Adzawoe do ho amewo yi Dziesɔ oo
(repeat from the beginning to the end).

English
Bee swarm, bee swarm, bee swarm, bee swarm,
bee swarm, Adzawo have formed a swarm
People have gone to Dziesɔ (have passed away).

Hatyiatsyia: Chorus Sung by Avenɔ Unity Group

3. Ewe
Migafle kuku nam o migafle kuku nam o
Hadzito be meva fia ’tefe dzidzi.
Milɔmea milɔmea lolo le mo ha dometo le vovo
Nye megble asi wo nu o magble afɔ fe nu o
Yefe nu le dome ve mea
Fo mado anyigba zu ku nam alea
Efia ku nanɔ fia tefe hadzito nekua ame no tefe hee,
Agbal fɔ kpolie nyea mete
Mewɔ nyui na gbe to mewɔ nyui na gbe to
Mewɔ nyui na gbe to akpe mele ’me nam o
Dzɔgbese nyee tso aya nam he.

Hatsotso
Miato Unitiviawɔ
Meblo be dzika de metsoa yefo kpɔ gbede o
Ne ha neva ne miadzi
Mede afɔ le gbe dzi
Nyameasi gbe to fe mo
Anɔ gbe de ha me o
Nukpolawɔ miawɔ zɔ hee.

English
Do not (flatter me) buy me hat
Do not (flatter me) buy me a hat
The composer says, I have come here since long
Love me, love me, love in the face that in the stomach is different
I have not destroyed belongings of hands and feet yet my affairs are painful
Stepping on the ground has caused my death
When a chief passes away someone will replace him
When a composer passes someone should replace him
The law giver endowed me with Agbali’s (bush cat’s) destiny
I have done good for humans there is no thanks in it for me.
My law giver has given me curses

Conclusion
Performers I am not discouraged
Let songs come for us to sing.
I have stepped off the bush
And would not shy human face
And drink grass in a drink
Spectators you are welcome.

Excerpts from Gohu Songs

1. Ewe
Gohu miele ʃoʃom
Ayelevi do Gohua miele ʃoʃom
υuaviawo mida akpe na ayele
Ayelevi do Gohua miele ʃoʃom.

English
She composed the Gohu that we perform
Ayelevi composed the Gohu that we perform
Group members give thanks to Ayele
Ayelevi composed the Gohu that we perform

2. Ewe
Womame womame
Alesu be Komanda ɲutoe xɔ awoma ne
uaviawo hee
Gudatua le woma me hee
Woma me woma me Alesu be Kɔmanda
ɲutoe xɔ awoma ne υuaviawo hee
Gudatua le woma me heee
Miawo Guda ha mjeʃona kpa de wo do
agbogbo Gudatua le woma me.
English
In the register in the register
Alesu says the commander has registered the group
*Guda* performance is registered
In the register in the register
Alesu says the commander has registered the group
*Guda* performance is registered
Our *Guda* that we perform
some people complain *Guda* performance is registered

4. Ewe
Doga t\(\text{w}o\) le avi dzi dada be mikpl\(\text{e}\) ve namea
Ayelevie do ga t\(\text{w}o\) le avi dzi dada be mikpl\(\text{e}\) ve namea
Yelevie te kp\(\text{o}\) \(\text{n}u\)\(\text{t}\)\(\text{o}\)
AyeleYelevi te kp\(\text{o}\) \(\text{n}u\)\(\text{t}\)\(\text{o}\) be ayele Ayele ko
Dahumet\(\text{o}\)\(\text{w}o\) fe nu (2 times) Ayele Ayele
mik\(\text{\text{o}}\)m dzra do.

English
She borrowed money parents burst in tears
Mother says bring her back to us
Ayelevi has borrowed money
Parent burst in tears, bring her back to us
Ayelevi has attempted so much, Ayele
Ayele has bolted away with Dahomean belonging
Ayele!! Ayele says hide me.

5. Ewe
L: Ayee aye aye siga vivime ye tr\(\text{o}\) hee
C: Ayee aye aye siga vivimea yet\(\text{r}\)\(\text{o}\) hee.

English
Yes yes yes *Siga* is pleasing this evening.
Yes yes yes *Siga* is pleasing this evening.

Hatsyiatsia: *Chorus Sung in Ge-Anyi, Togo Dialect* *(Composed by Atifose Amegago 1960s)*

Ewe
Nugbeylawo miawoe z\(\text{o}\) mado dza na mi
Gb\(\text{\text{o}}\)woe makp\(\text{o}\) vovo
Tsifose wuawo ha zu hu meli de xɔnyenu
Kpekem awu adza
Dunyo be husiviwokoane gbedom da be
Miawo Gohu ha tsi xɔ me
Ayele via ne gbɔ ko miawɔ wua njuti dɔ
**Hatsotsɔ gbate**
Hasinɔ Alesu Ayelevia do aŋe be mgbɔ na
Hafɔm de amlo fe (2 times)
Mi kudo Ayelevia miedi tsa hee
Miedi tsa Agbanake nyea mtsoa hee
Nya mva do d’Agbekɔ
Kaka mado Glefe ‘gbe nu vadzɔ le afunua
Dzigbawua njutɔ trɔ ɔtsyia de afim dzia nya mɔ fo le dua me
Hua mifɔa megawo biam bena du de me nyea mtso laa
Gohua ɔm de domafafa ade dzì.
**Hatsotsɔ Evelia**
Dekɔ miɛyɔ ɛ de mele dɔnyɛ me o
Miete kpɔ
Hasinɔ Alesu be ɛ de mele dɔnyɛ me o
Miete kpɔ Gohu nyea xɔ awomɔ.

**English**
Travellers you are welcome
I will welcome you and be free
Tsifose the songs of this group have become a divinity
I installed in my room
Heavier than Adza (a sacred symbol)
The very distributor of token for the entire citizenry
Is no longer available
Dunyo says the citizens should keep praying.
Our Gohu now remains indoors
Ayelevi should return so we perform it.

**First Conclusion**
Composer Dunyo, Ayelevi has sent me a message that she is arriving
The songs have woken me up
Me and Ayelevi have trolled to Agbanake
I went further to Agbekɔ
On arriving at Glefe life things issue over there
The real Dzigba performance turned into a style
As I displayed it in that town
After playing the leaders asked “Which town do I come from”?
The *Gohu* has brought me on peaceful stomach.

**Final Conclusion**
You have called me as I harbor no evil in my stomach
You have attempted, my performance is mandated.

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**Gohu: Halododo, Song-Poetry**

Ewe

L: *uua tso Ge-Anyie*
C: *Gohu wua tso Ge-anyi va Ajọga dume*
L/C: *Meawo be yewoe ame adeke megali o*
Dziagba hasinọ dze wonye woado
Klenọwọe doa nu doa dzi de ame ụn
Ayelevi di tsa yi Ge anyi wo dume.
Wokpọ Gohua Dagbanake
Teshitokọwo be Freeman
Dokuisi ko mianọ awọ wua ụnụsi do
L: *Dziagba hasinọ*
C: *Dżawutọ be meva*
L: *Atisfọse hasinọ*
C: *Dżawutọ be meva,*
L: *Totsu henọga*
C: *Dżawutọ be meva*
L: *Ayelevi haxea*
C: *Dżawutọ be meva …*

**English**
The performance originated from Geanyi
The performance originated from Geanyi to Ajọga township
Some people say they are and there are no other people
Cowards make plans and rely on others
Dziagba hasinọ this is open to dialogue
Yelevi has gone to Geanyi town
She saw Gohu at Dagbanake
Teshie ward calls it Freeman
We will be free and perform the music/dance
Dziagba composer, the performer says I am present
Tsifose, composer, the performer says I am present
Totsu ring leader/cantor, the performer I am present
Ayelevi (female) cantor, the performer says I am present …

*Excerpts from Agbekọ: vulọ*

1. Ewe
L: Miawo miegbọna ƒegame
    ſegametọwo midząru nuawo do
C: Miawo miegbọna ‘fegame
    ſegametọwo midząru nuawo do
L:Eeee midząru nuawo do alelelele
C:Midząru nuawo do
Repeat both lines
L/C:Miawo miegbọna afegame
    afegametọwo midżąra nuawo o.

*English*
We are coming to the great house
People in the great house should get things ready
We are coming to the great house
People in the great house should get things ready
Ooh!! Get things ready,
Alelele!! Get things ready
We are coming into the great house
People in the great house should get things ready.

2. Ewe
L: Agozọlia ye miezcọ
    Gawọ ọvị agozọlia ye miezcọ do ṣọ
C: Agozọlia hee Gawọ ọvị Agozọlia ye miezcọ do ṣọ
L: Mizọ doọvị miayi hee
    C: Gbekọviwo nezọ miayi hee
Repeat the two lines above twice
L: Agozọlia ye miezcọ gawọ ọvị agozọlia ye miezcọ do ṣọ
C: Agozọli hee gawọ ọvị Agozọlia ye miezcọ do ṣọ.

*English*
The velvet walk is what we walk
Siblings the velvet walk is what we walk ahead
The velvet walk yes siblings the velvet walk is what we walk ahead
Walk slowly let us advance
Agbekɔ performers should walk slowly and let us advance
The velvet walk is what we walk
Siblings the velvet walk is what we walk ahead
The velvet walk yes siblings the velvet walk is what we walk ahead.

**Youth Agbekɔ Ayodeha Prelude**
* (Composed by Modesto Amegago)*

3. Ewe
L: Miata agbekɔ viawo nuke lanye ye miadu
Be nukae lanye av miata ye nukae lanye atsy miado
C: Nunyae lanye nu miadu, nunya la nye av miata
Nunyae lanye ye miadu be nunyae lanye av miata
Be nunyae lanye atsy miado oo
agbekɔviwo miya awu de wua nu.

**English**
Colleagues of agbekɔ group
what should be our dance to dance?
What should be our clothes to wear? What should be our adornment?
Knowledge should be our dance to dance,
Knowledge should be our clothes to wear
Knowledge should be our dance to dance
Say knowledge should be our clothes to wear
Say knowledge should be our adornment
agbekɔ performers be serious with the performance.

**Wufoha, Main Drumming and Dancing Songs**

4. Ewe
Tsofia da mewo netso fia so degbe amewo netso fia da minye ahɔe
C: Tso fia da amewo netso fia so degbe amewo netso fia da minye ahɔ eee.

**English**
Take the sharp axe people should take the sharp axe
Thunder has commanded take the sharp axe let expel war.

5. Ewe
L: Ahɔ de miawoe miawoe malɔ o ooo
C: ooh ahɔ de miawoe miawoe malɔ o ooo
English
War has besieged us we would not agree
Oooh war has besieged us we would not agree

6. Ewe
Agotsakae mado yewoa hia
gotsakae mado hafi woade mea
Ooo b’ agotsakae madoo
b’agotsakae mado ‘agotsakae mado
yewoa hia gotsakae mado hafi woade mea
Ooh b’ agotsakae mado b’agotsakae mado
Yewoahia gotsakae mado hafi woademea
Ooh Agotsakae mado.

English
Should I wear velvet Atsaka my lover
Should I wear velvet Atsaka
before you marry me?
Oh should I wear velvet Atsaka …
Oh should I wear velvet Atsaka …
Oh should I wear velvet Atsaka …
Before my lover should marry me
Ooh should I wear velvet Atsaka?

Agbeko Hatsyiatsya: Main Songs

7. Ewe
L: Nakefɔ mɛfɔ Adzido o kɔ de lado anyidi fɛ afɔ eglo
C: Nakefɔ mɛfɔ adzido o kɔ de lado anyidi fɛ afɔ eglo
L/C: Labada do kinikini, labada do kinikini
Afa do ŋo hee ŋo eglo Kpolia do ŋo hee ŋo eglo
Mekae latso so wo tua ne miada
Nakefɔ mɛfɔ adzido o kɔ de lado anyidi fɛ afɔ eglo.

English
A firewood collector does not collect firewood from baobab tree
Who can trace the footprint of an ant? it is impossible
A firewood collector does not collect firewood from baobab tree
Who can trace the footprint of an ant? it is impossible
The wicked animal runs amok, the wicked animal runs amok
Afa has gone ahead to advance is impossible
Destiny has gone ahead to advance is impossible  
Who would give us thunder’s arm to fire  
A firewood collector does not collect firewood from baobab tree  
Who can trace the footprint of an ant? it is impossible.

**Gadzo Processional Song**

**Ewe**

L: Agbofu wɔyawɔya ŋu woe mekena godo  
C: Agbofu wɔyawɔya, ŋuwoe mekena godo  
L: ŋuwoe mekena agbofu hee ŋuwoe mekena godo  
C: Agbofu wɔyawɔya ŋuwoe mekena go do.

**English**

The plentiful-swinging ram fur unto you do I spread my arms  
The plentiful-swinging ram fur unto you do I spread my arms.  
Unto you do I spread my arms say unto you do I spread my arms.  
The plentiful swinging ram fur unto you do I spread my arms.

**Ewegbe**

Nutsuwo nya glo  
Kayiboe devia metsi o kayiboe

**English**

Male issue have become unbearable  
Black-string the child is not old black-string

**Adzogbo**

1. Ewe

Ehumanya ya kpɔli adekpekutɔwoe nya avɔlu  
Meyina atsyia do ge  
Be humahuma tu selɔ.  
Tsyiadolawoe dese na vodu  
B’ atsyiadolawo mienia avɔlu hee.  
Meyina atsyia do ge be humahuma tuseło.

**English**

The divinities would not bestow curses  
The divinity Adekpekuto pays you tribute
We are going to stylize 
Says *humahuma tusele*
The stylizers have sworn and paid tribute to the divinities.
We are going to stylize, say *humahuma tusele*.

2. Ewe
Adzonudza gbonue miedze atsyɔ miado
Ayee ayee hee atsyɔ miado
Adzonudza gbonue miedze atsyɔ miado
Aye aye hee Atsyɔ miado
Adzonudza gbonue miedze atsyɔ miado
Be zevi yito do da de tor ŋò
Tɔ ŋò nedo da miyi atsyɔ miado.

English
We have arrived at the gate of **Adzohu**
We shall adorn ourselves
Yes, yes we will adorn ourselves
We have arrived at the gate of **Adzohu**
The pot carried to the bank of the river
Has grown hair in front of the river
Let the river itself grow hair and we shall adorn our selves.

3. Fon-Ewe
L: Suku ee suvi nɔ na sudonu
C: Suku ee suvi nɔ na sudonu
L/C: Miiyi Adzohu si Adzohu wɔze ya
Suku ee suvi nɔ na sudonu.

English
When a tree dies, a small tree grows at its spot.
When a tree dies, a small tree grows at its spot
When an old Adzohu dancer dies
A young one replaces him/her.

*The Elders’ Nyayito Songs*
*(Composed by Vinɔɔ Akpalu)*

1. Ewe
Ha li wu ha hee medzi ge amedahewo naŋlo fu be
Akpalu do wu ade wonye dzidzome wu
Aŋloviawo bo de nu
Mitro gbe nunnyie miadzi Agoha na ye
Ha li wu ha hee medzi ge amedahewo naŋlo fu be
Meglo be miva miwoe
Evuua fe ha miva miawoe
Mesi ke meva œa ñomevetoe
Ne ñome fa na wo
Na’ miawo wua
Ha li wu ha hee medzige amedahewo naŋlo fu be.

**English**
There are more songs we will sing
For the poor to forget their sorrows
Akpalu forms the performance group the group of joy
The children of Aŋlo surround him
Clear your voices and let us sing Agoha to us
There are more songs we will sing
Let the poor forget their sorrows
Let us play it our debtor drum
Come let us play it
S/he who does not come is angry
If your heart is kind you will perform in our group
There are more songs we will sing it
Let the poor forget their sorrows
Akpalu forms the performance group the group of joy
The children of Aŋlo surround him
Clear your voices and let’s sing Agoha to us
There are more songs we will sing it
Let the poor forget their sufferings.

2. Ewe (Composed by Vinako Akpalu)
Deviwo mide suku mianya agbale
Agbale manya yeha wom alea
Akpalu dzi ha wu wonye dölọ wow wọ de yife susu medze anyi o
Nenye agbale mọe meto de mawo dọ ne dzinu ku maxọ fetu …

**English**
Children go to school and gain book knowledge
Lack of book knowledge is affecting me now
Akpalu has sung for so long in vain his mind is restless
If I had gone on the book path
I would work and receive monthly salary….
3. Ewe (Composed by Høfe of Ànjàga in 1930s)
Nye ha megbô loo uua fe ha azô ka dzi ayi Ablotsi:
Meyi Keta mado gbe na Àlwu (Tɔgbui Sroe) woabiam be megbô haa
Vi ledɔ metsià gbesi gbède o
Nye ha megbô loo wua fe ha azô ka dzi ayi Ablotsi

**Hatsotso**
Megbloë be zikpui ga dzie nele
Fia Àlwu (Tɔgbui Sroe) zikpui ga dzie nele
Nale Afeviawo fofu
Nale gbèviawo afofù
Hadzìto hame ko ge na mi azô.

**English**
I have also returned
The songs of this group would be on telegraph abroad
I am going to Keta to greet Àlwu (Tɔgbui Sroe)
He would ask me if I had returned
A sickly child does not strand afield
I have returned the songs of this group would be on telegraph abroad.

**Conclusion**
You are on the great stool Àlwu (Tɔgbui Sroe) you are on the great stool
You should unite the citizens at home and broad
The composer would now analyze his songs for you now.

4. Ewe
Me lia to tso abo di:
Mielia to tso abo di gake asime xɔm o
Melià to tso abo di gake asi mexɔm o
Migbloë na Dede nam be
Nye le ha gatsi agbatawò wànu loo
Danye lee nane wɔm loo
Melia to dzò abo di gake asi mexɔm o

**Hatsotso**
Metsɔ bo looo metsɔ abo dadavi mele yesi o metsɔ abo
Metsɔ abo lo metsɔ abo dadavi mele
yesi o metsɔ abo.

**English**
I have climbed the mountain and descended
But have not sold my merchandise
Tell Dede that it is me who has stranded at Agbatawò wànu
My mother a strange thing has happened to me
I have climbed the mountain and descended
But have not sold my merchandise

Conclusion
I am stranded I am stranded I have no sibling I am stranded

5. Ewe
Wuaviawo Akpalue zu atsifu
Abọdzefe adeke mele wo ọju o
Mehawo do vωvli de miawo dzi
Woawoe male dzogbe loo kọto nye nutọ
Gbẹhagbe ke wotem ade me
Akpalu be matu aglo de azoli me
Madui de megbe madui de ṣẹgo
woanye agọzali mazọ hee
Tọgbuiga Adeđenyaakie de ago loo
Amladevi ade gbọna uu si.

English
Group members, Akpalu has become a dry tree
With no branching spot
Those who shade on us
Are now stranded in the desert
I have remained, the day that I will be dragged in
Akpalu says, I will walk majestically
I would step backward and forward
It would be a velvet walk
Great Grandfather Adeđenyaaki would knock on the elders’
An Amlade child is landing.

Futaha/Atsyoha Fishing Songs

1. Ewe
L: Tsyatsyakogo
C: Tsyatsya kogo
L: Deyi degbe
C: Miakpe le futa
L: Hawuidegbe
C: Miakpe le futa.
English
Tsyatsyakogo
The day of caching herring
We shall meet on the beach
The day of catching Hawui
We shall meet along the beach

2. Ewe
L: Anipaye looo
C: Nyea manɔ kpotsia nu,
L/C: Anipaye nye nụtɔ manɔ kpotsia nu
Mayi vogome
Vokudza/votetre.

English
Anipaye
Anipaye, I shall stand by the buoys ooh
Anipaye, I shall stand by the buoys ooh
And swim to the tip of the fine mesh
The fine mesh the fine mesh.

Adevu: Hunters Song

3. Ewe
L/C: Megadae o mali megade o
Adela megadae mali megadae o
Megadae o mali megadae o
Adela megadae o mali megadae o.

English
Do not shoot it I will catch it
A hunter do not shoot it I will catch it
Do not shoot it I will catch it
A hunter do not shoot it I will catch it.

Excerpt from the Ceremonial Songs: Female Zizi Songs

The following songs are usually introduced by a cry, ezieke lo, from the cantor, and a response, dzabani, from the chorus, followed by another cry, abu logodzoe, and a response, abu, from the cantor and chorus, respectively.
1. Ewe
L: Wonin\woc le ago dom.
C: Wonin\woc le ago dom
L/C: Wonin\woc wonin\woc kaminewoc le ago dom
Eziziawo gb\ona ziziawo gb\ona ziziawo gb\ona ziziawo gb\ona.

English
Wonin\woc are knocking
Wonin\woc are knocking
Wonin\woc wonin\woc kaminewoc are knocking
Eziziawo are coming Ziziawo are coming Zizi are coming.

2. Ewe
L: T\ogbuie do do mi
C: Kamine miew\ge ne loo kamine
L: Mama do do mi
C: Kamine miew\ge ne lo kamine
L/C: Holoholo kamine, holoholo kamine Miew\ge ne lo kamine.

English
Our grand father has sent us on an errand kamine
We will perform it for him, kamine
Our grand mother has sent us on an errand
Kamine we will perform it for her kamine
Holoholo kamine holoholo kamine
We will perform it for them kamine.

3. Ewe
L: Wonin\woc be atso
C: Wonin\woc be matso
L/C: Wonin\woc, wonin\woc Kaminewoc be matso kpla
Te\unj\woc be matso kpla
Te\unj\woc be matso mele ago do ge mele ago do ge mele ago do ge
Nyea deko matso deko matso deko matso oo
Ne mado Ye\we go mado Ye\we go mado Ye\we go mado ye\we go.

English
Wonin\woc say I will rise
Wonin\woc say I will rise
Woninòwo, woninòwoe,
kaminewo say
I will rise briskly
Teŋunò says I will rise briskly, Teŋunò says I will rise
I will knock I will knock I will knock
Me, I will just stand, I will just stand, I will just stand
Then I will give Yète notice, give Yète notice, give Yète notice

4. Ewe
L: Eduawoe gbe loo
C: Wuaviawoe be duawoe gbe be magayi o
L/C: Gbladza wo xonu ha megayi o
Nyigbla kpônù ha mega yi o
Zivi-xonu ha megayi o
Wuaviawo be eduawoe gbe looo
Dokluwoo be eduawoe gbe be maga yi o
Ehló madu logozui hee
Dokluwoo be madu logozui be kamine.

English
The state has refused
Group members the state has prevented me from going
Gbladza’s house too don’t go
Nyigbla’s house too don’t go
Zivi/Kɔvi’s house too don’t go?
Group members the state has refused
Procrastinators the state has prevented me from going.
Ooh clan/state!! I want to be encouraged
Procrastinators I want to be encouraged Kamine

5. Ewe
Woninòwo de huum huum
Woninòwo de huum huum
Woninòwo woninòwoe Kaminewo de huum huum
Huhumu néde huhumu néde huhumu nédeee
Enuakè ne huha nuka nye huha nukae nye huha
Eŋɔŋlɔe kluviwɔ de huuummm
Enya ha menyɔ o Gave lagba Gave lagba Gave lagba.

English
Woninòwo express huum
Woninòwo express huum
Woninòwo, woninòwoe kaminewo express huum
Huum huum should be expressed (3times)
What is the huum for, what is the huum for what is the huum for
The spotted priests and priestesses express huum huum
This word is not good
Agave will collapse, Agave will collapse Agave will collapse.

6. Ewe
L: Dzadza miwoe ne woanyo
C: Dzadza miwoe ne woanyo
L: Dzadza miwoe miwoe
C: Dzadza miwoe ne woanyo.

English
Dzadza do it and let it be good
Dzadza do it and let it be good
Dzadza do it, do it
Dzadza do it and let it be good.

7. Ewe
L: Enu nesò hee
C: Hlòviawo be nu nesò miadza bee
L: Enu nesò
C: Hlòviawo be nu nesò miadza bee
L/C: Gbladzawo ñunu ha dza bee
Zivixònu ha dza bee
Nyigbla ñunu ha dza bee
Wuaviawo be nu nesò looo ooo
Dokluuìwo be nu nesò miadza be eee
Ehò madu logodzozoe ee hee
Dokluuìwo be madu logodzui be kamine.

English
The mouth should be equal
Group members say the mouth should be equal so you mix it
The mouth should be equal
Group members say the mouth should be equal so you mix it
Gbladza's house too you mix it
Nyigbla's house too you mix it
Korvi's house too you mix it
Group members say
The mouth should be equal so you mix it
For the state to strengthen kamine.

8 Ewe
Zizia woetsa be de wonyo
Ziziawoe tsa be de wonyo
Ziziawoe tsaa ziziawoe tsa amenɔwo be
de wonyo
De wonyona loo de wonyo na loo
de wonyona looo
Esi madzi wo de madzi wo de madzi wo de madzi wo deeee.

English
Zizi has done it in the past and it was good
Zizi has done it in the past and it was good
Zizi has done it in the past the begetters say it was good
It is always good, always good, always good
Since I have given you birth, given you birth, given you birth.

The Historical/Ceremonial Misego Songs

1. Ewe
L:Gbea wodo loo Egbea wodo
C:Gbe ha Adzafia do Gbea menye gbe vɔ o
Gbea wodo lo Egbe wodo
L:Gbe ha Adzafia do Gbea menye gbe vɔ o
L/C: Ka xoxoa nue wogbea ka yeaye wo do
Gbea wodo gbe menye gbe vɔ o
Gbea wodo loo egbea wodo
Gbe ha Adzafia do Gbea menye gbe vɔ o.

English
The voice he utters the voice he utters
The voice Adzafia utters portends no evil
The voice he utters the voice he utters
The voice Adzafia utters portends no evil
It is on the older rope pattern that new ropes are woven
The voice he utters portends no evil
The voice he utters the voice he utters
The voice Adzafia utters portends no evil.

2. Ewe
Nu ha wɔmea medze za
Agbeme nu ha womea medze za looo
Nu ha womea medze za
Agbeme nu ha womea medze zaaa.

**English**
What had happened to me
And I fumbled through the dark.
Life thing that happened to me
And I fumbled through the dark

### 3. Ewe

**L:** Hua do di de huvie be de me  
**C:** Ye wokle nyaga huvie be de me  
**L:** Ayisusu  
**C:** Kudo agudzedze wokpe  
**L:** Ayisusu  
**C:** Kudo agudzedze wokpe 'hômeisusu kudo agudzedze wokpe  
**L/C:** Huado di dee huvie be de me  
Ye wokle nyaga huvie be de me.

**English**
Darkness has concealed its young ones  
Even at its break they are still concealed  
A fog  
Has clashed with sunlight  
A warring fog  
Has clashed with sunlight  
Darkness has concealed its young ones  
Even at its break they are still concealed

### 4. Ewe

**L:** Tsieka Agu dze gbe  
**C:** Menɔvi huyɔwoe  
**L:** Tsieka agu dze gbe  
**C:** Menɔvi huyɔwoe  
**L/C:** Tsiekawoe gba go  
Menɔvie huyɔwoe wlu a do ee  
Ago milawoe hee  
Ago milawoe ne woanyo.
English
Tsyeka! evil days fall
Kinsmen are called upon
Tsyeka! evil days fall
Kinsmen are called upon
Tsyeka walks in gorgeously, neighbors are called upon.
Agoo we shall do it.
Agoo we shall do it
And may it be good.

5. Ewe
L/C: Lalem loo lalem hedua
Nye deka meti wɔdufo la lem hedua
Lalem loo lalem hedua
Nye deka metsi wɔdufo lalem loo

English
The animal has caught me
The animal has caught me and devoured me
I am stranded in the wilderness
The animal has caught me and devoured me

5. Ewe
L: Klo medi nu o
wobe zu nenyɔ ye dee
C: Zu nyɔ wo ha
gowo lava gba
L: Su mesu o susu mesu o
C: Ne zu nyɔ wo ha
gowo lava gba
L/C: Klo medi nu o
wobe zu nenyɔ ye dee
Zu nyɔ wo ha
gowo lava gba.

English
A tortoise is not sizeable
He says a hammer should wake him up
When the hammer wakes you up
your shell will break.
Not sizeable s/he is not sizeable
When a hammer wakes you up
your shell will break.  
A tortoise is not sizeable  
he says a hammer should wake him up  
When a hammer wakes you up  
your shell will break.

Some Atrikpui Songs

1. Ewe  
Atsibu ya metsea atsibu fe ku o  
Atsibu ya metsea atsibu fe ku o  
ŋutsi tsi ya metsea  
ahogogui fe ku o  
Avu metoa nyita o  
Atsi bu ya metsea atsi bu fe ku o.

English  
No other tree bears the fruit of another tree  
No other tree bears the fruit of another tree  
The orange tree does not bear  
the fruit of a viper  
Dog does not bear cow’s head  
No other tree bears the fruit of another tree.

2. Ewe  
Axolu menye ame vɔ o  
Oooo miyo Axolu neva  
Axolu menye ame vɔ deke o  
Aza su egbe vɔ miyo Axolu neva.

English  
Axolu is not a bad person  
Oh yes call Axolu to come  
Axolu is not a bad person  
So’s gun reverberates, call Axorlu to come

3. Ewe  
Gbɔmasumasua nusese fe nyae  
Be xevi ade ma dzo va yina  
Fafayisu be agbo masumasua nusese fe nyae  
Be xevi ade madzo va yina  
Fafayisue gbɔm be yedada medzi vi gede o
Yata agbɔmasumasi nu sese fe nyae
Be xevi ade madzo va yina.
Hotsuitwo viwo fo adegbe na mi
Amedaheviwo miewɔ yaa …

**English**

Being small in number is a hard thing a certain bird flies by
Fafayisu says being small in number is a hard thing
A certain bird flies by.
Fafayisu says his mother has not given birth to many offspring
Therefore, being small in number is a hard thing
A certain bird flies by
Children of the rich ones have bragged to us
We the children of the poor are embarrassed

**Some Ga, a Predominantly Male Music/Dance Songs**

1. Ewe
Abo dzie abo dzie wodoa ga do abo dzie
Akpe kple dzime wo doa ga do
Abo dzie abo dzie wodoa ga do abo dzie

**English**

It is with (strong) arms that one dances ga
It is with clapping and back (torso) movement that one performs ga
It is with arms that one dances ga.

2. Ewe
Denyigba tsi mavo denyigba tsi mavo
Dzodze Anyako denyigba tsi mavo

**English**

The homeland is restless the homeland is restless
Fire has set on Anyako, the homeland is restless.

**Tsitrenuhawo, Songs Sung by Members of the Yewe Sect While Strolling to Performance Settings**

1. Ewe
Dzo bi gbe mebia anyigba wo ke o hee.
Anyigba wo kea ke xoxoe wonye
Dzo bi gbe mebia anyigba wo ke o hee
Agbemenwọ menya wo na o
Dzobi gbe mebia anyigba wo ke o ee.
Anyigba wo kea ke xoxo wonye
Dzo bigbe mebia anyigba wo ke o hee
Back to the beginning.

English
The fire that burnt bush cannot burn the root of the earth
The roots of the earth is an ancient root
The fire that burnt bush cannot burn the root of the earth
Kinship in life is difficult to maintain
Kinship in life is difficult to maintain
The fire that burnt bush cannot burn the root of the earth
The root of the earth is an ancient root
The fire that burnt bush cannot burn the roots of the earth

Excerpt from Agoyiyi Processional
Songs of the Yewa Sect

1. Ewe
Eloo eloo eloo eee
Go magbe gomafide
Miegbo na se ge Yewa gbọna se ge
Go magbe go ma fi de

English
Yes oh yes oh yes
We are moving along to a meeting arena
We are coming and will hear it,
Yewa is coming and will hear it
We are moving along to a meeting arena

2. Ewe
Danye zọzọ yife fliwoe keke
Ale nya gbọdzọ
Danye zọzọ yife fliwoe keke
Ale nya gbọdzọ ale nyagbo dzọ
Aleke nya gbọdzọ ale nyagbo dzọ

English
The snake that knows how to walk leaves wider marks
That is the word/truth and that is the word/truth
Excerpts from Sohu songs of the Yewe Sect

1. Ewe
Sovi de wɔ ne so
Da ha wlu na do
Sovi de wɔ ne so sovi de wɔ ne so
Da ha wlu na do hee
Sovi de wɔ ne so.

English
So’s children are called upon
The divinity has called for duty
So children are called upon
The divinity has called for duty …

2. Ewe
Dzo madza gadzawo
Gadza woe do bame he
Dzo madza gadzawo oo gadzawo oo gadzawo oo
Dzo madza gadzawo
Gadzawoe do ba me.

English
Fire does not destroy Agadza
Agadza resides in the mud
Fire does not destroy Agadza,
Fire does not destroy Agadza …
Agadza resides in the mud.

An Excerpt from Sogbadzi

1. Ewe
Zakadza-gbeku mɔ ti ya do to
Made mɔ hugbe do

English
Zakadza, the seed of life has cleared the hurdle
Would anyone challenge the divinity?
Excerpts from Adawu, Music and Dance of Ecstasy/Exaltation

1. Ewe
Ahɔ dzɔ mieyi boo o
Sovi ahɔ dzɔ mieyi bo.
Dzekevisi ahɔdzɔ ahɔdzɔ loo
Hodesivi ahɔdzɔ ahɔdzɔ loo
Ahɔdzɔ mieyi booo oo
Sovi ahɔ dzɔ mieyi boo

English
A serious thing has happened we are far removed
A serious issue has transpired we are far removed
Dzekesivi a serious issue has happened, has happened
Hodesivi a serious issue has happened, has happened
A serious issue has happened
Sovi, a serious issue has happened we are far removed

2. Ewe
Gbeneu dzɔ de fudome zuwɔ
Miake miaanya loo.
Agboa wodzi le fudome zuwɔ
Nu hi le agbo wo tame agbo de huu
Ewɔdzi xie mafa ee mafa ee mafa loo
Edzie miayi loo oo
Anyie miayi loo hoo,
Nu hi le agbo wo tame
Agbo de huum.

English
Life things that issue at deep sea
We shall meet and get to know it
The ram is searched for at deep sea
What lies in ram’s head
Ram expresses huum
A serious lament will I lament will I lament
Up high shall we go?
Downward shall we go?
What lies in ram’s head
Ram expresses huum
An Excerpt from the Songs-Recital of Alaga,
a Defiled Priest or Priestess of Yewe

1. Ewe
Nyea nye manye oo loo
Nyea devie menye hee
Amesie ... dom loo
Mele ahɔ dzi ne loo
Ehuum mele kum ne
Do kete mele kum ne

English
Me I don’t know
Me I am an innocent child,
This person ... has sent me on this errand
I am on the alert for him/her
When I lament I lament for him/her
When I blow a whistle or trumpet, I blow it for him/her.

Ewe-African Instrumental Section and the
Rhythmic Structure

5.7 Instrumentation

Ewe instruments vary in size and quantity and from one performance context to another. They include idiophones, which are self-sounding instruments such as stick clappers and bells of varied types and sizes; membranophones, which are drums with animal (antelope, deer, duiker, and goat) skin or leather parchment heads, such as cylindrical and semi-cylindrical, open-ended, closed-ended, and double-headed drums; aerophones, which are wind instruments such as elephant tusk trumpets, bamboo flutes, and reed pipes; and chordophones, which are stringed instruments of varied types and sizes.

The idiophones found among the Ewe include gakogui (a double clapperless bell of two contrasting pitches, atoke (a boat-shaped bell of a higher pitch), adodo (a double-sided multiple bell), and avaga (a single clapper bell). Other idiophones are axatse or akaye (a rattle made of beads, pieces of bamboo, or pen cover strung around a gourd), akpe (stick or hand clappers), adaka (wooden box), ego (percussive gourd semi-hemispherical in shape), and amekpotsi (the human body).
Aerophones found among the Ewe include ladzo-kpe (animal tusk trumpets) and pamplo-kpe (bamboo flutes). A variety of open-ended drums such as atimevu, gboa, sogo, kroboto, kagan, uuvi, and uuga; closed-ended drums such as kidi and double-headed drums such as brekete, dondo, and patenge are also played by the Ewe.

Chordophones are rare among the present day Ewe. However, a one-string bowed lute, called atsiâfulegede, is made by the youths with a tin or can, bowed-stick, and string, and is played in games and for the youths’ own enjoyment.

5.8 Ewe Instrumental Tuning and Timbre

Ewe instruments are relatively tuned on the basis of sociocultural values. For example, the main southern Ewe instrumental ensemble (which includes the kagan, kidi, kloboto, totodzi or klodzi, gboa, atimevu, patenge, gakogui, atoke, axatse and akpe) is designed according to the age and sex roles, to represent the voices of the youth, adult male and female adults in the society. Usually, the smaller instruments produce relatively higher sounds while the lower instruments produce lower sounds.

Generally, atoke (boat-shaped bell), gakogui (double bell), vuelpa or vuqogo (the side of a drum or drum-wood), akpe (clappers), and axatsewo (rattles) produce some of the highest sounds. The kagan or uuvi (the smallest drum) and patenge produce relatively higher and the highest sounds in the drum ensemble, followed by the sounds of the kidi and sogo (main supporting drums), respectively. Atimevu, the lead drum, produces relatively lower and varied sounds/tones in many performances. But in performances such as agbekọ and gadzo the atimevu may be tuned relatively higher to provide higher taunting sounds in fulfilment of the contextual functions (as discussed under harmony). The gboa, which is used as a supporting instrument in kinka and a lead drum in gahu, produces low bass sounds. Also, the female atompani or talking drum is tuned relatively higher than the male. The brekete produces relatively lower sounds compared to the melodic sounds produced by the dondo. Generally, most of the instruments used in youths’ performances, such as gota, babasiko, and bbo:bbo, are tuned relatively higher in relation to the taste and preference or developmental stages of the youths. The todzo-kpe, or ladzo-kpe, or kpe, or biglo (animal tusk trumpets and bamboo flutes, whistle, bugle and trumpet) produce unique melodies or sounds relative to their sizes in various contexts.
5.9 Performance Techniques

Ewe instruments are played solo or in groups of similar or mixed types, ranging from a few to a larger number. A variety of techniques are employed by the Ewe in playing their instruments. The techniques employed in Ewe instrumental performance are related to the performance types, the desired timbre, intensity or dynamics, duration of sounds and the aesthetic values of performers and social groups. They are further influenced by the size of the instruments, and require the instruments to be handled or positioned in certain ways. Generally, Ewe instruments are played with hands, hands and sticks, and double sticks.

The Southern Ewe drum sticks are usually made from xetsi (a local thorny tree), setsi (destiny tree/stick), guwatsi (guava tree/stick), and other durable sticks from within and outside the immediate environment. The length, thickness, and weight of the sticks vary in relation to the size of the instruments and the desired sound. When the wrong stick is used, the drum will not produce the desired sound. Drum sticks are usually carved in a round shape. Straight sticks are used in playing most of the Ewe instruments.

However, hooked sticks are also used in playing instruments such as the atompani (male and female drums), and agblou (a single royal drum), dondo, brekete, kroboto, totodzi, and lakleu (friction drum); and in some cases, the atimeu in the nyayito, leafelegbe or atigo performance for producing specific tonal, gliding, and friction qualities.

Relatively smaller and straight sticks are used in playing the kagan and idi while relatively bigger sticks are used in playing the sogo and atimeu, respectively. The sticks used for playing kagan may be about 12–20 inches long and 1/8 inch in diameter. The sticks used for playing idi, sogo, and atimeu may be from ten to twelve inches long. The idi playing sticks may be about 1/4 inch in diameter; the sogo playing sticks may be about 3/8 inch in diameter, and the sticks used in playing the atimeu may be about 3/4 inch in diameter.

Two straight sticks are usually used in playing the various supporting instruments (such as sogo, idi, and kagan) for producing clear tones, various pitches, and rapid rhythms (except in some cases when hands are used in playing the supporting sogo, especially in adzokdi music and dance of the elderly people at Anloga. The drum skin may be struck freely at the center successively with sticks held with both hands, or it may be struck freely at the center with one stick, followed by the stick in the other hand. The skin may also be struck at the center with a stick in one hand while pressing the membrane with the other stick at or near the center of the drum head. In addition, a number of bouncing strokes at the center of the drum head may be followed by a pressed stroke with the other stick.
A combination of straight-stick and hand techniques are used in playing the lead drum in *adzida*, *gohu* and *dunekpoe* ensembles to produce sustained, loud, rapid sounds and double strokes. The drum may be struck with a stick at the center while pressing the membrane with the other hand near the edge or center, or it may be struck with the hand near the center or the edge at a zone closer to the drum wood while striking it with a stick held in the other hand. The skin may also be pressed with a hand at the center while sliding a stick on the membrane forward; or it may be hit with relaxed hand while hitting the drum wood/side with a stick held in the other hand at the same time.

Hand techniques are employed in playing the lead drum of *agbadza* and most of *bobobo* and *akpese* drums to produce specific bouncing, muting, and tonal effects. The drum may be hit at the center with a relaxed or slightly scooped hand. It may also be slapped at the center or near the edge with slanted hand, or the drum skin may be pressed near the center or the edge with alternating hands in slow, medium, and fast tempi. The membrane also may be struck at the center with one hand, followed by pressing it with the opposite elbow. The drum skin may be slapped near the edge with a relaxed hand, followed by sliding pressed thumb and forefinger on the membrane. The lead *bobobo* drums may be lifted up and down with the knees while being played at various angles or zones with both hands.

A combination of hand, thigh, and palm techniques are used in playing the rattle in most Southern Ewe ensembles. The rattle may be hit on the thigh downward and hit upward against the palm; it may be rested on the chest and tapped with the alternating hands, or a player may hold two rattles, each in one hand, and shake them forward and backward successively in some youth ensembles, such as *bobobo* and “Ewe highlife.” A combination of iron rod, palm, and finger-touching techniques are employed in playing *atoke*, a boat-shaped bell. The *atoke* bell may be held in the palm and be hit at a slanted angle with a rod. Ringing and shaking techniques are employed in playing *avaga*, a single-clapper bell, and *adodo*, a multiple bell. A combination of thigh tapping and clapping, and chest and body tapping and clapping techniques are employed in *adzida* and *gohu* performances, respectively. The blowing, breath control, and fingering techniques are employed in playing the bugle, flute, and animal tusk trumpet.

5.10 Ewe Instrumental Rhythmic Structure

Rhythm is defined by the *Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (1990, p. 1013) as an ordered recurrent alternation of strong and weak elements in the flow
of sound and silence in speech; or the aspect of music comprising all the elements such as accent, meter, and tempo, that relate to forward movement.

Agawu indicates that there is no word in Ewe that corresponds to the English word rhythm, and the absence of a single word for rhythm in Ewe suggests that rhythm refers to a binding of different dimensional processes, a joining rather than a separating, and transdimensional rather than a phenomenon existing in one dimension (Agawu, 1997, pp. 5, 73). The Ewe words that come close to describing the English concept of rhythm include uugbe (literally meaning drum language/sound), gagbe (bell or metal sound), gbedidi (sounding voice or sounding language), ga (time, timing, or beat), gafofo (time, bell-beating or bell-ringing), and gaavuu (bell-shaking or bell vibration). The phenomenon conceptualized as rhythm pervades all aspects of Africans’ life: their heartbeat, speech, walking, running, working, playing, love-making, praying, snoring, breathing, writing, typing, etc. It further manifests in the sounds of various environmental features and creatures such as wind, rainfall, lightning, and thunder; of neighboring creatures such as birds and animals; and of visible and invisible objects or beings (see also Agawu, 1997, pp. 5, 73). These rhythms are mediated by various performers such as dancers, singers, and clappers, and are further articulated by the drummers and other instrumentalists.

The polyrhythmic structure of African music and dance is composed of steady and variable sounds. The steady rhythmic sounds are produced on the supporting instruments such as stick clappers, bells, rattles and other supporting drums of contrasting pitches. These rhythms are composed of relatively shorter instrumental patterns, ranging from one to about twelve beats. The steady rhythms or patterns may vary slightly over time through constant performance (hence, the existence of some alternative or complementary patterns). The varied instrumental sounds or rhythmic patterns are produced on the supporting drums, such as kidi and sogo (which usually form the chorus), or on gboba, atimevui, or uuga lead drums. These instrumental sounds are composed of relatively longer durational patterns that may range from a small number of beats to over a hundred beats, and may be subdivided into phrases. Both the fixed and variable sounds and rhythms may exhibit two to seven or more sub-divisions or phrases.

In integrated Ewe music and dance performances, the ga, gakogui, or atoke bell maintains the timing and reference points for the various instrumentalists, singers, and dancers. Most of the traditional Ewe bell patterns are usually composed of uneven or asymmetrical beats of relatively shorter durational patterns, ranging from three to seven visible beats. The common bell pattern that features in most Southern Ewe performances such as agbadzà, adzida, agbekɔ, nyayito, and sectional structures of adzogbo and kinka is comprised of seven vis-
ible recurring beats, which are verbalized, \((\text{tin})\) \(ko-ko-ko-ko-koti\), or \((\text{tin})\) \(go-go.go-go-go.goti\). This is usually conceptualized as \(12/8\) in Western musical notation. The player of the bell usually starts on the lower bell and continues on the upper bell: he may return to the lower bell occasionally or at the end of the performance. Many drummers in the Ewe traditional setting conceptualize the downbeat as a resting point and the main point of reference in the performance. Some also express a cyclical feel towards this bell pattern, manifested through its interaction with other performance components. The cyclical conception of events is also reflected in the Ewe’s religious concepts or worldview: their general conception of time, of the movement of the celestial objects of the universe, of the year, of communal gatherings, and of the spatial organization of music and dance. The uneven or asymmetrical bell patterns may also reflect the Ewe’s desire for contrast in music-making and their conception of inequality in human society. An Ewe proverb states, “Asibidewo kata meso o,” meaning all the fingers are not equal.

Despite the cyclical feel of the seven-beat bell pattern, traditional Ewe performers usually consider its downbeat as the last beat (although to a Western ear, this may sound like the first beat). Traditional Ewe musicians usually conceptualize the bell pattern as a language; when asked to count the beats of the bell pattern, an Ewe drummer would begin from the beat that occurs after the downbeat and count in phrases such as \((\text{tin})\) \(go-go.go-go.go-goti\) “1, 2 3, 1, 2, 3 4,” to highlight the phrases, and uneven and even distribution of the beats of the bell pattern and the downbeat’s ending.

Apart from the seven-beat gankogui bell pattern, there are other patterns that seem to have derived from this older pattern. They include the three-beat husago pattern pronounced, \(koko ko\); the three-beat sohu bell pattern, pronounced \(ko-ko-ko\) and the three-beat adzogbo-atsyia pattern, pronounced \(titin.go\), all of which may be conceptualized as simple or duple meters in Western musical notation. Other bell patterns include the female adzogbo-kadodo pattern (pronounced \(titin.-titin-go\)), and the five-beat of dunekpoe (pronounced, \(ko-ko-ko — ko.ko\)), which may also be conceptualized as \(12/8\) time.

The gahu and kinka feature a five-beat bell pattern, pronounced \((\text{tin})\) \(ko-ko-ko-ko(tin)\). while the youths’ gota exhibits a six-beat visible pattern, verbalized as \(kokokoko-ko\) (which establishes a feel of Western \(4/4\) pattern). The adaavu bell pattern establishes a steady three-beat pattern, \(tin-ko-ko\) (usually conceptualized as \(6/8\) or \(3/4\) in Western musical notation). Further examples can be cited but these are enough to clarify my point. The bracketed beat that precedes or ends some of the bell patterns is the recurrent downbeat and the resting point.

Apart from the main point of reference (the downbeat), the various instruments may have specific points of entering into the performance. For ex-
ample, a given instrument may take off, or end on a particular beat, after a beat, or during an interval between two beats, thereby creating accents, syncopation, or dialogue with other instruments, and interlining or augmenting certain beats or phrases in the performance. Players of the relatively steady instrumental patterns also establish clear points of entry, accentuation, syncopation, ornamentation, and ending. For example, the rattle may take off on the downbeat or on the beat after the downbeat, and interweave with the bell pattern to add pitch coloring to the performance. The *misego* or *husago* rattle would take off on the last or first beat of the bell and play the same pattern played by the bell. *Kagan*, the smallest drum, may take off immediately after the downbeat of the *agbadza* bell, or it may accentuate the second and third beats on the bell, and keep a steady cross-rhythm throughout the performance. The *kidi*, *sogo* and *atimevu* drums also have their specific points of entry, dialogue, improvisation or ornamentation, and ending. There are alternative ways of entering the performance based on stylistic conventions, performance context, and cultural values. For example, the *kagan* or *kidi* may play one or two extra beats before establishing their patterns when they are signaled to begin simultaneously with other instruments. Also, because of the dialogic nature of the music, the reference points for a supporting *kidi* and/or *sogo* instrumental patterns may be determined by the rhythms played by the lead drummer, or the patterns that precede them. All these require knowledge of the performance structure, concentration, and the ability to communicate effectively during the performance. The organizing principles of African instrumental music composition and performance have been established by tradition. A radical deviation from these principles may be considered off beat, discordant, or lacking mastery or knowledge of the performance.

### 5.11 Intensity/Dynamics

Intensity or dynamics refers to the high or loud and low or soft moments in the instrumental performance. The intensity of Ewe instrumental performance is caused by the materials used in constructing the instruments, the size and shape of the instruments, the positioning of the instruments and their timbre, the performance techniques, performer's mood, motivation, skill and style; strength and energy exerted by the performer, and the interaction between the various performance components. In general, the larger *atimevu* produces varied, dense, and reverberating sounds, which contrast with the sounds of the closed-ended *sogo* and *kidi*. The relatively slim *atimevu* of *agbekɔ* and *gadzo* produce relatively higher and taunting sounds compared to the
sounds of the larger and taller atime\textnu used in some adzida and nyayito ensembles. The leaning of atime\textnu on uudetsi (drum stand) enables it to resonate properly.

The use of relatively thin antelope skins in making atime\textnu, sogo and kidi drum heads enables them to produce the desired pleasing timbre. The relatively thicker membranes of nyayito, atompani, and vu\textg lead drums enable them to produce distinct low tonal sounds. The placing of ego, (semi-hemispherical gourd vessel drums) upside-down on water enables them to produce distinct rounded sounds. The intensity of Ewe music and dance is further achieved through the practice of two or three drummers playing in unison at certain stages of the performance or throughout the entire performance. The interaction between low or soft and high or loud instrumental and vocal sounds, human movements, and visual imagery at various tempi contribute to the intensity or dynamics of a performance.

5.12 Ewe Instrumental/Rhythmic

Tempo and Sociocultural Values

The tempi of Ewe performances form a basis for meaning-making. Generally, a steady tempo underlies the various performances due to the desire for stability, order, balance, and continuity. However, some performances begin with a steady tempo and accelerate. Other performances feature a variety of tempi in their overall structure. For example, many processional sections of performances exhibit relatively slower tempi. The music and dance forms such as, atsyia, ad\textgbo, agbeko, and gadzo combine slow, medium, and fast tempi in their overall structure.

Judging from the empirical data that I collected at A\textl\textgga in September 1997, the elderly male gakpa and nyayito performances exhibit some of the slowest tempi, which may be due to the age, taste, and preference of the performers. The relatively slow misego tempo is often attributed to sadness or lamentation. The relatively faster tempi of atrikpui and kpe\textsu are influenced by the values cherished in the military field.

In this contemporary era, the continuing re-creation of traditional Ewe performances, the technological mediation in the creative process, the presentation of some of these traditional music and dance forms in the theater for a limited period, the level of competition among performers, and the increasing pace of modern life are leading to an increase in the various tempi. As a result, performances which were originally considered very fast may now be perceived as relatively slow. These phenomena render it problematic to determine the meaning of such performances on the basis of their tempi. Nevertheless, some
cultural meaning can still be deduced from these tempi, and these observations provide a basis for further creativity, performance, and research.

5.13 The Interaction between Ewe Language and Other Performance Components

The Ewe, like other African groups, communicate their contextual values through integrating language, instrumental sounds, songs, and movements. The following examples highlight the interaction between the Ewe instrumental patterns, songs, and the spoken language. They are drawn from the works of previous researchers such as David Locke, Godwin Agbeli, and A. M. Jones, and from my own performance practices and field research.

Atimevu, Lead Drum, Hand- and Stick-Drumming Syllables

Ga: a bouncing stroke with a relaxed palm at the center of the drum head.
Gi: a bouncing stroke with the fingers at the edge of the drum head.
De: a bouncing stroke with the stick at the center of the drum head
Dzi: a pressed stroke with the fingers at the edge of the drum head.
Tsi: a pressed stroke with a stick at the center of the drum head.
To: a pressed stroke with a stick at the center of the drum head while at the same time pressing the skin with the other hand.
Kpa: simultaneous bouncing strokes with the sticks on the side of the drum.
Dza: the simultaneous sounding of ga and kpa.
Kre: de followed by gi.
Vle: ga followed by de.
Vlo: playing gi and de in very rapid succession.

Thus, combinations of these sounds, such as gidon torebe dza; to rebe gide, toto dzadza-dzadza-dzadza, kren-to kren-totega; vlo-vlo tevotega; and tegidegide toto kideto toto ga hrebe tega toto, gase gide gitogi, may be heard in the atimevu patterns.

Gboba, Hand-Drumming Syllables

Gbo: a bouncing stroke with relaxed hand at the center of the drum head.
Kpo: a bouncing stroke performed with pressed hand at the center of the drum head.
Do: a bouncing stroke with the hand at the center of the drum head (usually proceeding gbo).

Go: a bouncing stroke with relaxed hand at the mid-edge of the drum head (usually proceeding kpo or gbo).

Ge: a bouncing stroke with relaxed hand at the edge of the drum head.

Hin: a slightly pressed stroke at the edge of the drum head.

Gin: a slightly pressed stroke at the center of the drum head (usually proceeding hin).

De/be/le: a slight slap at the edge of the drum head.

Tsya: a sharp slap performed with a slanted hand (involving the use of three or four fingers) at the edge of the drum head.

A combination of these syllables may form phrases such as gbodo gbo higin; gbodogbodogbodo higin, gedegede gbodo gbo gbodo.

Sogo, Hand-Drumming Syllables

Ga: a bouncing stroke at the center of the drum head.

Gin: a pressed stroke at the edge of the drum head.

Te/ge/de: a bouncing stroke at the edge of the drum head.

Gi/Gbo: a pressed stroke at the edge of the drum head.

Te/To: a bouncing stroke at the edge of the drum head (usually proceeding gbo).

Gba: a slightly pressed stroke at the center of the drum head.

Da: a slightly pressed stroke at the center of the drum head (usually proceeding gba).

Tsya: a slap with a slanted hand at the edge of the drum head.

A combination of these syllables may be heard in phrases such as ga gite, ga.ga.te, gakrebe gahrebe ga.ga.te; gitegite gada gada; gbotoboto gbadagbada, gidegada gide gada gite gada; gbodogbada gboto gbada; zete gede zete gede tehigin; gatsya gatsya gatsya gatsya, etc.

Sogo, Stick-Drumming Syllables

Te: a bouncing stroke with the stick at the center of the drum head.

Ge/de/ke: an alternate bouncing stroke at the center of the drum head.

Kre: close bouncing strokes at the center of the drum head.

Ki/Kri: (a) pressed single or double stroke(s) at the center of the drum head.

Tsii: the ki followed by another pressed stroke at the center of the drum head.

Sh/yi: a (muted) pressed stroke at the center of the drum head.
Thus, a combination of these syllables may form phrases such as *tegedegesh kresh kre kitsikitsi, tegeden, krekitsikitsiki kresh kededegesh krekitsikitsiki*.

**Kidi, Stick-Drumming Syllables**

*Kidi* shares the same syllables with *sogo* but with some differences in phonetics.

- **Ki**: a bouncing stroke performed at the center of the drum head.
- **Di**: the *ki* followed immediately by a bouncing stroke.
- **Ti/gi**: slightly pressed strokes performed by alternate hands at the center of the drum head.
- **Tsi**: a pressed stroke with the sticks at the center of the drum head (usually proceeding *ki*).
- **Kri**: closed bouncing strokes.
- **Sh**: close muted/pressed strokes performed immediately after *kri*.

A combination of these syllables may be heard in phrases such as *kidikitsikitsi, kidi kitsikitsi, kidigidi shkrishkrikitsikitsi, tigidin*.

**Kagan, Stick-Drumming Syllables**

*Ka*: a bouncing stroke at the center of the drum head.

- **Ga/da**: the *ka* followed by a bouncing stroke at the center of the drum head.
- **Kre/gre/gra**: close bouncing strokes performed at the center of the drum head.
- **Ke/te/de**: a bouncing stroke performed at the center of the drum head.
- **ŋu**: a pressed/muted stroke at the center of the drum head.
- **Ta/to**: a pressed stroke at the center of the drum head while at the same time pressing the membrane with the other stick.

A combination of syllables may be heard in phrases such as *kagan kagan, kren kedege, kadagra, teden-ta, teden-to*.

**Kroboto, Stick-Drumming Syllables**

*To/te*: a low bouncing stroke with a stick at the center of the drum head.

- **Gi/dzi**: a pressed stroke with a stick at the center of the drum head.
- **Re**: rapid bouncing strokes with the sticks at the center of the drum head.
- **Gre/kre/kro**: close bouncing strokes with the sticks at the center or the edge of the drum head.
- **Ge/de/be**: a moderate bouncing stroke with the stick at the center or the edge of the drum head usually with relaxed elbows.
A combination of these syllables may be heard in phrases such as toto-gin..gin..gin, tegitegidegi; tegikrebegi (in agbekɔ), or regedegedege-tegi, gi tegi tegi tegi (in kpegisu).

**Axatse/akaye, Rattle-, Fist-, Hand-, Palm-, and Thigh-Playing Syllables**

*Tsya:* a high-pitch sound produced by a regulated shaking of the rattle in the air, or by tapping it on the thigh, or against the palm or the lower arm.

*Ku:* a high-pitch sound produced by hitting the rattle against the palm or fixed hand (in an upward motion).

**Bell-Pattern Syllables**

*Tin:* a high-pitch sound produced by hitting the lower bell.

*Ko/go/ke/ka:* a relatively higher-pitch sound produced by hitting the upper gakogui or atoke bell.

*Krey:* close sounds produced by hitting the atoke bell (rapidly two times) with a small metal rod at a slanted angle.

A combination of the bell syllables may form phrases such as tin ko.ko-ko, tin-ko-ko-ko-.ko-.koti, titin.go, tin-ko-ko-.-, ke kren ke kren, etc.

**Uukpa/Uukɔgo, Drum-Wood/Side and Clappers Syllables**

*Ka:* a stroke on the side of the drum wood.

*Kpa:* simultaneous strokes produced on the side of the drum wood or by hitting one clapper against the other.

*Kpla:* close strokes on the side of the drum wood.

*Tu:* the ka followed by another stroke produced on the side of the drum or by hitting two clappers together.

Thus, a combination of syllables may form phrases such as, ka..ka..ka..ka..kpa katuka. kpa..kpa..kpa.kpa.kpa.kpa, and may be heard in Ewe performances.

The above instrumental rhythmic syllables have been derived from a long period of performance practices. They are shaped by the size of the instrument, tuning, performance techniques, tempo, performance structure and the Ewe linguistic structure and concepts. For example, the alternation of the weaker and stronger hand, the interaction between language and instrumen-
tal sounds, and individual idiosyncrasies all influence the expression of the instrumental sounds on a verbal basis. Variations within the performance through the use of various techniques, ornamentation, improvisation, and various dynamic ranges also lead to the emergence of syllables such as *te*, *re*, *be*, *ze*, and *nya*. For example, a slight pressing of the drum skin with the hand just before a bouncing stroke may be pronounced *te* while a slight finger touching of the edge of the drum skin before a bouncing stroke at the center of the drum skin may be pronounced *ze* instead of *de* or *te*, and the *gadegide*, when played at faster tempo, would be expressed *gahlebe*, or *gahrebe*. The acceleration of the tempi of some performances also leads to the existence of “r” sounds, especially in some youths’ performances.

During my interview with the elementary and secondary school students at *Aŋloga* and *Keta* (November 1997), I observed that some students usually confuse sounds such as *ga* with *gba*, *te* with *de*, and *gbo* with *kpo*. This confusion is partly due to the mode of tuning the instruments (or variations within the tuning process). Others with drumming or performance backgrounds have less difficulty expressing these syllables. The rendition by Foli Adade, a master drummer of the Ghana Dance Ensemble, mostly conforms to the previous research conducted by Godwin Agbeli, David Locke, A. M. Jones, and myself.

### 5.14 A Guide for Expressing Ewe Instrumental Rhythms

From the above analysis, a guide for understanding the Ewe drum syllables can be provided. Syllables that fall within the low tonal range include, *ga*, *da*, *gba*, *go*, *do*, *gba*, and *nya*. Those that fall within the mid tonal range include *de*, *gre*, *kre*, *be*, *te*, *ge*, *re*, *hin*, *gin*, *vle*, *vlo*, etc. Others, that fall within the high tonal range, include, *ka*, *ko*, *kre*, *ki*, *kri*, *kpa*, *kpla*, *ta*, *tu to*, *tin*, *din*, *dzi*, *tsi*. Syllables that dominate hand-drumming include, *ga*, *da*, *gba* *gba*, *kpo*, *hre*, *be*, *hin*, *gin*, *tsya*. Syllables that dominate stick-drumming include, *de*, *ge*, *te*, *kre*, *re*, *ka*, *ko*, *ki*, *di*, *to*.

Syllables that sustain the instrumental patterns/rhythms include *dinn*, *taaa*, *deen...*, *gbooo*, *hin*, *gin*. Other syllables, such as *shi*, *kitsi*, *n*, and *nya*, may mute or punctuate the drumming and serve as harmonic devices. Any syllable, such as *ga*, *de*, *te*, *to*, *dza*, *gblo*, or *tsya*, may end the overall performance. I have already indicated the variations which are due to the interaction between the performance sounds and process, language, and individual idiosyncrasies. However, the above analysis provides a guide to understanding the linguistic basis of Ewe instrumental music and serves as a basis for cross-cultural education and research.
5.15 Linguistic Meaning in Ewe Drumming

The following excerpts are drawn from the Ewe contextual performances. They are usually performed in a dialogic mode through call and response, interlining, in chorus or through drumming, speech, and song surrogate.

Excerpts from the Youth gota Lead Drum Text

1. Lead drum: Gazegitetegi Gazegitete gigiga.
   Ewe: Dadagbɔgbɔge dada gbɔgbɔge namea.
   English: Mother will return, mother will return to me.

2. Lead drum: Gadegegidegi-to.te.ga gi.gin.
   Ewe: Mekae ladu gota wumea zɔ va.
   English: Who will dance gota and surpass me? Come forward.

Excerpt from Adults gohu lead Drum Text

1. Lead drum: Gadegren tento krebekrebe gadegren tento.
   Ewe: Gbanake tatɔ krebekrebe, Gbanake tatɔ.
   English: Gbanake is our leader krebekrebe Gbanake is our leader.

   The above text is played by two or three master drummers in unison to announce the presence of a leader. The word tatɔ literally means head owner and refers to a leader in this context.

2. Lead drum call: Tototo krebe gide gazento.
   Chorus response in Ewe: Tsielele Dzigba lemo dzi gbo na.
   Mega megawo va so di koto
   Tsielele Dzigba le mɔ dzi gbo na.
   English: Tsielele Dzigba is on the way approaching.
   The elders have gathered, tsielo Dzigba is on the way approaching.

   The above text is played by two or three master drummers in unison to express the gathering of the leaders of the group at the height of the performance (this moment is marked by the carrying of sculptured figures representing cultural heroes and heroines into the performance circle).
3.
Lead drum: \textit{Gadegidegi te-gren-to-dzadzidzadzi-dzadidzidzidzadzi.}
Chorus: \textit{Tugbedzevi kpoppluiza, Gavi le tome Gaviwwo le tome.}
English: A beautiful stout girl with little earrings in the ears, sparkling little earrings in the ears.

The above text may be played by two or three master drummers in unison with the appropriate response from the supporting sogo and kidi drums, and the chorus to communicate some of the Ewe aesthetic values.

4.
Lead drum: \textit{Ga.hrebe.giten gindza.dza}
Ewe: \textit{Kpo gbale dzie Kundo la zo.}
Chorus response: \textit{Dzawuto be mele tsgbuiwo fe zikpua dzi}
\hspace{1cm} \textit{Wobe amead e lax miawo sre le Wokedi, adzeso so soe}
\hspace{1cm} \textit{Nextowo we mua Kundo wo ame le Wokedi}
\hspace{1cm} \textit{Meawo nada Kpe ne Miano sesie.}

English: 
Ga.hrebe.giten gindza.dza
Kundo will walk on leopard skin
Dzawuto says he is on the ancestral stool
They say who will take our wife/husband at Wokedi
It is all lie, lie, lie.
The Anexo people have done it
Hence Kundo murdered at Wokedi.
People should give thanks for good health.

The above text (which is played by two or three master drummers in unison, and in dialogue with the chorus) expresses the violation of the Ewe social ethics by an anonymous citizen of Anexo, and his murder by the legendary Kundo (also known as Gbehanzi) during the late 19th century, and people’s desire for order and good health in the community or state. This episode echoes through another gohu song, which states:

\textit{Amesroxxla mado agbe na}
\textit{Ayeee ee Kundo wu ame le Anexo}
\textit{Amesroxxla mado agbe na}
\textit{Gawoe melo o Kundo wu ame le Anexo}

Meaning
He who takes another person’s wife/husband
His/her life cannot be remodelled,
Yes, oh yes Kundo murdered at Anexɔ.
He who takes another person’s wife/husband
The citizens have disagreed hence Kundo murdered at Anexɔ.

**Excerpts from Agbekɔ**

1. Lead drum: *Gide gadin dzadza.dza-dza. Dzadzadzadza-dza gide gadin ...*
   Ewe: *Mibla godzi koko ko ko kokokoko ko mibla godzi ...*
   English: Gird up your loins surely gird up your loins.

   The above excerpt refers to alertness or readiness of the performers, a value cherished by the Ewe.

2. Lead drum: *Tototogarebede totede*
   English: Firing party all the arms reversed.
   Drum text: *Garebe garebede totede*
   English: Seven-gunshot salute ready

   The text above reflects the influence of the English language in the Ewe performance.

**Excerpt from Adzogbo**

Lead drum: *dzadza dzadza dzadza dzadza gadegi tegi krebe gi gitsi kide gin gitsi kre gidegidega zegitegi krebegi*
Ewe: *Dzadza dzadza dzadzadza dzadza avolu koe le ko na mi Minye avolu vuto minya avolu hasino, avolu koe le ko na mi*
English: *Dzadza dzadza dzadza dzadza it is only tribute that lies on our neck*

   We pay tribute to the drummer and composer/cantor it is only tribute that lies on our neck.

**Excerpt from the Elders’ Nyayito Text**

1. Lead drum: *Gazedegede.*
   Chorus in Ewe: *Kpe nasa kpe na kpeto*
   English: Claps should equate the claps for the clapper.

   The text above expresses the desire for precision in clapping/performance.
2. Lead drum: Gito krekre  
Ewe: Ado agoglo  
Supporting drum response: kidin. kidin.  
Ewe: Toğbuin ye toğbuin ye  
English: You would perform vigorously  
My grandfather my grandfather

The text above was a comment made by drummers on the vigorous manner in which an elderly man dances, despite his age.

Chorus in Ewe: Gbası nagba gble Godi vuvu nado.  
English: Refuse to trade refuse to farm you will wear worn-out clothes.

The above text cautions the participants of Ewe music and dance to balance their performance with hard work to enable them to afford their basic necessities.

In this contemporary era, the emergence of new generations, new modes of communication, the interaction between local and foreign languages, and the limitations posed by social ethics (censorship) hamper the use of the Ewe drum/music/language as an effective medium of communication. These phenomena contribute to the loss of many of the drum texts. Despite the contemporary challenges, the drum texts constitute a basis for meaning-making and may serve as a cognitive tool in African music and dance education as well as inspire further creativity.

5.16 Ewe Dance Elements: The Predominant Elements in Ewe Dances

A predominant movement in Ewe dances is yedudu, which is characterized by contraction and release of the upper torso in relation to the downward and upward movement of the feet and hands (in opposition), involving slight widening and narrowing of the shoulder blades. In yedudu, the upper torso inclines slightly forward and the feet are placed flat on the ground and legs are flexed at the knee, with the weight of the body pulled downward by gravity. The arms are flexed at the elbow and are placed by the sides of the torso (with the hands scooped downward or flattened). The entire body is relaxed and the movement is performed in a free flow. The timing of the movement varies
from one performance to another and the movement may be performed leisurely or faster, highlighting a steady four beats in a bell phrase. Space is collectively shared in most Ewe performances and \textit{yedudu} may be performed by two, three, or four dancers who establish a kinesphere in a horizontal spatial pattern (or line), and perform the movement in place. The dancers may travel (with the steady four steps in a bell cycle) slowly forward while interacting with other participants. The \textit{yedudu} may be performed by four or more small groups of dancers at the same time in a performance setting. \textit{yedudu} is usually preceded by \textit{ayehudada}, an introductory or rounding-off movement characterized by a free shifting of the pelvis sideways. \textit{Ayehudada} is usually followed by \textit{yekoko}, a downward movement of both hands (at near reach) in front of the body (in the sagittal plane) to round off the main movement.

\textit{Hamekoko}, another movement in Ewe dance, is usually performed with a horse-tail during \textit{hatsyiatsyia} (the interval between the drumming, singing, and dancing sections), to dramatize the main (lengthy) songs. \textit{Hamekoko} features a series of movements that express the main ideas or themes in the songs and may involve singing while pointing the forefinger upward and down to the earth, waving the hands forward in the sagittal plane, and flipping the hands toward near reach in the sagittal plane. Other movements in \textit{hamekoko} include crossing the hands across the chest or over the shoulders, swinging or swaying the horsetail forward or sideways, smiling, maintaining a serious or sad look, etc. \textit{Hamekoko} varies in relation to the performance themes and is usually performed in place at near or intermediate reach. Some \textit{hamekoko} movements may be performed at far reach in relation to the themes they express. During \textit{hamekoko}, the cantors may move rhythmically or slowly from one location to the other in the performance circle or setting.

The movements in Ewe ceremonial dances include \textit{aseyetsotsotso} or \textit{ayefufu}, quick, free flowing rhythmic movement of the whole body which highlights foot-stamping, locomotive movements, backward and forward, and hand gestures. \textit{Aseyetsotsos} or \textit{ayefufu} is usually performed by female praise singers to dramatize Ewe sociopolitical values. This involves the raising of leaves upward and downward in praise of political leaders, running forward and backward, and shooting imaginary or real guns in the air. \textit{Agogbagba} is another movement that features in the traditional Ewe political system. \textit{Agogbagba} is a gorgeous and sustained walk forward in a linear spatial pattern, marked by a slight hold on each step. This movement crystallizes indulgence, ostentation, and grace. \textit{Akogbagba}, a combination of clapping and chest-beating simultaneously with quick steps and free rhythmic body movement in a counterclockwise motion, features in \textit{gohu}. Individual variations in Ewe dances may be regarded as \textit{atsyia} or styles provided they do not radically deviate from the norms.
Generally, Ewe dances combine the basic contraction and release of the torso with slow and quick, intricate footsteps, sliding or dragging, strutting, shuffling, sideways gestures and arcing of the feet, fluid shifting or rippling of the hips sideways along with widening and narrowing of the arms, as well as hand gestures, slashes, carving, leaps, and hops, in and at various tempi, levels, directions, and dynamic ranges. The Ewe dances also feature symbolic, acrobatic, and gymnastic movements to communicate the contextual themes.

Movements in Ewe dances crystallize sharpness, strength, agility, slowness, grace, directness, free flow, and sporadic bound flow. However, many Ewe movements are not usually performed with much strength. As noted by Nketia, superficially the movements may appear to the onlooker to demand a great deal of physical effort, but this is sometimes an illusion created by the quality and speed of the movement (Nketia, 1974, p. 210). Percussive movements are predominant in Ewe dances. The tempi of movements range from relatively slow to medium to fast. Ewe movements are usually initiated simultaneously or in sequence, involving the use of the core or torso, mid-limb or feet, arms, shoulders, head, and eyes. Some of the movements are initiated sequentially, involving a hand reaching forward and grasping, followed by a slash with the other hand, marked by steps and turns (as may be observed in agbekɔ).

The communal sharing of space applies to all Ewe dances and a dancer may establish a kinesphere in relation to co-participants and utilize space within his or her near reach or intermediate reach. Some punching or slashing movements may be performed at far reach in dances such as adzogbo and agbekɔ. During processional sections, group of musicians and dancers utilize a lengthy space, about two or three kilometres from the beginning of the procession to the performance setting. Performers of adzogbo dance may be ushered from a place about fifty or hundred meters away to the dance arena. A solo Ewe dancer may utilize relatively wider space within the main setting. The Ewe emphasize volume or mass in dance, which is generally related to their curved body shape and downward orientation in dance. Opoku notes, “Like our sculptures, we express not the lines, but volume-mass in dance so that when the movement comes to a rest, we observe a ‘path’ created by a whirl-wind, strong, virile and powerful” (Opoku, as cited in the Ghana Dance Ensemble Profile, 1965, p. 19). The downward orientation in dance is related to Africans’ sociopolitical and economic values: their humility or down-to-earth nature, obedience to the Supreme Being, divinities, ancestors and the elders, and the postures assumed in some of their daily activities. The Ewe dances also feature circular and semicircular movements which exemplify their communalism, religious beliefs, and conception
of the life cycle events, as well as their desire for continuity, stability, balance, and order, as indicated by symmetrical dance movements. The linear spatial pattern also crystallizes aspects of the Ewe architecture, military formation, and desire for order and balance. Zigzag and undulating dance movements that sporadically manifest in Ewe dances such as *adzogbo*, *sohu*, *adavu* and *husago*, may represent the dancers’ expression of confusion, anxiety and conflict. The undulating movements may also be observed in the paddling done by those in the fishing profession.

Generally, the male movements are considered to be more vigorous and sharper as they are influenced by their physical activities, such as farming, fishing, and hunting. On the contrary, the female dance movements are considered to be less vigorous and more graceful, and reflect their daily activities, experiences, and nature. The female dancers also exhibit quick and flowing movement of various parts of their bodies. In some religious music and dance performances, women who get possessed by God or divinities would execute extraordinary movements, which are more vigorous than some of the male movements. Further, some women may execute the basic movements more vigorously than some men in some social contexts. As Nketia (1974) points out, departure from the usual forms or norms may be intentional when one wants to be comic or convey a specific impression (Nketia, 1974, p. 210). The differences in individual and group movement dynamics also depend upon physique, skills, the duration of the performance, the level of participation and purposeful intent to compete with or outdo others in the performance. Recently, women have been participating in performances that were originally performed by men and the distinction between the male and female movement qualities and dynamics continues to blur. However, gender differences still occur in particular contexts. Gender differences create contrast and harmony and enrich African performing arts.

### 5.17 Elements of Specific Ewe Dance Forms

The Ewe contraction and releasing dance movement usually features in the mainstream *agbadza*, *misego*, *atrikpui*, *kpegisu*, *adzida*, *gakpa*, *gohu*, *dunekpoe*, *kinka*, *atyiagbeko*, *atsyia*, *adzogbo*, *gahu*, *gota*, and in some contemporary dances. *Ayehudada* usually precedes or rounds off the basic Ewe movement, and features during *hatsyiatsyia*, the main chorus session. *Ayehudada* also features in the processional sessions of *kinka* and *dunekpoe*, *adavu* and *sohu* dances. The various contextual music and dance performances exhibit other movements and variations that are analyzed below.
Gota Movements

Gota dance dramatizes Ewe youths’ activities or experiences, such as socialization, games, domestic chores, love themes, anger, and competition, as well as tolerance and respect for parents and colleagues. The basic gota movement is characterized by quick backward and forward movement of the right foot simultaneously with both hands moving from sideways to forward. In this movement, the right foot performs a slight releve and moves from back to its original spot or forward. The dancers may reach both hands parallel, slightly above their heads, to mime the carriage of a load; they may rub their fists toward the floor in a relaxed-knee position in the sagittal plane to indicate washing, and twist both hands (in which they hold pieces of cloth) towards one another in front of the body in the sagittal plane to indicate rinsing. The dancers may hold pieces of cloth with both hands and move the arms and upper torso around (in place) from a low level to a higher level and back to place, to serve as a transition to other movements. They may mime the shaking and drying of clothes, bathing, playing with water, and combing hair.

Other movements include the dancers’ raising of their lower right arms slightly above their shoulders in front of the body in the sagittal plane, or quick rolling of the forefingers counterclockwise (in the horizontal plane) to signal their partners to turn. The dancers may flip their hands/fingers toward near reach to indicate an invitation of their partners to dance with them. The dancers may pose, placing the backs of both hands on the waist or crossing both hands on the shoulders (with a sad facial expression) to express disappointment and sadness. They may depict compassion, love, joy, agreement, and consolation to their partners by running toward them and embracing them. The youth may express anger or teasing by suddenly holding their partners back. In addition, they may express victory by raising their fists or arms intermittently. The dancers may execute the basic Ewe (yedudu) dance movement and punctuate it with a sudden freeze, and then begin another round of dancing. A combination of the basic Ewe movement with hops and quick hand waves may be performed to the lead drum rhythm, gadegide (gaghrebe) gitotega dzindzin, to indicate the dancers’ invitation of peers to dance (or compete) with them, or to signal the dancers’ exit from the dancing ring. The gota movements further highlight solos, duos, trios, and small groups within the larger group. The dancers make sufficient use of space and highlight circular, linear, diagonal, vertical, horizontal, and zigzag spatial patterns, as well as quickness and a combination of free and bound flow. The above analysis is based on my observation of gota groups in the Volta, Greater Accra, and the Eastern regions of Ghana.
Gahu/Oleke Movements

The striking features of gahu/olenke dance are the slight inclination of the upper torso forward in relaxed knees position, combined with the positioning of the arms (slightly flexed at the elbows) in front of the body, which creates a unique shape in the sagittal plane; the forward double sliding or dragging feet movement performed on each foot; and the free flowing dance movement qualities. Gahu/olenke dance highlights a multiple system of movement, involving the movement of the torso, hips, and limbs at the same time. Each movement is rounded off by both hands waving upward to the rhythm (dza-dza-dza-dza.tege.dege or to-to-to- to.to tege.dege) provided by the lead drummer.

In gahu, two partners facing each other dance, moving their right hands and feet simultaneously from outward (sideways right) to inward, towards the front of the body (in the sagittal plane), followed by the execution of the basic Ewe dance movement (ɣedudu) and gesturing with the right or left leg and hand simultaneously to the lead drum rhythm (...gide.gidega). Other movements include the placing of arms flexed at the elbows against the waist and moving them (quickly) downward while sliding or dragging each foot two times forward. A combination of the basic foot-sliding or dragging, quick and free shifting of the hips, playful hand-tapping on partners’ hips, and outward sideways (right) gesture of the right hand (in the sagittal plane) may be performed with cheerful facial expressions. The dancers may shake hands (at low or middle levels) to depict greetings and unity or they may march, run, or move around counterclockwise while flipping their hands upward and suddenly resting on a knee of their peers while establishing eye contact as they move along.

Boɔɔboɔ Movements

The predominant features of boɔɔboɔ include the use of handkerchiefs (particularly) by the female dancers throughout the dance, the fast rolling of the white handkerchiefs in various directions simultaneously with subtle movement of the hips and stepping forward or in various directions. The dancers may create various designs to exhibit male and female roles/values. For example, boys may stand reaching their arms parallel and forward (with palms facing downward), and dance while moving the arms gently sideways above the female dancers who pose placing their left hand against the left side of their waists, while moving the handkerchiefs held in the right hands at low level outward and inward (from the right side to the front of the bodies). This signifies both boys and girls praising, supporting, and caring for one another.
Boys may raise the female dancers on their knees to stand facing them where they would perform the basic handkerchief-movement at high level towards various directions.

The *bɔbɔɔbɔ* further highlights the grouping of girls in twos, threes and fours, wiping one another’s faces with handkerchiefs and shaking or holding hands at various levels. The dancers may depict cooking through miming and the use of improvised cooking utensils, as well as prayers, greetings, and other social themes. They may sit on the floor and stretch their legs and arms towards the opposite side in a horizontal dimension, followed by a sudden change of direction. A combination of marking time and sharp and sideways shifting of the pelvis as well as other symbolic and representational movements may be performed to the instrumental sounds and songs.

**Tokoe Movements**

The basic movement of *Tokoe* is characterized by flexing of the knees and arms at the elbow joints (to about a third degree), contraction and release of the upper torso, along with stepping a foot forward and backward, marked by hopping forward while opening both hands forward, and repeating the movement on the other foot. The dance is further characterized by placing one fist hand against the chest and reaching the other arm with fist hand forward, and back to the chest (while moving the body rhythmically in place) in relation to specific lead drum rhythms. This movement is repeated with the other hand, followed by the dancers pressing both hands against the chest, and performing the basic contraction and release of the torso while moving downward low and back to place. Each movement is rounded off by the dancers executing the basic *agbadza* movement (characterized by contraction and release of the torso) while turning counter clockwise in place, and marked by opening of both hands forward. Alternatively, the dancers may round off each main movement by bending the upper torso towards the floor and shifting their pelvic or waist area along with the flexed right arm, rhythmically from right to left, and turning counter clockwise, marked by opening both hands forward. The dancers may sink in a kneeling position, and tap their right hand inside the left hand a number of times (while bouncing the body upward and downward), rise and shake the right arm upward, turn towards the opposite direction, and repeat the same movement. They may rub both fist hands towards one another downward and upward, to depict washing. The dancers may hop around in the dance arena, run rhythmically forward, bend their torsos forward, press their hands on their knees, and perform the torso contraction and release, followed by the basic rounding off movement.
Adzogbo Movements

*Adzogbo* utilizes symbolic and representational movements to communicate the contextual values of sacredness and defense. *Atsyia, le, or todzo*, the male version of *adzogbo*, is characterized by the interplay of the basic movements with rapid spinning, turning, leaping, hopping, tapping, twisting, shifting, lifting, kicking, stretching, slashing, somersaulting, bobbing, etc. *Atsyia* also features symbolic and representational movements that suggest praying, allegiance, supplication, combat, confusions, order, movements, and gestures depicting social commentary/criticism, social ethics, beauty, and a display of agility, physique, strength and style. *Kadodo*, the female version of *adzogbo/adzohu*, features the use of a mirror as a prop, graceful arm movements, and calculated rippling of the pelvis to communicate the contextual values.

The preparatory movements in *adzogbo* include outward arcing of the alternate lower legs in a horizontal plane, marked by steps. In this movement, the hands are placed against the waist while the upper torso moves rhythmically. This movement is usually followed by inward to outward strutting of the feet (from almost first to second position) repeatedly, accompanied by flexed arms moving or arcing around the torso (through near reach in both sagittal and horizontal plane). The movement highlights both hands and a leg moving in opposition. In the execution of the basic movement, the upper torso inclines forward, the arms are flexed at the elbow, and the knees are also flexed (to almost a third degree).

Traditional *adzogbo* groups of *f`lawu, Klikɔ, Kedzi, AŋLOGa* and *Woe*, etc., feature acrobatic and gymnastic displays, including a boy dancer carrying two dancers sitting on one another’s shoulders, a boy carrying two dancers on arms stretched sideways, with a third person standing on the shoulders; a multidimensional design created by one dancer carrying another dancer on his neck, while carrying another dancer who crosses his legs around his waist, while the dancer on the neck raises the dancer on the waist by means of putting stretched legs/feet in his arms. This creates a design which, somehow, resembles an airplane. Other designs include two dancers facing one another, each carrying two other dancers standing on their necks, with the fifth dancer climbing through them to stand on the arms of the dancers on top and perform *yedudu*, the basic Ewe movement; boys crossing their legs over their necks with arms reaching outward through the legs and being carried in bowls or on bare heads; boys crossing their feet between the thighs walking on their knees; boys climbing bamboo sticks (rooted in the earth extending between fifteen to twenty feet high) and resting their belly on top or sitting on it while dancing; boys walking on stilts and ropes, or standing on intertwined brooms held at both
ends by two dancers; boys passing under sticks placed on top of two bottles at each end and ablaze with fire; a girl carrying two girls (who crouch) at her back, sideways, etc. Some of the movements, such as the presentation of arm wrestling, boxing, wooden horse leaps and bayonet charges, are influenced by the motifs of the French colonial soldiers.

*Kadodo* features female dancers moving gracefully from side to side in relation to the music and rippling their hips while widening and closing their arms, and is marked by the dropping of the lower arms and torso toward a low level. *Kadodo* also features a sweep or sustained movement of both arms successively around the body (in the horizontal plane), which takes one hand toward the navel, and through near reach and back to one side/back of the body as the other arm moves from the opposite side/back of the body to perform the same movement. This movement is intensified with a repetitive right hand movement from outward (right side) to inward (toward the left) in front of the torso, taking the dancers to a low level and back to place. *Kadodo* also features a combination of slashes, taps, hops, and leaps, replete with turns, twists, and other symbolic and representational motifs at various tempi and various dynamic ranges.

**Agbekɔ Movements**

*Agbekɔ* or *atsyiagbekɔ* reflects the Ewe historical and cultural experiences, such as their travels in search of new place to settle, their sufferings and hardships, their desire for sanctity of life, their occupational and social activities such as farming, fishing, hunting, military or defense, curricular experiences and games as well their display of agility, physique, strength and style. The dance is characterized by symbolic and representational movements, each of which may express ideas and emotions or together may express a theme. The *agbekɔ* movements, songs and instrumental sounds are closely intertwined.

**Agbekɔlɔ: Agbekɔ Procession**

The processional *agbekɔ* features the Ewe *axadzi-axadzi*, a side-to-side trekking movement characterized by the dancers posing in flexed and relaxed knee position and inclining their torsos forward and dancing sideways (in almost 4/4 steady beats) while swaying both arms with horsetails or swords held in the right hands in front of the body (in a horizontal dimension). The *axadzi-axadzi* movement involves the whole body moving sideways in steps in the sagittal, horizontal, and vertical planes, marked by about a quarter-turn to
the side in a parallel foot position and a downward dropping of both arms (which brings the torso to a lower level). This movement is followed by a sudden rise of the upper torso in simultaneity with the front leg and arms gesturing sideways. The dance features four steady steps or three steps and a leg movement sideways in the bell phrase.

Each movement in *agbekɔ* is set to specific rhythms and is marked at intervals with a turn (which some performers refer to as *kpakpo*), designed to round off the theme and lead the dancers to a new movement. In this arrangement, the dancers turn through the left and perform *yedudu* (the basic Ewe dance movement) sideways right-left-right, followed by the left leg and both hands gesturing sideways. There are local and institutional variations of this rounding-off movement. For example, in the School of Performing Arts, dancers who performed *kpakpo* (turning; usually referred to as “the long turning”) would round off every main figure with a turn and perform the basic Ewe *agbadza* movement sideways right-left-right, followed by two additional steps sideways left; and while posing in place, perform an outward (backward right)-inward (left)-outward (backward right) twisting of the right foot simultaneously with inward slashing and outward arcing with horsetail or sword held in the right hand, and spreading to almost second position, followed by raising both arms and the right leg towards the left side, and continuing with the *axadzi-axadzi* side to side movement in the opposite direction.

Other basic movements in processional *agbekɔ* include a combination of forward and backward steps and slashes below the left arm and by the right side of the body in the sagittal and vertical planes. The processional *agbekɔ* also features a series of slashes followed by forward jumps and pointing the handle of the horsetail or sword downward (to the rhythm which begins with *te kide gidegide kide gidegide kide gidegide. giden to.to kren kren*). This is usually accompanied by a song, *Wd’ago, gowoe wod’ ago gowoe*, in the Ajọga Deti *atsyiagbekɔ* group, led by Kwame Yege (in the 1960s and 70s), to signify the dancers’ entry into the arena. The dancers may perform the basic Ewe movement while placing the horsetail on the alternate shoulders repeatedly (with the appropriate facial direction), from middle to low and back to middle level to the instrumental rhythm, which begins with *gadegre to* or *gazegren to*, accompanied by dialogue, *Adzesoo* (or *Adedzo*, as expressed by Emmanuel Agbeli, an instructor at Dagbe Cultural Institute at Denu-Kofeyia, 28th June 1999). This movement signifies the dancers’ challenging of their opponents (or listening to the voice of a divinity of defense, as maintained by Emmanuel Agbeli at Dagbe (June 1999). The dancers may swing/roll the horsetails or swords held in the right hands in a sagittal plane several times, pass them under their
left legs and bring them back to the right hands, move or sink to knee level, and tap the props on the floor (to the rhythm which begins with krebekrebekrebe...gadidegadidega, gide gagidegin gâgide ga gîto, dzzâdzidzzâdzidzadza gîto ...), to indicate their endurance and readiness to defend. They may brush their right feet forward while twisting their lower right arms forward in the sagittal plane (to the rhythm, dzadzin-dzin krebegide dzadzin-dzin) to symbolize expelling of evil or to display a style or show off. The dancers may perform a series of backward hops along with flipping of the hands upward-backward in dialogue, Awe!! Awe!!, or Ayee!! Ayee!! with the lead drum pattern, toto krenkren, to indicate their listening or alertness (see also Blum, 1973, p. 31). They may twist the swords or horsetails held in front of the torso, from right to left continuously (in the sagittal plane) and point their handles to their chests, to express the swearing of an oath. A combination of sideways turns (with slight jumps) and downward side-to-side motioning of the horse-tail or sword, held at the handle and the end with both hands, may be performed as the dancers travel backward and forward (to the rhythm which begins with zegedege te te krebedzadza..or zh kedegezh te te krebegide zkedegesh teten krebe dzadza). The dancers may combine slashing, turning, stamping, clapping, hopping, twisting, shaking, pointing, throwing, rubbing, tapping of props, bouncing, kicking, floor movements, and other movements to communicate contextual values. The overall tempo of the slow agbekɔ is relatively slow compared to the fast version.

The Fast Agbekɔ Version

Agbekɔ tsɔtsoe, the fast agbekɔ, features a unique axadzi-axadzi (sideways movement) characterized by the flexing of the knees and inclination of the upper torso forward. This movement involves a slight plie and rebound of the knees in relation to the motioning of both arms/hands (held sideways) downward. Variants of this movement include side-to-side stepping, accompanied by moving both flexed arms with fists from outward toward the front of the torso (which may result in the fists almost meeting or overlapping). The agbekɔ groups of the School of Performing Arts and the Ghana Dance Ensemble feature a unique upright, sideways movement involving placing the left hand on the torso and pointing the sword/prop held in the right hand sideways while looking sideways towards the direction of the prop.

Another basic movement in agbekɔ is the simultaneous and oppositional backward and forward sliding or gliding of a foot (much like springing from almost first to fourth position and back to the first position) simultaneously with reaching (or pushing) of flexed lower arms to the intermediate reach of
the torso in the sagittal plane and back to place. The fast agbekɔ also features a turn designed to round off each movement and lead to the execution of another movement. It also uses symbolic and representational movements, such as the rolling of the arms successively in the sagittal plane followed by falling sideways on the ground (to the rhythm ... tege tege tege ... nuse nuse nuse..., strength strength strength ...) to depict fitness exercise. The dancers may point the horsetail or sword toward the waist while looking toward it (with the rhythm gide gagin or mibla go dzi ...: gird up your loins ...). This movement is followed by a turn, a series of jumps and slashes (in place) in the sagittal plane, which take the dancers to a low level, to indicate their alertness, defense, and retreat. The quick and free shifting of the pelvis along with the horsetail or sword held by the handle and near the tip with both hands in front of the lower torso, towards sideways right and left, and from middle to low level and back to middle level (to the rhythm which begins with giden gidetega tegide gade, or gito gito gitotega tegide gato: kaleawo ava dzɔ vo mitso ne miadzo: gallants war has begun get up and go), depicts the sharpening of the machete in readiness for defense. A combination of quick rolling of the prop and placing its handle on a fist hand (in the sagittal plane), followed by forward-diagonal kicks, depicts attack. A series of sideways slashes while stepping backward simultaneously indicates clearing of the field and retreat. The sideways steps and quarter turns performed counterclockwise while slashing upward above the left arm with a sword or horsetail held in the right hand, followed by the rolling of the sword or the tail (in the sagittal plane) and stepping and spreading the arms (slightly flexed at the elbows) towards the opposite direction, and marked by dropping the body and arms and moving quickly backward in low position (in the sagittal plane), suggests predicaments and freedom and serves as a unique style. A combination of quick knee kicks with the horsetail or sword held with both hands forward in the sagittal plane and in various directions suggests horse riding or a chase. The dancers may pose in place and perform the basic Ewe dance movement while tapping one foot from outward (sideways) to inward or in front of the body a number of times, and then raise their arms while opening the hands in the vertical dimension to indicate victory. They may cross both arms over the chest and shoulders and move in place rhythmically while dropping their heads from side to side (accompanied by a sad facial expression) in the vertical plane to depict sadness, lamentation, sympathy, empathy, and a transition to normal life.

Other symbolic and representational movements in agbekɔ suggest warning, betting, combat, arms, reversal, prayer, friendship and reconciliation. Some of the movements in the female agbekɔ version suggest warning, affirmation of the dancers’ perspective, lamentation, self-image in the mirror, removal of
thorns from the foot, unity, open invitation to spectators and foreigners, happiness, or joy, and individual styles.

A version of agbekɔ which is usually performed by the youths in some schools in the Aŋlɔ traditional area features movements that depict physical exercise; occupational activities such as tilling the land, weeding, sowing, planting, harvesting, and enjoyment of the fruits of one’s labor; curricular activities, such as writing, numerical games involving the use of pebbles, and games involving tapping and clapping; and political themes of unity and empowerment. Other movements depict the playing of football, running, climbing sticks, the picking of lice (which symbolizes commendation of good deeds or achievement), marching, salutation, military drill and burial, exchange of swords, wrestling, combat, solidarity, happiness, joy, and acrobatic and gymnastic displays. The performance features small groups, trios, duos, and solos within the whole group at various levels, tempi and dynamic ranges.

**Gadzo Movements**

Gadzo features military movements similar to some of the movements described under agbekɔ. It also features a basic movement characterized by posing in place in flexed and relaxed knee position and moving both arms flexed at the elbows forward (toward intermediate reach) and back toward the torso, in relation to the sliding or gliding of a foot from place to backward and back to place (from almost first to fourth position), in the sagittal plane, as described in agbekɔ. One main movement that features in the processional version of gadzo involves forward and backward steps along with the raising of both hands and dropping them by the sides of the body in the sagittal plane. The dance features linear spatial formation to depict the Ewe military culture. It also features circular, semicircular, and other spatial patterns, as well as symbolic and representational movements that suggest endurance, hardships, sufferings, physique, strength, etc. The repertoire of gadzo is relatively smaller than that of agbekɔ but creativity continues to take place especially in the gadzo groups of Aŋlɔ-Afiadenyigba, Tegbui-Dodovi, and Aŋlɔga.

**Atsyia Movements**

The most striking element of atsyia is the use of two horsetails by each female dancer during the performance. The dancers may combine the basic Ewe contraction and releasing movement with forward, backward, sideways, di-
agonal, circular and semicircular steps, and the swaying or swinging of the horsetails in the sagittal, horizontal, and vertical planes. Each movement is rounded off by the dancers swinging or swaying the tails forward to backward to forward and moving the horsetails downward and upward in relation to the contraction and release of the torso along with each foot moving backward and forward. The dancers may pose to create designs, and may turn and hop at various tempi, levels, and dynamic ranges.

They may move both horsetails downward and upward in the vertical dimension in relation to the torso movement or pose with the horsetails on both shoulders and then raise the horsetails upward in the sagittal plane. A combination of sideways steps with a sideways outward swaying/swinging or rolling of the horsetail in the vertical plane and back to place may also be performed. The dancers may pose, raise the horsetail (with their eyes following the tails) and pass them through their legs (below the left legs) transfer them to their left arms and bring them back (to the right hands) repeatedly. The dance features solos, duos, trios, and small groups within the main performance. The choreography of the Ghana Dance Ensemble usually features trio dancers, while that of the new National Theatre Dance Company features a relatively large number of dancers as well as small groups. Some of the atsyia movements symbolize the arrival of the dancers into the arena, the dancers’ social relations, teasing of peers, aspirations, readiness to perform their duties, and exiting the dance arena.

**The Female Zizi Movements**

Movements in zizi performance are characterized by quick and free pelvic shifting along with rapid footsteps in forward, counterclockwise direction. These movements are punctuated with downward body and hand movements in the sagittal plane. Zizi songs also feature gorgeous and graceful movements characterized by indulgence (for example, the normal legato walk with a slight hold on each step).

**The Occupational/Professional Dance Movements**

*Adevu*, the hunters’ dance, features professional experiences of Ewe hunters, their interaction with animals, stalking movements, lying at low level, advancing, retreating, slow and rapid steps, sudden stops, shooting, and the lifting and carrying of an animal, as well as movements that depict the training of young hunters, harassment of hunters by animals, victory and gratitude of
hunters, and their solidarity with trees, animals, ancestors, divinities and the Supreme Being.

The movements of Ewe tɔshilawo, fishermen/fisherwomen, depicts swimming, pushing, pulling and paddling the canoe, backward pulling or dragging of nets, net mending, scooping movements depicting fish hauling, normal walking, running, chasing culprits, bending low, and lifting or carrying fish or loads. These movements also feature the raising of hands in the vertical dimension or sagittal plane to express happiness and celebrate a good catch, posing with hands on the waist to express surprise and disappointment, as well as other symbolic and representational movements. In the present Ewe societies, dances associated with farming are no longer common but these movements are expressed in other dances as noted earlier. However, one may regard the daily activities of farmers as dance. The Ewe farmers’ movements include hoeing, tilling, digging, planting, watering, harvesting, and stretching the body to depict fatigue and relaxation.

The Historical/Ceremonial Misego Dance Movements

Misego combines the basic Ewe dance movement with the forward and backward movement of alternate feet, or inward-outward twisting of the feet (while moving backward) accompanied by symbolic and representational gestures to narrate the Ewe historical episode. The version of misego which is usually performed during the annual Ajla Hogbetsotso festival highlights movements, such as both hands resting on the knees to represent fatigue; palms touching the stomach and opening forward to represent hunger or stomach ache; both hands resting on the back of the body with morbid facial expression to symbolize sadness; both hands stretched across the chest over the shoulders to symbolize sadness; a forward and backward gesture with the forefinger in the sagittal plane to signal departure; closed fingers touching the mouth and opening forward to represent hunger; pointing the right forefinger to the eye and forward, to represent seeing and not seeing what has happened to the dancer; the twisting of both hands towards one another with the right hand above the left one to symbolize tightening, affirmation and perseverance. Some female misego dancers may toddle with sticks and move their hips or pelvis in a subtle manner to depict old age and fatigue; they may display some luggage on their heads while dancing to dramatize the exodus of the Ewe. A male misego dancer may mime or reach with the sword forward, twist or slash it to symbolize the historical wall-breaking. The male may drag specific props on the ground to cover the direction of their movement, and perform other symbolic movements. The basic misego movements and gestures reflect movements which are expressed in daily Ewe activities and may convey similar meanings to the cul-
tural bearers outside the performance context. These movements may also have cross-cultural relevance.

**Religious Dance Movements**

Most of the Yewe dance movements have already been discussed under the various Ewe dances but a few elements can still be pointed out. *Tsitrenuhawo*, songs sung while strolling through the village or town toward the performance setting, are accompanied by rhythmic walks, marked by sudden change of directions, slow movements, halts and low level movements as the dancers arrive at the performance setting to take their seats. *Agou* or *Agoyiyi* features slow, processional movement characterized by the dancers stepping forward and swinging both flexed arms or the right flexed arm sideways right and (slightly) upward and back toward right (in front of the body), involving rhythmic movement of the body, accompanied by singing and the supporting *kagan* drum patterns (this is usually performed during the graduation ceremony of the initiates and funeral rites of a deceased member). A combination of the slow contraction and releasing movement and backward and inward-outward movement of the feet is performed in *husago* (similar to *misego*). *Afou* features *Ayehudada*, an introductory movement characterized by quick and free sideways shifting of the waist and arms, agile and intensified contraction and release forward across the dancing arena and back to the original place (this is rounded off with *Ayehudada*). *Avleou*, a dance suite that depicts a comic relief and repressed desire, is characterized by the shifting of the waist from side to side (slowly then faster), followed by the quick movement of the waist from back to forward and the rippling of the waist as the music accelerates and comes to an end. *Adavu* features a combination of rapid steps, subtle movement of the waist and body as the dancers move the remains (coffin) of a departed member of the group rhythmically forward and backward, upward and downward, and counterclockwise in a circle; stretching, punching of the arms (with fists) in the vertical and sagittal planes as well as turns and sporadic mouth slaps at the height of the performance. The movements of Alaga, a defiled priest or priestess of Yeve is characterized by slow and fast rhythmic walks while placing sticks or batons on the shoulders; occasional turns, running, jumping and resting in the hands of the chief priests and priestesses during the cleansing ritual. Members of Afa religious group would feature the basic Ewe *agbadza* dance movement and other movements relevant to their contextual values. The *Akom* and *Brekete* feature intricate, backward-forward steps, combined with the torso and hand movements, shaking and quick turns at various levels and tempi.
Military Dance Movements

Atrakpui, the main military dance of the Ewe, combines the basic contraction and releasing movement with symbolic movements and gestures such as tightrope-like steps simultaneously with alternate hands reaching forward over the other in the sagittal plane, along with sideways and downward slashes (with the alternate hands) almost parallel to the legs as well as turns and occasional mouth-slaps at various levels. The dance highlights directness and forward movement of the body in both the sagittal and horizontal planes. Kpeguisu combines the basic Ewe movement with a slight plie and releve on the right step which results in a slight downward and upward movement of the whole body. Aflui, kufade, asafo vuga and boama utilize the multiple movements characterized by rapid steps, hand gestures, jumps, turns, and rhythmic movement of the whole body (similar to some movements that may be observed in the Akan dances) to communicate the contextual values.

5.18 Emotional Expression

Emotional expression forms a significant part of Ewe music and dance performances. Such emotions vary from one performance context to another and depend upon the nature of the performance, the occasion for the performance, the requirement for dramatic enactment and individual differences.

In general, performers of social music and dance styles such as gota, babashiko, bɔbɔbɔ, tokoe, kinka, gahu, dunekpoe, agbadza, and gohu usually maintain cheerful and smiling faces. However, the dancers clarify specific dance movements or themes with the appropriate facial expressions. For example, a performer may express sadness or sorrow by remaining cool or collected, or by maintaining a morbid face. Dancers may combine these facial expressions with shaking of the head or the whole body or placing both hands over their heads, or crossing the hands over the shoulders or behind the body. A performer may express anger by maintaining a stern look or a serious face.

Participants in ceremonial/religious performances may express ecstasy, meditation, supplication, and hope through serious or pensive facial expressions and actions. Some participants in religious performances may express heightened emotion through a state of possession. A fisherman or hunter or warrior-dancer may express seriousness, victory, happiness, solidarity, reconciliation, unity, love, hope, disillusionment, and normal life experiences with the appropriate facial expressions. Other performers may interchange the various emotions in relation to the contexts. However, a performer may find it diffi-
cult to express all the emotions due to the multifaceted themes that are expressed in a given performance. The performer’s emotional expressions may be influenced by his or her experiences prior to the performance. For example, a participant who has recently experienced sadness may be affected by this emotion in a social and joyful performance. The same applies to one who has just experienced happiness prior to a performance that requires serious or sad expression. Individual differences manifest in these emotional expressions and some performers may find it easy to express certain emotions in isolation while finding it difficult to express them in public (or under peer pressure). Other emotions may be difficult to express or describe overtly. Within a cross-cultural setting, the interpretation of certain emotions may be foreign to a performer. Due to the problems posed by such emotional expressions, African societies tolerate individual idiosyncrasies and are flexible in their performance evaluation.

5.19 Costumes, Make-Up, Props and Other Visual Imagery

The costumes worn in African performances reflect the sociocultural group, the nature of the performance, the occasion for the performance, performance style, the mood of the performers and the requirements for dramatic enactment.

Members of a new Ewe social music and dance group design or purchase bright or multi-colored costume. The main Ewe dancing pant is called *atsaka*, a fairly long pant sewn with a combination of traditional hand-woven *kete* cloth and plain material used between the thighs. *Atsaka* has two pointed edges behind the thighs and is worn by folding the excess material toward the front of the body to balance neatly around the waist in alignment with the pointed edges behind. This pant is designed in relation to the performer’s body to facilitate free movement. On top of *atsaka*, the male performers usually wear a jumper (a round necked or chest-buttoned shirt) and loin cloth about eight by two meters neatly wrapped around the waist, folded and tightened with head-kerchiefs, strips, or bands. For the sake of simplicity, some male youths/adults may wear a pair of pants and ordinary shirt, on top of which they wrap the female’s one by two meter piece of cloth around the waist.

The female performers usually wear a blouse and two pieces of cloth around the waist, one of which extends to the ankles, a head-kerchief around the head in the usual West African fashion, as well as necklaces and decorative beads.
In northern Eweland, the male performers (especially of gbolo and vuga) may wear a pair of shorts and a cloth (two by eight meters) over the body, wrapped across the left shoulder for support. Their female counterparts may wear two pieces of cloth in the West African fashion, or they may wrap a second piece of cloth loosely around the upper torso, tied around the left shoulder for support.

**The Youth Costume**

The young female performers of gota may wrap a piece of cloth above the breast extending below the knees leaving the remaining parts of the body bare. Alternatively, they may wear T-shirts. Their male counterparts may wear a pair of pants, T-shirts or any special shirts over which they wrap a piece of cloth, or they may wear a piece of cloth around the body and tie it around the neck, extending to their knees.

**Gahu/Oleke Music and Dance Costume**

The male performers of gahu and olenke may wear dzokoto or agbada, a Yoruba-influenced pair of loose trousers and a loose long shirt, while the female participants would wear loose blouse with a piece of cloth wrapped around the waist, extending to the knees.

**The Bɔɔɔbɔ Costume**

The female youth bɔɔɔbɔ dancers may wear a uniform blouse and skirt, or wrapped cloth and head-kerchiefs. The male youth participants may wear special uniform: a pair of trousers and shirts. Some performers may wear assorted materials with specific designs and embroidery.

**Other Female Music and Dance Costumes**

The female performers of atsyia, atsyiagbekɔ and adzogbo may wrap pieces of females’ cloths (which would extend near the knees) tightly around the waist, by means of bands or head-kerchiefs. They may also wear breast and head bands, gold, beads, and necklaces. In some cases, both the female and male dancers wear the same costume. The male adzogbo performers may use about twenty pieces of females’ cloths neatly folded on a band or string and tied around the waist, which would extend towards their knees and add beauty to
the dance movements, or they may wear voluminous skirts around their waists. They may wear specially decorated raffia costume, gourd rattles, and jingle bells around their upper arms, lower legs and ankles to ornament the performance, and accentuate the dance movements and instrumental patterns. The male adzogbo dancers may wear bands around their foreheads or across the upper torso, with floppy caps on their heads, and decorate their necks and upper bodies with talcum powder. The female adzogbo dancers may also wear gold and beads ornaments around their ankles, legs, arms and necks.

Ceremonial Music and Dance Costume

On festive and ceremonial occasions, the female misego and atsiblaga performers wear atsibla or atsifu, folded pieces of cloth, tied around the waist to serve as an extension of the buttocks, over which they would wrap their cloths which would cover their breasts and extend to knee level. The female performers would carry tsikpo and akpaku, ancient hand-woven and hand-carved containers in which they would display their belongings and lanterns. The male participants would wear the usual loin cloths, jumpers, T-shirts, Batakari, or smocks to dramatize historical events.

Occupational Music and Dance Costumes

The hunters groups may wear indigo dark brown (batik) material to conceal their identity in their professional practices. The fishermen may wear loose pants and bare their chest, or they may wear casual shirts and put towels on their shoulders or wrap them around their necks, for use in wiping their sweat. The fisherwomen may wear loose, casual blouses and wrap their usual cloths or skirts around their waists, and head-kerchiefs around their heads, and place a special portage on their heads to facilitate the carrying of loads.

Religious Performance Costume

Participants in Afa music and dance may wear pure or spotted white materials in the usual West African fashion. The Yewé priests and priestesses may wear loose pants or voluminous (skirt) costumes made of indigo blue, white, and red materials for specific divinities and occasions; expensive multi-colored clothes, including traditional hand woven kete, cowry strings across the torso and shoulders and head bands decorated with feathers of parrot and other special birds on their foreheads on special occasions. The chief priests may
wear white hats or headgear in addition to any of the above-mentioned costumes.

**Military Music and Dance Costume**

The male and female *atrikpui* performers may wear white costumes (and wrap red bands around their heads on special occasions to signify danger). Performers of *akufade*, *aflui*, *asafo* or *vuga* may wear red shirts and loose pants on special occasions as well as casual wear on other occasions.

**Props/Visual Imagery**

The female performers of social music and dance forms such as *bɔbɔbɔ*, *kinka*, and *gohu* utilize handkerchiefs to extend the movements. The *atsyia* and *agbekɔ* dancers usually employ horsetails and swords to extend the movements and to communicate the contextual themes. The female dancers of *adzogbo* and *agbekɔ* may use hand mirrors to aestheticize their movements or express specific themes. The male *agbekɔ*, and *gadzo* dancers may utilize machetes, and wooden swords to clarify their movements. The machete is the basic tool used in the traditional Ewe daily occupations such as farming, weeding, chopping firewood, and for defense. *adzogbo* dancers may employ stilts, brooms, bamboo sticks, ropes, bowls, etc.

During inaugural performances and festive occasions, *aflaga* (special flags made with triangular pieces of cloth) sewn onto strings are used to decorate the main street and pathways leading to the performance setting, and the actual performance setting. Other paraphernalia, such as *dzoya* (large umbrella), on top of which *dufozi* (visual images of divinities, cultural heroes, heroines and neighboring creatures) are displayed, decorate the performance settings and communicate some cultural values. Students-dancers in Aŋbɔga Donɔgbɔ *agbekɔ* group (between 1974–89) often utilized tablets bearing inscriptions of political slogans such as “one nation, one people, one destiny,” or “people’s revolution, power to the people, fight for your right”. The implication is that all the visual imagery and other performance elements are conceived and perceived as a whole and form the basis of semiotic communication. The omission any of these elements in the performance may amount to a breach of expectation, which may draw disapproval from the audience, which takes the form of some of the audience leaving the performance arena. These days, economic constraints and changing modes of presentation are affecting the quantity and quality of costumes, props, and visual imagery employed in various performances. For example, lack of funding compels many performing groups
to forego some of these visual elements. Also, some groups continue to modify these visual elements and create new ones, leading to the interaction between the old and the newer elements. Most of the older elements are still appealing to the performers and spectators and form the basis for new developments.

5.20 Concerning the Harmony of Integrated African Performance

Harmony is defined as an agreement or a consistent orderly and pleasing arrangement of parts. In music, harmony refers to the (simultaneous) combination of notes or tones, especially when blended with chords pleasing to the ear, as distinguished from melody and rhythm (The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music, Fourth Edition, 1996, p. 321). The above definition pertains to Western musical harmony which is based on chordal patterns. There is no word in Ewe that exactly corresponds to the English word harmony. The phrase that comes close to harmony is edze fiawo to dze gawo to, which means, it is pleasing to the ears of the chiefs, kings or leaders and the people. Some contemporary groups may now employ the term gbeblabla, which literally means tightening of voices or sounds, to refer to the blending or harmony of the performance. The harmony of Ewe music and dance performance is shaped by the social ethics, based on the blending of the various performance components through dialogic and complementary modes of drumming, singing and dancing, and the expression of individual idiosyncrasies in the various contexts. Ewe performance harmony may also be achieved through acting in moderation, conforming to an order and maintaining balance in the performance.

The mainstream participation in Ewe performances and the contextualization of some performances on the basis of age, sex, socialization, occupation, religion, politics, and individuality, constitute a basis for achieving harmony. Such practices allow people to participate in group performances and within specific contexts.

Other harmonic devices manifest in the construction and tuning of Ewe instruments. For example, the kidi is tuned relatively higher than sogo; they are sometimes regarded as brother and sister. The two instruments usually form the chorus and engage in dialogue with the lead drum(s), and reinforce or interline the lead drum patterns. The two atimevuwo are usually regarded as male and female parents, the male with a relatively deeper sound than the female. The lead drums of agbeko and gadzo are usually designed to produce rel-
atively higher taunting sounds to communicate with dancers and coordinate the various aspects of the performance. Kroboto and totodzi, the main supporting instruments in agbeko, are regarded as brothers, the younger with a relatively higher sound. They produce relatively lower sounds which blend with other instrumental sounds in the ensemble to create harmony.

The blending of the steady and variable instrumental patterns also constitutes the basis of Ewe harmony. For example, gakogui, which is usually the smallest and the highest in pitch, provides a steady beat that regulates the various artistic elements and interweaves the high (crisp) pitched rattling sound. Kagan, which is the smallest (child) and the highest-pitched drum, provides repetitive cross-rhythms. The persistent pattern provided by this instrument is related to the youths’ indulgence in certain life activities. The steady sounds produced on the smaller supporting instruments balance the larger instrumental sounds which often dominate the performance, especially when heard from afar.

The proper coordination of the performance constitutes another basis of Ewe harmony. For example, in collaboration with the various instrumentalists, the lead drummer will introduce a pattern and repeat it, then provide scope for the supporting instruments to respond, thus reflecting the dialogic mode of African communication. A persistent rendition by the lead drummer without making room for the various instruments to sound, or any faltering on the part of an instrumentalist, may be perceived as discord. Also, the introduction of a new rhythm may be announced by drum rolls and a yell, hododioo, to heighten its effect, and a lead drummer has to ensure that a particular song is about to end before introducing a new drum rhythm. Ewe performance harmony may be achieved by two or more drummers playing in unison (as in gohu) during the beginning, at certain stages, or throughout the performance (thus blending the contrasting sounds).

In singing, harmony may be achieved through the blending of the various voices; conformity with the group’s desired melody; the dialogic, interlining, and polyphonic patterns; and the toleration of individual idiosyncrasies. In dancing, harmony may be achieved through the proper articulation of the movements (appropriate movement qualities), the use of appropriate facial expressions, props, and costumes in coordination with instrumental sounds and songs. This would further be achieved through providing scope for solos and small groups to feature within the entire performance.

In contemporary theaters, the modification of traditional performances, the reduction in the number of instruments, performers, and performance time, and the adoption of some Western harmonic devices all affect traditional Ewe performance harmony. These phenomena may be considered as ways of
adapting to the new environmental conditions but they occur with some dis-
cord. The implication is that the conception of harmony may shift from one
historical period to another. Since art is a social product, certain elements of
traditional African harmony will continue to be relevant to the present and
future artmaking process. It is imperative to reconsider traditional harmonic
elements as a basis creating harmony in contemporary performances and for
formulating new harmonic ideas.

5.21 Concerning the Interpretation of
Ewe Music and Dance

Interpretation may be defined as the act of explaining or elucidating an ex-
perience, phenomenon, event, or performance. My current project is a process
of interpreting complex cultural knowledge/values. It is true that certain
works of art reflect the values of a particular cultural group or artist, hence,
this work reflects the Ewe’s artistic and cultural experiences and worldview,
and my interpretation is a process of negotiation between the Ewes’ world-
views, my own experiences, and the Western and other cultures’ values. My
interpretation does not rule out alternative interpretations or criticisms from
the readers. For these music and dance forms or components may be rein-
terpreted by various performers, observers, and readers on many levels. Due
to the communicative functions of African music and dance, one who is fa-
miliar with the Ewe and English languages may readily deduce some mean-
ings from this text. It is also problematic to provide a detailed interpretation
of some of these artistic and cultural elements because of lack of adequate
empirical evidence on their origin, development, and intended meanings,
the interaction between the Ewe and English language, and the scope of the
project. While the meaning of some of these cultural values may remain sta-
ble, some have undergone transformation and reinterpretation by the suc-
ceeding generations. These issues create a problem of reinterpreting Ewe
music and dance, and this problem is now intensified by the current cross-
cultural interaction, the emphasis on subjectivity and innovation, the con-
flicting and random interpretations, and loss of meaning of certain cultural
values.

On the whole, adequate interpretation of the Ewe music and dance requires
intensive knowledge of the culture, art forms, and the contexts of their de-
velopment. I have already indicated that the birth of the reader does not neces-
sarily lead to the death of the author.
5.22 Concerning the Intellectual Values in Ewe Music and Dance

The foregoing analysis has elucidated the intellectual values of Ewe music and dance, as manifested in their creative processes, forms, contents and structures, and in their sociohistorical and cultural values that engage human reasoning. It can be inferred from the analysis that African music and dance integrate the intellectual themes, topics, subjects and disciplines such as cultural studies, physics, science, religion, morality, ethics, aesthetics, education, and philosophy. It is worth noting that what may be perceived as intellectual values in African performing arts actually emerged through the interaction between practice, critical reflection, and theory.
Chapter Six

Ethics, Appreciation, Aesthetic Evaluation, and Criticism of Ewe Music and Dance

6.1 The Ethics of Ewe Music and Dance

Ewe performance ethics refer to the norms and values that are observed in the artmaking process. These ethical values range from consent of the elders or leaders prior to the commencement of the creative process, to counselling, discipline, punishment, and rituals, aimed at regulating the conduct and securing the welfare of the participants and society. These are ultimately geared towards good performance.

The Ewe cherish social harmony as the ultimate purpose of human existence but they also recognize the existence of intra- and inter-personal conflicts. The Ewe believe that, once resolved, certain conflicts may generate new perspectives towards life but they contend that no human society can flourish without a consensus. The Ewe further maintain that within a performing group, conflict may arise from individual idiosyncrasies, temperament, overreaction through peer group pressure, and from precarious environmental conditions. In addition, human thoughts, feelings and emotions such as anger, jealousy, hatred, envy, curses as well as praises or excessive flattery may be directed by the colleagues, spectators or people toward the leaders who occupy the central position in the group. The persistence of such phenomena may engender controversy in the group/performance. For example, drum skins and sticks may break or cantors may lose their voices and these may be attributed to such phenomena.

The Ewe also believe that social conflicts may cause certain illnesses and the death of children, family, or performing group members. For example, out of anger, a member of a performing group may vow to no longer participate in the performance or to no longer be on speaking terms with a colleague or other members of the group. Parents may vow to no longer eat or sleep together. It
is believed that _nu_, which literally means mouth and symbolizes human utterances, and refers to a particular sickness may affect children of the aggrieved individual, parents, and group members. The illness is said to have caused the victims to either swell or grow lean, which may lead to their death.

The Ewe also hold that the source of certain conflicts is indeterminate or mysterious, the solution of which lies beyond human endeavors and requires soliciting the help of the ancestors, divinities, and the Supreme Being. From the African perspective, the Supreme Being, supernatural forces, ancestors, and human beings are interconnected. It is to the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors that the Ewe attribute their ultimate source of creativity and they may be considered more experienced in problem solving in the creative process. The ancestors, divinities, and the Supreme Being deserve to be commemorated or paid tribute. Africans’ desire for solidarity, peace, harmony, stability, and order in the creative process necessitates the observance of certain norms, rituals, or values, which together constitute the performance ethics. The analysis of some of these ethical values is provided below.

### 6.2 Adanudodo, Counselling

_Adanudodo_ or counselling in Ewe performances may take the form of advice or comments from the peer group, leaders, patrons, ritual experts, diviners, or spectators. A participant who falters in the performance may be overtly advised or signalled (with the appropriate facial expression or physical touch) to get back on track. The patrons may advise all the performers to put more effort into the creative process or to put forth their best performance, to tune their musical instruments and voices properly, or to postpone their performance. The patrons may also admonish latecomers and arrogant performers in public or private. There are norms that forbid the wearing of shoes and shirts in various performance contexts. It was believed that God would punish the violators of the ethics of _adzogbo_ performance due to the sacred values attached to it. This belief is no longer strictly observed, but the art form is still performed with seriousness. The desire for excellent performance is reinforced by an Ewe proverb, which states, _dumede vu medoa agblɔ o_, which literally means, a public drum/performance is not left loose.

Other indeterminacies may be referred to the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors, usually through _Bokɔ_, a diviner who in consultation with the Supreme Being may advise the participants to refrain from certain behaviors/conducts or to perform in moderation. The priest may recommend rituals such as _blatso_, which literally means tie and untie, or bind and unbind;
nugbuidodo, reconciliation or conflict management; gbedododa, a prayer in the form of tsifofodi, pouring down water; and hanududu, communal dinner, depending upon the social conditions. While gbedododa, a prayer, is customarily performed, other rituals are usually performed on recommendation. Performing groups, which are organized by Christians and Muslims, may also observe ethical values relevant to their belief system in the artmaking process. Due to the limited scope of this paper I will focus on the traditional Ewe ethics.

6.3 Afakaka: Afa Inquiry/Divination

There are various forms of inquiry in African communities aimed at elucidating uncertainties and problems that lie beyond the immediate understanding of the people and require soliciting the help of supernatural forces to ensure social harmony and order. These include divine revelation through trɔfofo, possession, hotsuikaka, cowry inquiry, and Afakaka, Afa inquiry. Afa inquiry or Afa divination is one of the oldest and most reliable divination systems in West Africa, and is usually undertaken in the southern Ewe creative process.

Afa or Ifa divination originated among the Yoruba in Ife, an ancient kingdom of Western Nigeria, which was one of the earliest settlement of the Ewe and some neighboring West African people. It is now practiced broadly among the Yoruba and Fon-Ewe of West Africa, and some Afro-Cubans, Haitians, and African Americans. A detailed account of this divination system lies beyond the scope of this book but I will briefly review the process.

Afakaka (Afa divination) is a customary inquiry into the Afaduwo, Afa state, world or universe, which includes the physical, social, and spiritual realms. Afa is also a body of knowledge prophesied, ordered, or structured by the Afa divinities. These texts reflect the oral historical experiences, legends, figures of speech, aphorisms, philosophy, and myths handed down by the African sages, and provide a basis for critical reflection and speculations on human experiences and events of the universe.

Afa divinities include the sixteen Dunɔ or Dudada, literally meaning the state mothers, which refer to the main divinities, and the two hundred and forty Viklewo, sibling divinities. The two hundred and forty sibling divinities and the sixteen mother divinities add up to two hundred and fifty six. Each Afadu is said to have preserved at least sixteen narratives. The total number of Afaduwo is realized by multiplying two hundred and fifty six by sixteen narrative texts, which makes about four thousand and ninety-six.

Afa texts are usually quoted by ordinary members of the society in conversations and by composers because of their richness in poetry, psychology, and
philosophy. Some of the texts have infiltrated into African and Western folktales and literary texts, because of the level of social and cross-cultural interaction and some similarities between the structures of African and Western forms of knowledge. Hence, some Western researchers analogize Afa divination to folktales. Obviously, the various forms of knowledge overlap and any form of knowledge can be analyzed on a narrative basis. Traditional Africans have a tendency to express serious themes through plays or games. African folktales may be educational, but Afa divination is also unique in its interweaving of complex human experiences and events of the universe.

When asked whether a diviner is able to memorize all the texts, my informant maintained that even though they try to memorize as many as possible, often by enhancing their memories with traditional medicine, no diviner would be able to memorize or know every text. Diviners maintain that what one diviner lacks may be known to another, which maintains a balance. The claim about lack of absolute knowledge of Afa texts is also due to the fact that although the texts exist in a relatively standard form within the oral tradition, their rendition varies slightly from one diviner to another. Due to the recognition of the limited knowledge of a diviner, a client may be advised to seek verification from other diviners. A diviner who is consulted for cross-reference may initially proclaim, “Adzafia mesi ne Eyɔfia ha nayi ese ge o,” meaning “Adzafia does not understand it for Eyɔfia to understand it,” a statement which admits the limits of his/her knowledge and his/her humility. Afa diviners usually emphasize honu or hoyanu, the time or context of divination.

Afa divination is usually done by Bɔkɔnɔ in Ewe and Babalawo in Yoruba, (the chief priest) to Afakatsɔ, a client or the client’s representative who may be a person, a household, a state or another diviner. This is usually done with kpele, or agumaga, a divination chain made with special seeds, strings, and beads, together with vodziwo, symbolic and representational visual objects blessed with divine medicine and words.

In the process of divination, the client picks dza, a token or cowry, from the diviner’s bag or his/her own money and mentally recount his/her problems and which divinity in the Afa universe could help find solution to them. The client would then put the token on the divination mat in front of the diviner. In the case of the client’s representative, the token would be wrapped in a piece of material or paper to keep it sacred from the physical contact of other people. Any token provided by the client may serve as compensation to the diviner.

The client then sits opposite to the diviner who proceeds by holding the kpele or agumaga and acknowledge hodzedze, sunrise (the east), hodota, sun journey or upward high, hoyixo, sun set, (the west), dzikusi, up high, nyikugba,
earth, *efu*, sea, *amu*, river or lake, and round it off by saying, *mekla mi da*, I inform you. He then covers the *kpele/agumaga* with his divination bag and begin with *amlafofo*, the invocation of the universe, Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors while mixing the sacred objects with both hands. He pays tribute to the divinities such as *Kpoli Edu*, (literally meaning Divinity State, or Divinity Town) the spiritual representative of Afa universe, *Alegba*, the security personnel, *Afeli*, the female divinity and house manager, *Metoleafi*, the messenger of Afa, *Vodu Amayewe*, the divinity responsible for herbal medicine, and *Ase*, the divine linguist and inspector of sacrifice. He invokes the male and female predecessors and his godfather/teacher and the sixteen priests and priestesses that led him to the initiation setting. The diviner acknowledges the limits of his knowledge and solicits the guidance of his predecessors to achieve a positive result by stating, *Bokɔnɔ kutom etɔ m enɔ anyi tsɔ agbetɔm etɔ woɔ nu dua ŋkpe o, miäfe alɔ dzi wɔm mele ne menya wɔɔ ha, ne kitse ne nye- meganya ewɔɔ o ha ne kitse*, meaning the divine ancestor does not live while the living one performs and is shameful, I am operating on your hands, whether I know how to do it or not, let it be positive. He then states, *akoe ade ma le to sia me, du kae ke akoea wonyo na akoets afe fa gbe fa, akoe do gome, asi eti agble eti*, meaning here is a certain token in the circle, which divinity divines it for the goodness of the client, so that house is cool/peaceful, outside world is cool/peaceful, prosperity reigns, trading and farming become positive? He would conclude the invocation by stating, *Dunɔ kple viawo/viklewo woadzi wofo ha woad owofe, gbe du masegbena bokɔ adek mekan o, Ooh!! Afa Dzinakpetsu, mieyi bɔlu, bɔya, bɔkitse*, which means, may the mother divinities of the state and their children sing their songs and speak their voices, the incomprehensible *Edu* is not divined by any diviner. *Ooh!! Afa Dzinakpetsu*, we have come to *Bɔlu, Bɔya, Bɔkitse* (*Bɔlu, Bɔya, Bɔkitse* are usually referred to as the three daughters of *Metoleafi*, the messenger of Afa).

Following the invocation, the diviner casts the *kpele or agumaga* by holding the chain in the middle, raising and spreading it in front, and pronounces the names and titles/appellations of the divinity that appears and may sing any of the divine songs. The interpretation of the client’s problem is based on the divinity that appears at the first casting. Subsequent castings will ensue in a form of inquiries throughout the entire process, and will involve mentioning the names of the divinities that appear and their proverbial titles and the singing of their songs.

The inquiry continues with *votsyiatsyia*, literally meaning sorting or selection of the problem. The ensuing investigation of the client’s problem is made by means of the *vodziwo*, sacred objects held by the client in both hands (or in one hand) with fists, any of which s/he would release upon the divine re-
Response to the problem. The preliminary questions posed by the diviner to Afa may include whether the issue is a blessing or a curse to the client; whether the problem lies with the client’s immediate or external environment; whether the problem is past or pending; whether the problem is past but may have subsequent effects on the client or not; whether there is a solution to the problem or not; or whether the problem would prevail because the client would hear the counselling but may not abide by it. The responses to these questions may include yes, no, or there remains for us to search and find. The divination process continues until a concrete solution is suggested to the problem.

The diviner will then interpret the main text to the client for their reflection. The solution to the client’s problem may be deduced from the most relevant texts in specific contexts, through relating the texts to the client’s location, physical appearance, social relations, profession, nutrition, interests, needs, clothing, sickness, etc. Further recommendations for solution to the client’s problem may be made by the divinities through the diviner. This would take the form of a$a$a$dodo, advice, or counseling, gbedododa, prayer, $osa, literally meaning “mixing the bad omen” (presumably with the good), which implies, to over turn a bad omen, sacrifice or foregoing or avoiding certain actions, or acting in moderation, purification, plea, or reconciliation in specific contexts. Diviners are usually worried about the client’s ability to abide by the counsel and the consequences of their ignorance or disobedience. Hence, one Ewe proverb states, Kama$s$a$nu boko, which means, divination without sacrifice or obedience, says it has affected the divine priest; kama$s$ (divination without sacrifice or obedience) fui, literally meaning, kama$s has beaten (or punished) him or her. Below are some examples of the main divinities, their titles, and the English equivalence.

**Dzongbe:**

*Tototo lblo gana-vutsu medzea to fe alifome bu na o; alie nyo alie gb¿, to nyo to gb¿, go nyo go gb¿; alie vu.*

*Tototo lblo,* the male wolf-dog does not stray while following his father’s path; a path is good but curved, a river is good but meanders, a shore/bank of a river/sea is good but curved; the path/gate/way is opened.

**Yekum edzi:**

*Akpa dzaka/klika mewua lo o, atsi dogo memua atsi o, haha be yeakpoe klokololoa ye ngøgea zu megbe megbe ha zu ngo.*

The tough skin of the crocodile does not kill it, the bark bulging of the tree does not fell it, when the earth worm wants to see its detail unflinchingly, its back transforms to the front and the front transforms to the back.
Tsyemedzi:
Dzie do kata dzie klo, ete-memie gbloe na Adzafia be esi womeye koa nedu ye, nemedu ye kaba oa, dzodemie dzodzo ge; ku fe dzodemi madzo o, enya fe dzodemi madzo o, aya fe dzodemi madzo o ke negbe tsikata ade koe woanye afo ya ayi/awu.
Scattered rains clouds have disappeared, the roasted yam said to Adzafia that since he has roasted it, he has to eat it, if he does not eat it early, a happening will intrude; death happening will not intrude, words happening will not intrude, curse happening will not intrude but these will become scattered rains and blow away.

Below are some examples of the sibling divinities and their titles and the English equivalence.

Tsyiesa:
Goni ago nya minya, yiyilawo yiyim gbogbolawo gbogbom
Welcome, farewell, the goers are going, the arrivals are arriving.

Tulawoka:
Nu bubu wo nua ame adeke metsena woa nu bubui o, akotre nen o akotre tefe, ahotre nen o ahotre tefe, eye ha nen o eye tefe.
No one uses what is used for a different thing for another thing, the red chalk container should be at its place, the indigo blue chalk container should be at its place and the white chalk container should be at its place.

Woliwotula:
Agba nya gake eto ka ne, adaba nya gake kome gble ne; menye wo deka koe nye aduba o.
The plate is good but the edge is broken, the eyelash is good but its neck is spoilt; you are not the only first female born to a diviner

Losotsie:
Gawo gbe dom gake sika to le vovo; nam tsie nye ha mana wo tsie; agbekap dzidzia ame nuto gbe nae.
The metals are sounding but the sound of gold is different; offer me the least and I will also offer you the least; the long life rope is woven by the person him/herself.

Tulatsy:
Fia de se vu se ametolafo de wo-se gake ye nuto fo wo.
The chief passes a law and repeals it, Metolafo forbids the growing of grey hair but he himself has grown it.
ηŋɔlikotsyie:
Agbe le ηŋɔ devi mezoa klo-zolí o.
Life is ahead a child does not walk leisurely (tortoise/knee walk).

Gudagboloso:
Asiwọ asiwo mekae na wo ne medze ŋuwo o na va yi ake Tsá akpọ.
All in your hands I have divined it for you if you doubt it go and divine Tsá and see.

Some Divine songs

Gbe Abla:
Bokọna do axọ nedo adegbe nu lanyo Gbeabla.
An experienced diviner would pray and things will be positive

Gudawawyi:
Nuha meﬁa woa be netsoe dze awum,
Gudawawyi be netsoe dze awum.
What I have taught you, you have known/mastered it better than me,
Gudawawyi says you have known it better than me.

Tuladologbe:
Miele agbe me miawo nɔvi meke Tuladologbe
Atsivia tse na gaha tse na
Miele agbeme miawo nɔvi Tuladologbe.
When you live love your neighbors I divine Tuladologbe
The small tree bears fruit, money too accumulates
But when you live love your neighbors (says) Tuladologbe.

Ablamedzi:
Nu nɔ ame si gake wo na nu ame woxone
Abla medzi be nu nɔ ame si gake wona nu ame woxone
Elo tormafo nake yi na Dzogbedzɔki
Dzogbedzɔki ha ku tsi yi na lo
Emu nɔ ame si gake wona nu ame woxone
Ablamedzi be nu nɔ ame si gake wona nu ame woxone.
One has things but one accepts gift
Ablamedzi (says) one has things but one accepts gift
A riverine crocodile collects firewood
And takes them to the desert duiker
The desert duiker fetches water
And takes it to the riverine crocodile
One has things but one accepts gift
Ablamedzi (says) one has things but one accepts gift

Wolikotsye:
Wolikotsye do lo de ha me
Aza su eee.
Wolikotsye do lo de ha me
Aza su woyo mi aza su aza su woyo mi (2times)
Eha le miawo nu mia yi adzi na botowo
Botowo si hee woayi adzi na anawo
Anawo si hee woayi asu na Yeve
Aza su, woyo mi aza su aza su woyo mi.
Wolikotsye has spoken proverbially in song
The day is due
Wolikotsye has spoken proverbially in song
The day is due they have called us
The day is due, the day is due they have called us
There is song in our mouth we shall sing to the priests
The priests would hear it and sing it to our mothers
Our mothers will hear it and sing it to Yeve
The day is due they have called us
The day is due the day is due they have called us.

Excerpts From Divine Texts

Text One

On consulting the Supreme Being and divinities through an Afa priest (Bokɔ) prior to an inaugural ceremony, members of a group were counselled through the prophecy of Gbetumila who had ordained that once there was frequent bush fire destroying many habitats in Efe. Agadza, who was anxious about losing his habitat, consulted an Afa priest to help him solve the problem. The divinity, Gbetumila, appeared and advised him to find some environmental materials such as straw and weave some of them into a special mat for use in vɔsa, a sacrificial ritual, which he did. The priest then placed the straw-mat beneath the mud where Agadza was supposed to reside, and planted the remaining straws around it. Agadza was asked to reside there until he was sent for, which he did. As a result, the straws grew up surrounding Agadza’s swampy habitat and preserved enough water in which he resided, and was able to withstand the subsequent bush fire, which temporarily burned the surrounding straws but left enough water in his environment to protect him. With time, the straws rejuvenated and spread around Agadza’s habitat. Later, Agadza ap-
proached the diviner and recounted his victory with gratitude. The diviner reminisced Agadza’s victory and joy with the song,

\[
\begin{align*}
Afa\ ha\ Dzidanu\ ka\ loo,\ Afa\ ha\ Dzidanu\ ka\ loo, \\
Be\ ba\ me\ Adzida\ nan\w,\ ba\ ba\ me\ Adzida\ nan\w \\
Kpetsu\ logodzo\ Dzidawoe\ le\ ba\ me \\
Nan\w\ afima\ mado\ ye\ na\ wo\ nan\w\ afima\ bele\ nan\w\ afima\ na\ vo.
\end{align*}
\]

Meaning:
The divine inquiry that was made for Adzidanu,
The divine inquiry that was made for Adzidanu
Says in the mud will Adzida dwell,
In the mud will Adzida dwell
Kpetsu the great one Adzida will dwell in the mud
You will be there I will send for you,
You will be there cautiously and be free.

The diviner would conclude by stating, “one yesterday or the previous day or in the past when Agadza (symbolic of a special crab) on consulting the diviner and Gbetumila appeared and advised him to protect his environment which he did, was he not able to withstand the bush fire?” The concluding statement fuses the past and future into the present.

The text speaks of environmental protection and may relate to one of the problems faced by the group. The environment also refers to the individual’s body, personality, and character. Environmental protection refers to the performers’ self-control and self-criticism, humility and acting in moderation. Inaugural ceremonies attract people from different locations to the performance setting, hence, the need for environmental protection. Based upon the divined text, the members of the performing group were advised to sacrifice or protect their environment with relevant materials.

Text Two

An inquiry was made for an Adza prince through the prophecy of Gbetumila titled, Fia vi adzedat\w be egbo na nyatefa to ge, which means, the prince who lied will later tell the truth. The Adza prince was a shepherd who would climb a tall tree to look into the horizon whenever he led the animals to graze. On his return, he would claim to have founded three nations, which would turn out to be false. Later, he approached the diviner to help him satisfy his desire (ambition). The divinity Gbetumila appeared and advised him to provide some yam and water and his casual/common cloth for use in roasting the yam. He was further advised to place the water and roasted yam at a crossroad, which
he did. On leading the herds to the graze afterwards, he came across three groups of people at the crossroad, looking hungry. The prince then pointed to the direction of his offer (roasted yam and water) where they went to feed. Being satisfied with the offer, the crowds decided to follow him to the town and reside with him.

The diviner would end in a similar manner discussed above and would give various interpretations to the text. For example, when asked why the prince should roast the yam with his cloth, an informant maintains that he was prejudged by some people for not being able to afford a better cloth let alone feeding three nations. The yam, water, and cloth constitute some of the basic necessities the prince would provide for the crowd daily, after satisfying his desire.

Text Three

This text, which forms part of the narratives of an Afa divinity Tulaŋloe, revolves around a woman called Amabele, an enthusiastic performer who was always eager to attend performances even in distant countries. Once, a performance was scheduled out of town across the river, or over the sea. Amabele, who was desirous to attend this performance, consulted Afa, (God of divination) through a divine priest, to enable her satisfy the desire. The divinity Tulaŋloe counselled her not to go, or not to overly indulge in the performance or attempt to outdo the indigenous people if she went. She was further advised to return home promptly lest she became the focus of attention and endanger her own life. Amabele was also told to pay tribute to Alegba, the security officer, which she failed to do.

On the performance day, Amabele travelled over sea/across the river to the performance setting. She was so fascinated by the performance and danced persistently. She would engage the indigenous performers in dancing for a long time and became the focus of attention. Tired though she was, she persisted. It was getting late, Amabele made no effort to leave. Alegba became worried since he did not want Amabele to fall victim to her own deeds and, therefore, tracked her. On his arrival at the performance setting, Alegba stood behind Amabele whispering in a song, “Amabele dzo loo aye Amabele, amedzrovi medua ye awu afeto o Amabele dzo loo aye Amabele,” which means, Amabele go home, ooh yes Amabele!!, a stranger does not dance to surpass the indigenous people, Amabele go home ooh yes, Amabele. Amabele paid no heed to Alegba’s advice as she persisted in dancing until the last hour. In the process, some indigenous people became so concerned and cursed her. On her return, her whole body was in pain. This situation aggravated and she passed away.
The diviner/mediator would conclude, one yesterday and the previous day when Ambele divined Tidagloe and was advised not to indulge in off-country performance and was further asked to follow Alegba’s advice which she refused, did she not fall victim to her own deeds?

Based upon the interpretation of the text, the client may be advised not to travel outside the town to perform during a certain period and not to attempt to outdo other people and to listen to the advice of others. In the divination process, a client may interject intermittently with the word Afa or Efa, (especially when the text relates to his or her particular contextual experiences) which also motivates the diviners.

An Excerpt from Divined Text of Letewogbe

A hat was bought for the head and ears
Sunglasses were bought for the eyes
A uniform was bought for part of the body
The legs/feet were left bare
A journey is to be undertaken
The legs/feet refuse to move.

The above text implies a neglect of part of the body and cautions us to pay due attention to the whole body.

6.4 Blatso

Blatso, literally meaning tie and untie or bind and unbind, is usually performed (upon recommendation) for the leading members of a performing group such as drummers, composers, and cantors together with their instruments and props (drum sticks and conducting whisks) on behalf of the entire group. This ritual is led by a priest who may be a member of the group. The performance of blatso depends upon the prevailing social conditions. It is generally aimed at regulating the conducts of the performers, and protecting/liberating them and their instruments and properties from unfavorable environmental conditions and malevolent human thoughts, feelings, and emotions likely to be directed towards them, as well as other uncertainties that might impede the artmaking process. For similar reasons, blatso is performed for pregnant women who are approaching their delivery date.

In the process, the priest gathers sacred materials, including medicinal herbs, and knot some of them into fourteen long ropes, and asks the leading performers to sit stretching their legs forward beside their instruments and props.
The priest also acknowledges the presence of the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors and proceeds to tie each lead performer together with the instruments or props at seven parts of his body (around the head, neck, torso, legs, knees, ankles, and feet). He exits the ritual setting momentarily and returns, and begins to call each performer’s name, with phrases such as Gbeve menyia vi o, amea gblo vo ts o nyuia do xa, meaning, two voices do not rear a child, the person utters the good and juxtaposes it with bad utterance. The client responds, agoo!! or yee!! The priest asks, “why is everybody freely interacting here but you have been tied in these ropes?” The client again responds (as directed by the priest), eku, edɔ, nya, ahe kple nuvɔ, dze-asimadzenuiwoe blam de ka sia me, meaning, death, sickness, words, curses, and evils, the-fall-in-hand but not into mouths/poverty have tied me in these ropes. The priest again asks, “If the diviner unties (or cuts) these ropes for you and you see him one day, what will you do to him? Will you not slap or insult him? The performer/client again responds, Mabliba nae, I will revere him. The diviner then cuts the ropes with a knife while saying, “Today, I have cut the ropes of death, sickness, words/gossip, curses, evils and fall-in-hand but not into the mouths/poverty for you.” After the first round of this ritual, the client unties all the knots in the ritual materials, gathers them and exits to throw them at a place hidden from the public eye. The process is repeated, after which the client gathers the remaining ritual materials and takes them home for use as medicinal antidotes against the phenomena mentioned above. This ends the ceremony and the performers/clients and the priest may interact by sharing food and drink before they disperse.

The significance of this ceremony lies in its provision of an avenue for the performers to experience the phenomena mentioned above at a real and symbolic/imaginary level, serving as catharsis and a guide against them. It is not aimed at controlling the performers unduly but to liberate them from such phenomena.

### 6.5 Nugbuidodo, Reconciliation Ceremony

Nugbuidodo (as the name applies in Aŋlo) or tsitutu (as it is called in Togo and Northern Eweland) is a reconciliation or conflict management ceremony performed among the Ewe. According to my informants, Videzo Amegago, Atifose Amegago, and Emmanuel Logodo at Aŋloga (1991, 1999), this ceremony was invented by Togbui Gbeda, or Gbe, literally meaning, grandfather healer/physician, bush, herb or bush gatherer, who was an ancestor of Loafe and Amlade clans and many Ewe people (at Notsie in the Republic of Togo prior to the fifteenth or sixteenth Century). Before passing away, Togbui Gbeda
or Gbe had ordained that in the event of any misunderstanding or conflict occurring between family members, neighbors, or relatives, certain medicinal herbs which include nugbui (mouth herb/bush), some pieces of raw staple crops, and clean water should be gathered by a family/lineage head for use in performing this ritual through summoning the aggrieved people within a household, ward, village, or state to anywhere deemed convenient.

Among the Aŋlo-Ewe, this ceremony is performed in various households, wards, and communities on recommendation. Currently, nugbuidodo is customarily performed by the Aŋlo state representatives and volunteers including chiefs, priests and priestesses, lineage heads, government officials, ordinary citizens, students, and spectators at Agowowonu, a public gathering located at the central part of Aŋloga, near the market. The ceremony is performed on every Thursday preceding the annual Hogbetsotso festival, grand durbar, celebrated at Aŋloga on the first Saturday in November.

During my field work (at Aŋloga on the 30th October 1997), Togbui Nyahotamakloe, the left wing chief of the Aŋlo state and the then representative of the paramount chief or king, announced that arrangements were underway to introduce the ceremony into schools and if confirmed, would be officially announced to the schools through the Keta Education Service.

The ceremony provides an opportunity for households, members of performing groups, other social groups and state’s representatives to overtly express their grievances, which would be resolved in the ritual process, thus restoring peace, order, and harmony. In addition, festivals are great occasions for music and dance performance and for dramatic enactment of the people’s way of life, hence the need for eradicating any internal or external conflict which is likely to affect such celebrations.

There are local variations of this ritual but the main elements are common. In general, family/ward or state nugbuidodo may be preceded by formal or informal arbitration involving adahude, brainstorming on the basis of social ethics. The deliberative or brainstorming session involves a private consultation of the adjudicators with amegakpui, “the short old man,” who is an imaginary sage responsible for critical reflection and final judgement. An example of ward and state nugbuidodo is provided below.

In the ward reconciliation ceremony, participants may gather in the house of the gbedzigla, the lineage head or priest, or under a shade or at a public space, around a mat on which the ceremonial materials are displayed. The ceremony is introduced by an official handing over of the ritual materials to the gbedziglawo, master(s) of the ceremony by a family or lineage head. The ceremonial leader begins by acknowledging the presence of the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors and summarizing the purpose of the ritual.
In the process, the priest asks each individual or a state representative to overtly express his or her grievances. At the end of each statement, gbedziglawo, the ritual experts or priests, turn or mix the herbs while pronouncing, “ne ema nye nua adzi de yaegba vuha neyi de amatsia me,” which means, if such is the mouth/utterance or conflict that would ruin the performing group/state, let it dissolve in this medicinal water. The process is repeated several times until every aggrieved person has had his/her turn.

The priests then kneels down by the ritual materials and invokes the attributes of *nu* (mouth, utterance, or conflict), such as “enu gbeigbeyi, enu be yetso tevi tekọ magbe nu madu nu, magbe do mamo do, magbe vuhamenwọ mano ene,” meaning, “mouth the dangerous one, mouth/utterance or conflict who says s/he has cut the wrist from the joint, I would refuse to eat food and eat it, I would refuse make love and make it, I would refuse to be part of the performing group and be part of it.” After this, the priest gathers the ritual materials into a container and again acknowledges the various directions of the universe, (sunrise, sun journey, and sunset) while holding a calabash, a local container full of water. While facing sunset (the west), the ceremonial leader/priest or counsellor lowers the water and begins to pour it in drops while counting up to seven, and on the last count, pours all the water on the herbs and fills the container to the brim.

The ceremonial leaders/priests then hold the right hands of all the aggrieved people or their representatives and place them on top of one another, beginning with that of the king, queen, chief, or eldest person and ending with that of the youngest (with palms facing upward). They again place the left hands of the participants on top of the right hands, this time with the eldest or king’s hand last and with palms facing downward. While holding the hands together, gbedziglawo, the ceremonial leaders or priests, pronounce, “Amewọwọ toe nye hi, Amewọwọ toe nye hi, miatoe nye fie, fie via fie wo do na,” literally meaning, “this is for the bad people (two times) ours is dusk (peace), children of dusk outdoor at dusk (peace time).” They then count from one to seven three times with the hands held together, and on the last count, lower all the hands into the ritual water.

The ceremony climaxes with the priests scooping a handful of water into their mouths and spilling it on the ground/floor while pronouncing the attributes of *nu*, mouth, utterance, or conflict. This action is repeated by all the state representatives and participants, spilling and splashing the water on their fellows’ bodies while pronouncing, “enu gbeigbeyi, enu be yetso tevi etekọ, magbe nu madu nu, magbe do mamọ do,” “mouth, the dangerous one, mouth (utterance, conflict, grievance) says it cuts the wrist from its joint, I will refuse the food and eat it, I would refuse to perform the music and dance and per-
form it, I will refuse to sleep with a woman/man and sleep with her/him, today, if I perform this music and dance, let there be no curse, sickness or death. Today when I speak to or eat with “this person . . .”, let there be no death, no sickness, no curse.” The ceremony usually ends with hanududu, public dinner or communal feasting, or sharing of drinks, after which the participants disperse to their various homes.

### 6.6 Du-Nugbuidodo, State Reconciliation Ceremony

The state reconciliation ceremony is more elaborate and usually begins with a procession of the king, chiefs, priests, priestesses, and state delegates from the king’s palace through historical places such as kuife (a public setting for individual and communal expression of sorrows, pleas and wishes) and some clan houses, to agwowo, the ceremonial setting. The procession is usually heralded by the female zizi and the male asafohliawo, atrikpui choruses in the same circle (creating a dual chorus and a unique polyphony). On arriving at the ceremonial setting, the participants continue the procession by moving in a counterclockwise circle three or seven times, to symbolize their communalism and divine presence. They sit according to the three major divisions of Aŋla state: Lashibi, Adotri, and Woe.

Zizi chorus interweaves the entire ceremony, featuring at regular intervals, in prelude, interlude, and postlude to speeches, prayers and the main ritual activity. The ceremony is introduced by tsiam , state’s speaker or linguist, followed by a short statement by the paramount chief/king or his representative in the form of advice or counselling. This statement may caution the citizens not to take it for granted that even if they offended their neighbors during the year, such a conflict would be resolved during this ceremony or ritual. This would be followed by gbedododa or tsifofodi, a prayer by two representatives from Loafe and Amlade clans respectively (who are usually direct descendants of twin brothers, Atsu Weny and Etsse Adedzenyaki, who were leaders and priests of the Aŋla-Ewe). After the prayer, the priests exchange greetings with the leaders and the entire gathering and deliver any message they received from the Supreme Being and ancestors to the community.

The ceremony continues with the expression of grievances by the paramount chief, followed by divisional chiefs or representatives of Lashibi, Adotri and Woe, and is punctuated intermittently with speeches while mixing the ritual materials in a manner similar to that discussed above. At the end the ritual/ceremony, three rams provided by the various divisions of the state are
slaughtered by state butchers for public dinner or communal feasting to climax the reconciliation ceremony or peacemaking.

There is usually an educational forum led by one of the chiefs and directed towards student-youth participants, who together with other participants would ask questions relevant to their cultural history, moral and ethical values, and the significance of the ceremony or festival. Suggestions may be made on ways of improving the ceremony or festival.

There are also public announcements, followed by the procession of the chiefs and their entourage three or seven times in a counterclockwise circle in the ceremonial setting, followed by their final departure through the historical places and back to the paramount chief’s palace. This is also heralded by zizi and atrikpui songs. The various participants would either disperse to their houses, or observe or join the procession, or wait for the communal dinner before dispersing.

6.7 Gbedododa, Prayer

Gbedododa, which literally means prayer, may take the form of tsifofodi, pouring down water (libation) or offering to acknowledge, commemorate, revere, solicit the help of, and share one’s food/drink with the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors. This prayer is broadly performed in African communities (with local variations) and is usually observed at the beginning of the Ewe’s art making process, during inaugural ceremonies and on special performance occasions. The prayer is led by tsifodila, a male or female elder, state representative or priest/priestess. In the process, a calabash containing purified water and some mild alcohol is presented to tsifodila to offer to the Supreme Being, divinities, and/or ancestors. S/he begins by acknowledging the various directions of the universe by raising the offer toward sunrise or east while stating “amevo wo toe nye hi, amevwo toe nye hi,” meaning, “this is for the wicked/bad people,” and to the west by saying, “Miatoe nye fie, fievia, fie wodona,” meaning “ours is the dusk (peace), the dusk’s children assemble at dusk.” The tsifodila would continue to recount the attributes of the Supreme Being: “Mawuga kitata adanwuwo to be yewoa asi woa afos,” meaning, “the omnipresent God, the craftsman or artist who says s/he has created hands and feet (all things), the names of the ancestors/cultural heroes/heroines, drawing from the genealogy of the founders of the state/community and the people present. S/he would further state, “enu mefle fia a,” which implies “mouth (does not) cannot count all chiefs/leaders, I have called the known and the unknown,” to admit his inability to recall all the ancestors, cultural heroes, and heroines as well as include all of them.
The elder/priest or priestess then states the purpose of the prayer, such as the desire to form a new performing group, the desire for social harmony, the desire to achieve the goals and objectives of the group, or the desire to commemorate or pay tribute to the source of creativity, or the desire to have a good and peaceful celebration. S/he pours the water outward-forward three times and pronounces, “here is your water to receive, we should perform to please the chiefs/leaders and the people.” S/he also pours some of the water aside and says, “Those who do not drink it in public, here is yours.” S/he further pours the drink while stating, “here is your drink, ours is coolness/peace, let coolness/peace reign. Should there be an enemy who would wish the downfall of this group/state, we do not know, you know, or if s/he drinks it let him/her fall asleep or forget his/her malevolent thought.” The ceremonial leader/priest or priestess pours the remaining water down and toward himself and says, “fortune should proceed from outside into the room/house.” S/he would finally pour the remaining drink and pronounces, “There is nothing whose head is seen and whose tail is not seen, here is the remnant of your drink. We should perform to please the chiefs and the people.”

Following this, the ceremonial leader or state messenger returns and exchanges greetings with the community/group members, and is asked if he had successfully delivered the offer to the recipients and received any message from them. The response may be in the affirmative or in the form of caution or advice.

The exchange of greetings does not usually take place in ordinary music and dance performances because of time constraints. Instead, banyinyi, excerpts from Afa wu and misego music and dance, are performed to pay tribute to the divinities and ancestors and to symbolize peace, well wishes, and the interconnectedness of human and metaphysical beings. The prayer varies according to speakers, the occasion, the purpose, and the number of people present. Some speakers may prolong, ornament or exaggerate their prayers while others may be brief. Some citizens may interject the prayer with utterances such as afui woadi!!, your utterance will sound, ye ma!!, that is it!!, neva eme!!, may it come to pass. In Northern Ewe, Akan or Ga areas such interjections may take the form of yaoo!!, ahaa!! all of which connote positive sentiments.

Below are excerpts from the prayer by Aŋlo-Ewe state representatives of the Lɔafe and Amlade clans respectively on 1st November 1997.

Text One

... I call grandfather Wenya manyahe ...
You should all descend among us.
Those who settle in Ewe valley,
When the Ewe valley festival sets in
They would celebrate the yam festival
Those who settle in Ge/Accra, when the festival sets in
They would celebrate Homowo.
Today here is some water in calabash handed to me Loafe child to offer you.
There is no death in it, no sickness in it.
The mouths of the 36 states of Anlo should be equal.
Our heads should pull our chiefs and the chiefs’ heads should pull us.
No one is his neighbor’s enemy
One may say s/he is his/her neighbor’s enemy
Should someone step on his/her neighbor
S/he does not do it deliberately
S/he should accept it for him/her.
The festival we are celebrating
We should perform it to please the chiefs and the people.
Those who are foreigners among us
When it is time for us to disperse from here,
Strengthen their back and front
Their way should be clear.

Text Two

… *Here is some water from Tɔgbui* (chief or king) *Adeladzea and his subjects*
Given to me Amlade son to pour for you
The word added to the water is
They said truly the way you led them from Hogbe to this place
And our grandfather Wenyia recoiled here
Then Anloga becomes the resting place and the residence for them
He says it is necessary for them to be doing a remembrance thing
About the way you led them from Hogbe.
Then he established it and we are doing it for the leaders and the led.
The 36 states of Anlo would come together to celebrate it and see the outcome
The water in my hand to be given to you is for goodness.
What we desire from you ancestors is now the whole state is spoilt
Our mouths are no longer equal
Father’s child, mother’s child rise against one another
Truly, the way you led them with bravery and strength
You should put those values into them through book knowledge.
Betrayal has now established home among them.
People should not betray one another,
A mother’s child to eat has become difficult.
If these are due to the violation of your ethics
May you remove them from our midst.
These are the words with the water
The foreigners among us should also see their way home
Their houses should be cool on their return
When the year turns, we meet again.
While pouring this water it would be good for me to say
Let it rain again right now.
But you omnipresent God what pleases you is what you do
If it pleases you, may you send us the rain again oooo …
Interjection: yemaal!!, that is it; ne dzaal!, ne dzaal!, let it rain!!, let it rain!!

Nowadays, traditional rituals have been subjected to criticisms, particularly by some Christians who still consider them as acts of heathenism or paganism. One of these critics is Michael Amoah, who argues (1998, pp. 196–197) that such rituals are a waste of public funds and do not confer any economic and social benefits. He further critiques Catholic Bishop Sarpong for trying to reconcile traditional African rituals with the Christian faith and proposing those rituals for GCE Advance Level Curriculum. Amoah further claims that the Biblical Adam and Jesus Christ were black. He also attributes the African mode of prayer, libation, to Greek and Asian sources. Such criticisms are reactions to the contemporary critique of Christianity as a foreign religion and have attracted counter-criticisms in defense of traditional values. Amoah traces the etymology of the word “libation” to the Greek and Asian cultures without attempting to investigate the meaning of the relevant concepts across African cultures, and the origin and cultural significance and particularity of this African mode of prayer. He also fails to recognize the commonality of this prayer and its rootedness in the African cultures prior to colonization and subsequent cross-cultural interactions. In doing so, he is perpetuating the colonialists’ representation of African knowledge. I do not believe that this widespread and unique African prayer is a Greek or Asian derivative, despite the intercultural contacts that occurred in the past. Despite the universality of certain cultural practices, this practice reflects both common and particular African communal values and their practical orientation. This is not to ignore the fact that some world societies have moved their emphasis from practical activities and communalism to objectivity, abstraction, and individualism. African societies are as old as other world societies and their emphasis on practical activities may be related to their biological nature and their awareness of the limits of theory and abstraction.
Concerning the economic values of these rituals, critics fail to realize that despite limited specialization in traditional African societies, certain cultural practices, such as religion, were not geared toward the accumulation of surplus value but rather towards social and individual welfare and the maintenance of harmony and peace. This does not imply their lack of economic potential. The fact that Christianity is based on an economic and political foundation, which facilitates its commodification in this contemporary era, should not lead such critics to conclude that African rituals lack economic and social benefits. With the emphasis on professionalism and democracy, the traditional priests or ceremonial leaders also qualify as professionals who could be remunerated for their services. Their prayers are equally directed toward the same God(s) who created all human beings, and they cherish cultural diversity and harmony.

Despite the tolerance of Western and Islamic rituals by many traditional believers (not for lack of critical ability), most Christians are often intolerant of traditional practices which form the bedrock of African cultures. Such an attitude is eroding the remnants of traditional African cultures in an era when most of the youths are continually being indoctrinated into Christian and Muslim worship. In this situation, a new awareness must be created in the Christian and the Muslim settings in order to develop a greater respect and tolerance for traditional African cultural values. It is true that some traditional ritual practices may require modification but it is worth noting that no cultural practice would develop if it were constantly nipped in the bud. We are witnessing religious revival in some Western societies at the turn of the century, but as a result of colonization and a tendency toward universalism, Africans’ immense contribution to world philosophies, religions, and cultures continues to be undervalued. To some extent, African nation-state formation has complicated the development of certain indigenous African cultural practices. Some educational and cultural institutions are now addressing these issues but they also face opposition, particularly from the Christian sector.

Obviously, some aspects of the traditional rituals/prayers would require modification to include the contribution of women and other cultural groups who are often underrepresented. Such practices depend upon the originators of certain practices, social responsibility, qualification for ancestorship and cultural heroism, but it appears the patriarchal system also led to the existence of a relatively larger number of heroes than heroines. In most African communities, the roles of male and female cultural archetypes are regarded as complementary. However, current socioeconomic and political conditions necessitate reevaluation of these cultural values for effective, adequate, and proper representation.
One notices that a particular Ewe prayer begins with, *Amewo tse nye hi*, this is for the wicked or the bad/evil ones. This may create an impression of creating a negated other. The text does not refer to any particular person or group of people. It recalls the Ewe historical and cultural experiences: their sufferings and hardships during their westward migration, with a realization of their connection to their torturers whom they still honor with an offer or prayer. The statement reflects the African communalism and desire to reconcile with enemies, but this reconciliation does not imply a total repression of the historical and cultural experiences.

Some observers comment on the unhygienic nature of some African rituals because of the use of local materials and the level of human interaction, such as the splashing of water in *nugbuidodo*, and the environment in which they are performed. Such comments reflect the observers’ perspectives. Most of the ritual materials objects are well treated. These rituals are not geared toward undue aestheticism but serve as stabilizing and unifying forces and seek authenticity through the use of some historical materials. However, the originators of these rituals/ethical values did not restrict any future modifications. Like human beings, other creatures, and features and natural objects, the ritual materials may undergo gradual deterioration and, therefore, need proper maintenance. It is important for observers to attempt to understand the significance of African rituals before suggesting any modifications since undue criticism or aestheticism would undermine their historical and cultural significance.

Some critics also argue against the holistic nature of these rituals as represented by the incorporation of medicinal materials. The incorporation of medicinal, healing, spiritual, and other materials provides a unique human experience. All human beings undergo healing and medical treatment, which varies across cultures. At a cross-cultural level, these rituals or ethical values may be adapted to suit the prevailing environmental conditions.

Concerning Afa inquiry and counselling, one may say that some of the problems that formerly required divination may now be solved through the use of the “common sense” and through a reflection on its theoretical documentations (as done by some scholars), or through scientific inquiry, especially in an era associated with progress. The distinction between common sense and intellectual knowledge is still ambiguous and no particular mode of knowing would provide us with absolute knowledge. The divine text provides a unique African epistemic foundation through its integration of multifaceted experiences. Certain elements of this text cannot be accessed through Western technology and science but this does not imply their superstitious, static, or unreflective nature. The text is continually reinterpreted and much of its content relates to the current social conditions.
Some Christians usually argue against the use of animals and other objects in rituals, which they perceive as leading to the destruction of environmental creatures and features and benefiting the priests. It is worth noting that such rituals are not aimed at radical destruction of the environmental creatures and features or enriching the priests and priestesses. They are rather aimed at redistributing or sharing, communal feasting, feeding neighboring creatures, environmental protection, and maintaining checks and balances. Such critics often fail to realize that the many offerings that are presented in the churches or to church leaders for their services are also forms of sacrifices whose environmental consequences and economic values may outweigh those of traditional African rituals.

However, some sacrificial recommendations may (as usual) require modification, since the requisite materials may no longer be easily obtainable from the environment. This would require the minimal usage or substitution of ritual materials to ensure their continued supply, and to sustain the environment. Changes in the environmental conditions require the performance of outdoor rituals at the more appropriate locations, and a timely removal of the ritual’s remains, in order to maintain a clean and healthy environment.

I would reiterate that the difference between traditional and modern lifestyles is mainly due to the idea of progress, a linear conception of time, and technological and scientific developments. These phenomena require critical examination in view of the rate of human development and environmental destruction, and creating a balance between the essential African cultural values and the current technological and scientific developments.

The integration of spiritual, artistic, and other human values contributes to the uniqueness of African music and dance and provides a basis for a broader arts education. Adopting this holistic approach to African arts education will ensure a balanced development of various cultural elements. The focus on “artistic values” at the expense of other cultural components often leads to a distortion or neglect of other elements necessary for integrated African performing arts.

In this situation, the modification of traditional African rituals or ethical values should involve re-representing the images of the Supreme Being, state divinities, and cultural heroes and heroines to make them more appealing to the present and future generations. Such a project would involve collaboration between performing artists, visual artists, various cultural workers, government officials, and international organizations.
6.8 Ewe Performance Appreciation

Integrated Ewe music and dance performances may be appreciated by the performers themselves, patrons, and local and foreign spectators. In the case of the performers and local audiences, appreciation may be based on cultural values or performance ethics, which influence individuals' tastes and preferences. A foreign observer or listener may appreciate these music and dance forms on the basis of his/her cultural values. Traditionally, there is no marked distinction between the audience and performers since they all belong to the same culture and are encouraged to participate in most performances.

Appreciation of Ewe performance is intertwined with its evaluation and involves the active participation of the performers, patrons and audience, including positive comments, clapping, singing, dancing, and playing supporting instruments such as rattles, bells, clappers and the lead instruments, as well as nodding heads and sighing where appropriate.

Ewe performance appreciation also takes the form of token reinforcement; spectators fixing coins on the foreheads of performers, throwing money in the performance setting, putting cloths around the neck of performers, using cloths to fan the performers, wiping performers’ faces with handkerchiefs and raising their right forefingers towards the performers. It also involves performers or audience members waving, swinging, or spreading their clothes or handkerchiefs on the ground for the patrons/leaders to walk on in the performance setting. Ewe performance appreciation further takes the form of performers or audience members throwing cloths or handkerchiefs into the audience or performers for open or specific invitations.

Ewe music and dance appreciation involves a lead drummer playing the appellations of other performers or spectators, shaking hands, and sharing drinks and food with them after closing. Spectators may nod their heads, smile, shake their bodies, imitate the performers, or remain quiet, cry, or express their surprise in appreciating African performance.

Limited participation is encouraged in some religious or ceremonial and professional performances that are contextually bound, and require special skills. This usually takes the form of the audience or peer groups playing minor roles such as clapping, cheering up peers/colleagues and friends, or maintaining some distance. In the traditional setting, atsimua, the disciplinarian ensures that at a given time, the performance circle or setting is not overcrowded. These days, some professional and semi-professional performing groups usually direct their performances towards passive audiences who may participate by clapping, commenting and dancing at the end of the performance. To avoid undue disruption, members of performing groups may put containers in front
of the group for collecting any token from benevolent spectators or performers. Disapproval of African performance usually takes the form of the audience shouting, remaining silent, or leaving the performance arena.

6.9 Aesthetic Evaluation of Ewe Music and Dance

The concept of the aesthetic is said to have been originated from the Greek word “aesthetico,” meaning pertaining to the senses of perception of sensual beauty. The term is said to have been coined by Alexander Baumgarten in 1744 to refer to the science of the beautiful (see Crawford in Smith and Simpson, 1991, p. 18). The application of the aesthetic concept to Western arts generated debates on the definition of art, the nature of beauty, and the criteria for its evaluation. The subject of aesthetics has attracted much research in Western societies. However, four major aesthetic theories came to dominate the Western art history, as enumerated by Richard Anderson (1990, pp. 199–220). The first, which is mimetic (a Greek derivative word), is a dominant theory associated with imitation and refers to the representative arts which convey to the viewer something of extra-artistic character and depict ideal classical beauty and ethical and moral perfection, as theorized during the neo-classical era. This theory is said to have influenced the French impressionism and contemporary popular art forms.

Plato and Aristotle were among the major contributors to mimetic theory in ancient Greece. Plato’s concern with the arts lies in his conviction of the unity of all values, as seen in his dissatisfaction with the functional and the relativist conception of beauty and fineness, and the attribution of fineness to goodness. He affirms that artistic beauty be grounded in goodness that is essentially ethical or moral. Plato formulates certain aesthetic principles on the internal structures of the arts, such as form, organization, and coherence. Concerned about the education of the young, Plato formulates three criteria for the aesthetic: truthfulness, ethical quality of content, and psychological benefit. He disputes the ethical wisdom and religious or divine inspiration of the poets on moral, intellectual and epistemological grounds (Cooper, 1992, pp. 327–330).

Aristotle states the predominant forms of beauty as order, symmetry, and definiteness. He recognizes the dialectics of the ugly and the beautiful in poetry (Cooper, pp. 11–12). Aristotelian dialectics further implies that certain things may be morally ugly and aesthetically beautiful, some may be aesthetically ugly and morally beautiful, while others may be morally and aesthetically
beautiful. Good poetry, according to Aristotle, would present vivid imagined particulars and would be aesthetically pleasing even in cases where the subject matter was displeasing. The Aristotelian notion of beauty is said to have been developed by Thomas Aquinas to encompass integrity or perfection due to proportion, harmony, brightness, or clarity (Battin, et al., 1989, pp. 36–37).

Pragmatic theory deals with the practical purpose or instrumentality of the arts: their sociopolitical and cultural functions and refers to a variety of religious arts, political arts, political propaganda, and recently developed art therapy.

Emotionalist theory is said to have developed in the mid-eighteenth century and was associated with the expression of human emotions or feelings, serving as the bedrock of Western popular music. Another aesthetic theory that had gained momentum during the industrial/revolutionary era in Europe, is Marxist, which views aesthetics as reflecting the dominant capitalist ideology (Arvon, 1973, pp. 83–100; Sarup, 1978, pp.107–128).

Formalist aesthetic theory takes its roots from the classical sources (during the era of Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle) and was advocated by Roger Fry, Clive Bell, and others during the twentieth century, as a departure from the previous aesthetic theories. It defines art on the basis of its formal qualities (without regard to sociological, anthropological, and historical values): art for its own sake (Anderson, 1990, pp. 199–220).

Recent philosophers distinguish between aesthetic values and aesthetic experience by stating that

>aesthetic values typically come into play when we are making value judgements about artworks or other aesthetic objects (or considering and assessing the judgement of others). In the course of these practices, we are more likely to rely on a wide range of value concepts than on beauty alone. As we observed, we will speak of objects as elegant, sublime, horrible, comical, dainty, picturesque, dumpy, dreary, and so on, and perhaps only rarely speak of them as beautiful or ugly (cited in Battin, et al., 1989, p. 38).

In contrast, aesthetic experience is defined as

>whatever mental states we undergo when we perceive things in a certain frame of mind (seeing things for their own sake), or all mental aspects of our acquaintance with whatever objects we take to be aesthetic object (Battin, et al., pp. 42–44).

Another feature of the aesthetic experience that emerged at the end of the nineteenth century was the aesthetic attitude theory, which holds that a cer-
tain way of looking at things is an all-important precondition of aesthetic experience. The key to the aesthetic attitude theory is psychical distance—the idea that in order to have an aesthetic experience, ordinary practical experience must be put out of reach (Battin, et al., p. 44). Edward Bullough attempts to illustrate this distance by an analogy:

“Imagine a fog at sea: for most people it is an experience of acute unpleasantness. Apart from the psychical annoyance and remoter forms of discomfort such as delays, it is apt to produce feelings of peculiar anxiety, fears of invisible dangers, strains of watching and listening for distant and unlocalized signals. The listless movements of the ship and her warning calls soon tell upon the nerves of the passengers; and that special, expectant, tacit anxiety and nervousness, always associated with this experience, make a fog the dreaded terror of the sea (all the more terrifying because of its very silence and gentleness) for the expert seafarer no less than for the ignorant landsman. Nevertheless a fog at sea can be a source of intense relish and enjoyment” (Bullough, cited in Werhane, p. 392).

Jerome Stolnitz and other writers have tried to expand on Bullough’s theory by stating the way in which distance and similar features of the aesthetic attitude affect the way we see the world. These features include disinterest (absence of concern for any ulterior purpose), sympathy (an acceptance of objects on their own terms), and contemplation (an appreciation of objects that does not involve analysis of asking questions about them) (Battin, et al., pp. 44–45).

It is said that the aesthetic experience allows the work of art to be enjoyed in its own right without regard to sociopolitical, anthropological, and moral considerations, and to achieve an objective view through critical judgement, without regard to ambiguities, social prejudices, and conflicting values. The notions of aesthetic attitude, aesthetic disinterest, and aesthetic experience all imply a certain degree of abstract perception.

Other writers, such as George Dickie, have denied the aesthetic attitude theory by arguing that there is no such thing that can be identified as the aesthetic attitude, and by insisting that there need not be any conflict between practical concerns and aesthetic appreciation. Dickie points to instances in which we observe movies critically and unsympathetically and yet seem to get the most out of them (Battin, et al., p. 45)

Other theorists have tried to provide accounts of aesthetic experience that are independent of the traditional claims about the aesthetic attitude. For example, Virgil Aldrich stresses the peculiar ways in which aesthetic perceptiveness allows us to see an object as a series of interchangeable “aspects” (from
various levels). Aldrich maintains that this experience begins with “aspection,” the trained and sometimes highly refined ability to see the several aspects of a thing (Battin, et. al., p. 46). On the other hand, Monroe Beardsley states that the key to aesthetic experience is the way we tie our mental activity to the form and qualities of certain objects to render that activity unified, intense, complex and pleasurable (cited in Battin, et al., p. 46).

I will now review the factors that constitute African aesthetics before examining how these concepts relate to them. The aesthetic concepts were originally applied to African cultures, visual arts, music, dance and drama by recent anthropologists such as Robert Redfield (1959), Melville Herskovits (1959), Horton (1965), Robert Farris Thompson (1968), and Simon Ottenberg (1971); ethnomusicologists such as Harold Schneider (1956), Alan Merriam (1964), and Nissio Fiagbedzi (2005); and dance ethnologists such as Kariamu Welsh-Asante (1985) and Ofotsu Adinku (1994).

The application of the aesthetic concepts to African cultures/arts generates debates in the absence of written philosophical theories, and the lack of adequate knowledge of African cultures on the part of foreign researchers. Hence, Roy Sieber applied the term “unvoiced aesthetic” specifically to African visual arts (Merriam, 1964, p. 271). Obviously, evaluation of traditional African performances takes the form of verbal utterances or comments, actions, attitudes, or behaviors and remaining in silence to indicate awe and surprise. Therefore, the African aesthetic is not only unvoiced.

In applying the aesthetic concept to the music of non-Western cultures, Alan Merriam listed the Western aesthetic concepts such as the psychical distance or objectivity (as used by Bullough in 1912), manipulation of form for its own sake, the attribution of emotion-producing qualities that are perceived strictly as sounds, the attribution of beauty to the art product or process, purposeful intent to create something aesthetic and the presence of the philosophy of aesthetic (Merriam, 1964, pp. 259–276).

An awareness of African aesthetics requires an understanding of African philosophy, worldview, and culture (as discussed earlier). African aesthetics is shaped by the interwoven biological/physical, social, economic, political, religious, and ethical values. In general, the Africans are born within certain environments. They interact with the environmental features and creatures by using their senses of feeling, seeing, smelling, hearing, touching, and tasting. They also think about the origin of the cosmos and formulate concepts and ideas to communicate among themselves and with their source. Thus, the African interaction with the physical environment and their experiences in the socioeconomic and political spheres together shape their music and dance forms and form the basis of their evaluation. Historical and environmental
factors contribute to African cultural diversity. Hence, the various African societies express their aesthetic values in unique ways but similarities exist in the concept across cultures.

Strictly speaking, there should be a distinct basis of evaluating the performances of the mainstream, youth, adult, male, female, economic, religious, and political groups because of the contextual basis of African music and dance organization. However, there are common values that are expressed in the various performances and it is the synthesis of the particular and common values that constitute African aesthetics.

In defining African Aesthetics, Aloysius Lugira states:

“Beauty is multi-dimensional, i.e., it may be physical, intellectual, moral, or literary. It is multi-level in that one may consider the beautiful as merely pretty, as graceful, or as sublime. Though art can be reached by human endorsement and industry; however, in order for art to reflect beauty it must encompass integrity, proportion, and splendor” (Lugira in Lemuel, 1982, p. 6).

The multidimensionality of the aesthetic concept is expressed in many African societies. For example, among the Ewe, the word *dze tugbe* means beautiful; it refers to a woman’s exceptional qualities or beauty. The word *dze deka* means being exceptional and refers to a man’s handsomeness. Thus, the noun forms of *dze tugbe* and *dze deka* are *tugbedzedze* and *dekadzedze*. The term *nane fe tugbedzedze*, or *nu fe tugbedzedze* refers to the beauty of an object or a thing (See also Fiagbedzi, 2005, p. 3). The Ewe may apply the aesthetic concepts to the whole human physique, or to particular features of a person, such as face, neck, buttocks, thighs, and legs. Similarly, the Akan consider roundness of the buttocks and breasts, a slant gaze and tilted neck as some essentials of feminine beauty (Kwakwa in Sage, 1997, 10–15). Personal beauty is also ascribed to environmental creatures and features thus indicating the interconnection of the self and the environment. For example, evaluative terms, such as *edze deka abe adɔ ene*, he is as handsome as *adɔ* (a tropical animal with a furry tail like that of a squirrel), may be heard among the Ewe. Also, according to Harold Schneider, the Pakot women of East Africa who are gardeners find beauty in the healthy green field of the eleusine plant (Anderson, 1990: 245).

Many Africans conceptualize beauty on two broad levels. According to Babatunde Lawal, the Yoruba word *ewa* refers to manifest beauty. It has two different levels: *ewa ode*, facial beauty, refers to the attractive appearance of an object and sensuous good looks of a person. *Ewa enu* refers to inner beauty, which is the genuine intrinsic worth of a thing or a person, determined by his
or her character (Anderson, 1990, pp. 132–133). Similarly, the Ewe use terms such as tugbe le mo, literally meaning beauty in the face, and ame gbale, a person covered with human skin, to refer to a person’s physical attractiveness. They also refer to de, character (which they maintain, manifests through the interaction of the heart with other human components), as the intrinsic worth of a person. Hence, the expression nyo nanyo de gbɔm wo le, meaning, you can be exceptionally good but it is the character that is (worth) talked about.

The Ewe recognize the interaction between outer and inner beauty: the effects that physical appearance may have on human character, behaviors, or actions. Hence, they also pay due attention to physical appearance or physical well being. Right from childbirth, mothers begin to mold the infant into the desired form/shape by pushing or pressing the forehead and buttocks to achieve some proportion and roundness. They also press or stretch the infant’s legs and elbows with the aim of achieving some proportion, and apply fragrance powder or incense to the infant. Personal appearance is further enhanced by colorful costumes, make-up, and props and through food habits and participation in physical activities. However, the emphasis on human character is based on the premise that one’s physical features may wane through ageing, ill health, accident, and death but good morals or ethics that manifest through a person’s character or soul may sustain or transcend generations.

Among the Ewe, people born with unique traits or disabilities are usually regarded (by the elders) as normal human beings. Hence, the elders would express, eya ha amee, he or she is also a human being. Generally, a person of good character lives in harmony with others by conforming to the social norms and expressing his or her will or idiosyncrasies when the need arises.

In referring to African musical aesthetics, Nketia states:

“... aesthetics of “the reference system” of artistic, social and philosophical values in music is held and applied or expressed by those who make or listen to music. Hence, as a system it is independent of or external to musical structure, even though its exponents are embodied in the materials and structure of music” (cited in Lemuel, 1982: p. 7).

One could refer to African music and dance aesthetics as the values that are expressed by the performers, spectators, and custodians of the music and dance in various contexts. These values are expressed through drum texts, songs, dance movements, comments, eye contact, nodding, sighing and remaining silent to indicate awe and surprise, and in theory. Not all the values that constitute African aesthetics would be expressed in a particular performance but in various performances.
The beauty of Ewe music and dance is generally expressed as *Evua dze fia to dze ga to*, the performance is pleasing to the chiefs/kings and the people (the leaders and the led). *Evua vivi*, the performance is pleasing or sweet; *Evua nyo*, the performance is good. Displeasure is usually expressed as *Evua gble*, the performance is spoilt or is not satisfactory. These pleasing or agreeable qualities manifest through the blending of instrumental sounds, vocal sounds, dance movements, costumes, make-up, properties, and sculpture in such a way that they fulfil their contextual functions in appealing to the physical, spiritual, emotional, and intellectual values of the people. However, an observer may evaluate or comment on specific elements of the performance, such as drum patterns, songs/melodies, dance movements, costumes and their meanings.

The fulfilment of the contextual functions forms a basis for evaluating Ewe music and dance aesthetics. As noted earlier, African music and dance is usually created or performed to communicate or reenact significant cultural values, integrate members of the community, educate, validate sociopolitical values, mourn or commemorate a deceased member of the community, heal, comment on social phenomena, and entertain.

Communication is a major function of African music and dance. Communication is effected through the use of musical instruments: their size, number, tuning, text, tempo, dynamics; song texts, melodic and rhythmic patterns, dance movements/themes and visual imagery to represent or depict the contextual values (sounds and movements of spiritual forces, human beings, neighboring creatures and objects), as noted earlier. If the performance fulfils the contextual functions, it is evaluated as positive, pleasing or good.

However, within the realm of meaning-making, the drum language does not exactly mimic human voices but its close association with the spoken language enables those familiar with the language and culture to understand it. Dance movements can mimic or represent real life experiences, events, or actions, symbolize cultural themes and exhibit the dancer’s idiosyncrasies and imagination. Similarly, the songs may feature themes that can be understood within specific and general contexts, on a real and metaphorical or symbolic level, and serve as unique melodies. In addition, some of the music and dance forms/elements have lost their original meanings and can now be conceptualized as abstract. However, the participants/observers would expect to understand certain aspects of the performance to enable them feel at home and judge it as pleasing or good. Further, certain elements or themes of the Ewe music and dance (songs, drum texts and dance movements) may violate the social ethics. It is true that some Ewe composers sometimes take artistic license or use their imagination to express exaggerated and abusive themes. Many traditional leaders would discourage composers, citizens, and youths from expressing im-
moral and taboo themes. However, the featuring of such themes in Ewe performances may be due to the social conditions and the use of music and dance as an avenue for social criticism and social commentary. Such themes may reflect the particular experiences of certain individuals and groups within the broader society. For the artists to solely express morally virtuous or beautiful themes, the entire society must conform to absolute virtues. If not, the artist would be condoning and conniving social injustices. The inclusion of some immoral themes in Ewe music and dance may be a reflection of the social reality: conflict, human imperfection, the tendency of human beings to discriminate and imagine, and individual idiosyncrasies. Some of these expressions may serve as catharsis or an emotional release for some people who have been victims of certain social practices, and may lead to restoration of social equilibrium. Some of the themes may also be geared towards moral education.

The recognition of human imperfection among the Ewe leads to the saying: edzu metɔ ko o, or dzu matse, an insult does not bear mark or an insult does not grow on the victim. Some insults are considered mere descriptions. However, certain insults are considered painful and serious offenses that may have negative impact the abused, hence the abuser may be reprimanded or punished in specific contexts.

Within traditional Ewe society, some youths may experience some of these immoral themes on abstract levels while others may be affected in one way or another. But the social structural integration usually maintains a check on any negative effects these themes may have on the youths’ behavior. There is a difference between expressing these taboo themes in music and dance and expressing them in real life. Such themes may be aesthetically pleasing despite their subject matter. However, in this contemporary era marked by gradual breakdown of traditional African societies and the emphasis on individuals’ rights and freedom, the effectiveness of the society in maintaining checks and balances on any negative effects that some of these critical themes may have on people is being challenged.

Evidence exists among the Aglo-Ewe on the effects the Halo songs of insult and exaggeration had on some citizens (during the early 1920s, marked by the decline of the traditional political system), who committed suicide or exiled themselves. This led to the elders’ mediation through performance censorship. Therefore, in extreme cases where such themes endanger social harmony, negotiation between the various parties should be made. Needless to say, some of these critical themes may be relevant to critical studies in the contemporary educational systems.

Ewe music and dance should also be evaluated on the basis of its sectional structures such as instrumental, dance and song sections. In vufofo, drumming or percussion or instrumental performance, the aesthetics should be
evaluated on the use of appropriate instruments, such as drums, bells, rattles and flutes, their tuning and playing techniques and the harmony or blending of the various sounds. The proper articulation of tones and pitches, dynamics of the musical sounds, their meanings and the coordination of instrumental sounds with voices and dance movements also form the basis of Ewe music and dance aesthetics. Critical comments are often expressed on the timbre and tonal qualities of the musical instruments, their tuning, the drummer’s use of appropriate techniques, articulation of the musical sounds, improvisation skills, and coordination of the various performance elements, as well as his/her dancing ability. Further comments are made on the effects the instrumental sounds have on the listeners and the meaning or themes expressed through the instruments/music.

In hadzidzi, singing, the aesthetics is based on smoothness and projection of voices, rhythmic qualities of songs, singing in unison (homophony) with minor variations that serve as harmonic devices, the pleasing qualities of songs; the singer’s involvement or emotional expression, proper coordination of songs with instrumental sounds and dance movements, the meaning or themes expressed through the songs and the overall impression. Critical comments are usually expressed on the smoothness, intonation, and projection of voices; singers’ melodic range, the dynamics, timing and blending of the songs; coordination of the songs with instrumental patterns and movements; the skill or artistry of the composer, and the effects of the songs on the listeners and the relevance of the song to context.

In yeδudu, dancing, the aesthetics is based on the posture assumed by the dancer, dancer’s hand formation, flexibility of the dancer; movement qualities or the execution of dance movements in conformity with age, gender, religious and political and individual values; personal involvement (emotional expression or feeling); the meaning or theme conveyed through the dance/movement or performance; the timing and coordination of the movement with the drumming patterns and songs. The aesthetics is further evaluated on the spatial organization of the dance, the dancer’s stylization and improvisation or creative skills. A forward and backward movement of the waist in Ewe performances may be considered obscene or violating the aesthetics of Ewe performance.

Here too, comments are often expressed on the dancer’s posture, hand positioning, flexibility, movement quality, improvisation or creative skills, timing, spatial organization and meaning of the dance/elements.

Seselame, mododo or mododo de ye/hai Dzi, feeling or emotional or facial expression on the dance or music, constitutes another basis of Ewe music and dance aesthetics. A dancer is expected to be immersed in the dance, or assume the role of the character s/he portrays through the expression of appropriate feel-
ings or emotions in order to clarify the message. I have discussed the feelings or emotions that are expressed in various contexts, some of which reflect the original emotions of the composers while others reveal the subjective experiences of performers, listeners, and viewers. Critical comments are expressed, such as *do mo de ha/yea dzi*, express the song or dance in the face, *edo ada akpa*, you look too serious, *le mo de enu*, concentrate on it. Ambiguities of such emotional expression are due to environmental factors, individual idiosyncrasies, and multiple and overlapping themes expressed in various contexts (as noted earlier). This requires flexibility and tolerance in the evaluation process.

The repetition of the music and dance components forms a basis of Ewe aesthetic evaluation. Repetition enables the performers and spectators to absorb and retain the performance components and acquire the necessary skills and meaning. Repetition in Ewe performance also stems from the desire for continuity and stability. It also symbolizes certain cultural values (as discussed earlier). In such contexts, evaluative comments are expressed, such as *gagblo ake*, say it again, *gafui ake*, play it again, *gawoe ake*, do it again. The Ewe aesthetics also manifests in oral modes of presentation, which elucidate the role of African performers as historians and custodians of the cultural heritage. The oral presentation encourages greater freedom of expression, creativity, improvisation, and social interaction.

The costumes, make-up, stage properties, and other visual imagery also form the basis of Ewe aesthetics. They identify sociocultural groups, the nature of the performance, occasion for the performance and the requirements of dramatic enactment. They also extend the dance movements and clarify the themes or meanings of the performance. Comments are often expressed on the color of costumes, the appearance of dancers, and the properties used in the performance. If the wrong costume is worn, or the wrong props and visual imagery are used, disapproval may be expressed in the form of comments or audience leaving the performance arena.

Audience participation also forms the basis of African music and dance aesthetics. Although in some cases, a physical audience may not be necessary for the performance to take place, audience participation enhances the performances. Comments are often expressed about the number of people in the audience and the lack of audience participation in the performance.

Ewe music and dance may well be evaluated on the actual artmaking process. I have elucidated the Ewe’s main creative/performative process (from the preparatory stages to the inaugural performance) as well as the other processes in the economic, religious, and political contexts which deserve consideration for the process-based evaluation. There is bound to be an interaction between
process and product. Although in some cases, the effect of the creative process on the performance may be difficult to discern, yet a close examination of the Ewe’s artmaking process (the preparations and rituals that are performed in the process) reveals its effect on the actual performance. I would reiterate that in the processed-based evaluation, due consideration should be given to the various processes of artistic creation/performance.

6.10 Evaluative Terms

Below are some of the evaluative comments, or terms or concepts used in Ewe music and dance and their English equivalence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ewe</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua vivi</td>
<td>The performance is pleasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua dze fia to dze ga to</td>
<td>The performance is pleasing to the leaders and the led</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edzo le vua me</td>
<td>There is “hotness” or dynamism in the performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua fa</td>
<td>The performance is cold or not lively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua ne ya</td>
<td>Let the performance be lively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua ne ho</td>
<td>Let the performance rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua mevivi o</td>
<td>The performance is not (sweet) pleasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De ati vua me</td>
<td>Remove the stick from the drum or leave room for other instruments to sound</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tro vugbea or mla vua</td>
<td>Change the drum pattern or ornament the drum pattern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yro vua</td>
<td>Roll the drumming or provide a drum signal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ugbea nede to</td>
<td>Let the rhythm be intoned or well articulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efоа vу ѵтг/Emla vу</td>
<td>S/he plays very well, S/he ornaments very well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua didim dindindin</td>
<td>The drum sounds (dindindin) highly pleasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uu ga dina detega</td>
<td>The lead drum sounds (detega) variedly pleasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua gbe dom</td>
<td>The drum/performance is sounding well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua fe gbe nyo/Eʋua didim nyuie</td>
<td>The drum’s sound is good/the drum sounds well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua didim kpakpakpa</td>
<td>The drum is sounding too high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua he akpa</td>
<td>The drum is too stretched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua didim gбgбгбgб</td>
<td>The drum sounds dumpy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eʋua gбл akpa</td>
<td>The drum is too loose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Le atsia nyuie</td>
<td>Hold the stick properly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kpɔ yedulawo gб</td>
<td>Look at the dancers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ewua nedze ga dzi  Let the drumming/performance be on the beat
Ewua da  The drumming/performance is off beat
De atsi wua me  Remove stick/hand from the drumming, or
leave for the supporting instruments to sound
Azaguno maduye ade lia tso dzro  Is there a drummer who would not dance? Get
up
Eyea ne se  Let the dance be strong
Dzimea ne ye  Let the back/torsio break or contract and release
Bobo de yea dzi  Bend down or go low on the dance
Amesike mebobo oa dzime kpekpie  One who does not bend has stiff back
Fozo abowo fu  Bring the arms closer to the body
Eye nedze mo anyi  Let the dance be smooth, orderly or pleasing
Edua ye/edoa atsyia  S/he dances/stylizes/displays
Devi sia dua ametsitsi ye  This child dances like an adult
Nyomu sia dua ntsu ye  This woman dances like a man
Natsu sia adua nyomu ye  This man dances like a woman
Eha nedze ga dzı  Let the song fall on the beat
Egbẹa nyo  The voice is good or pleasing
Le gbea nyui  Hold the tune well
Egbẹa ne bobo/egbẹa ne ko  The voice should be low/or high
Egbẹa bobo akpa/ekọ akpa  The voice is too low/too high
Egbẹa nezr  The voice should be smooth
Egbẹa ne bla  The voices should blend
Egbẹa ne de to  Let the singing be intoned
Edzia ha nyui  S/he sings well
Eha dze fia to dze ga to  The song is pleasing to the leaders and the led
Eha vivi  The song is pleasing/sweet
Henọ sia adanyu le tame nae  This composer has art/craft in his/her head
Henọ sia ami le tame nae  This composer has grease or oil in his/her head
Edzia ha abe ako ene  S/he sings like a parrot
Amesia henxe  This person is a (real) composer
Eha sia hoa wu  This song arouses the performance
Ecọva de fu tame nam  The drumming/performance arouses my emo-
tion
Eyea de fu ta me nam  The dance arouses my emotions
Ecọva na nye daduiwo nu doto  The performance has caused my pores to close
Ecọva fe lamẹ na  The performance has made me cold
Do mo de edzi  Express it in the face
Do nukomo, do movevi  Maintain smiling or serious face
Miensa kọ na  You look magnificent
Some of the aesthetic values discussed above reflect in the works of some Africanist scholars. For example, Halifu Osumare (1993, pp. 2–4) summarizes Farris Thompson’s fine forms of African aesthetics, such as get down quality, descending direction in melody, sculpture, and dance, vividness cast in equilibrium and multiple meter: dancing many drums. She further refers to Thompson’s notion of the aesthetic of the cool, which he defines as truth and generosity regained as an all-embracing positive attribute which combines notions of composure, silence, vitality, healing, and social purification (Osumare, 1993, pp. 2–4; Thompson, 1971, pp. 85–102). Dolores K. Cayou states the characteristics of African-derived dance forms, such as the use of bent knees, with the body close to the earth (excluding those times when the dancer is jumping), the tendency to use the foot as a whole, the isolation of body parts in movement, such as the head, shoulders, hips, and ribcage, the use of rhythmically complex and syncopated movement; carrying as many as two or three rhythms in the body at once—polyrhythm, combining music and dance as a single expression, one feeding the other; individualism of style within a group style; and functionalism—becoming what you dance—the art of real life, (Cayou, 1971, p. 4; Osumare, 1993, pp. 3–4). Kariamu Welsh-Asante also summarizes the commonalities of African aesthetics, such as polyrhythm, polycentricism, curvilinear forms, shapes and structures, multisensory modes of performance, oral presentation, critical roles of African performers, repetition of performance and open-ended creativity (Asante, 1985, pp. 71–91).

In some cases, evaluative comments many not specify the exact qualities that needed to be expressed in the performance. They may also not reveal the inner feeling of some evaluators, but other communicative devices such as the evaluator’s attitude, facial expressions, active participation, in-depth knowledge of the performance and the agreement among the various evaluators may validate some of these comments or concepts. In reality, no mode of evaluation would provide an absolute evaluation of African aesthetics. The current Ghanaian institutional modes of evaluating African performances reflect approximations and a consensus by a group of educators. It is imperative to incorporate the traditional modes of evaluation in the contemporary arts institutions to give students and observers opportunities to express themselves, and to foster a sense of tolerance and respect for various perspectives. The problems of translating traditional evaluative comments and attitudes into written scores may arise and involve negotiations within the various educational settings.

It can be inferred from the above analysis that similarities exist between Ewe/African and Western aesthetics viewed from the imitative, pragmatic, emotional, formalist, and sociopolitical perspectives. But while the West tends
to compartmentalize its aesthetics, African societies usually apply theirs in a holistic framework.

Further, the application of “psychical distance,” or “objectivity” in evaluating African performances raises issues. As noted earlier, performers of traditional African music and dance are expected to be immersed in the performance in order to experience the performance and express themselves on a more holistic level. There is usually no clear distinction between the audience and performers. Those who assume the role of performers at a time may step outside the performance circle and assume the role of the audience (momentarily). In the ceremonial and professional or contemporary contexts where the audience may maintain some distance and contemplate on the performance, the audience may move from one location to the other to observe or listen to the performance from various perspectives and expressive themselves on some levels.

The notion of psychical distance or objectivity further raises the question whether the performers should be objectified together with the various performance components and if so, what would be the implications? In view of the expressive nature of African performances, the term psychical distance or objectivity would imply the removal of oneself from the performance or limiting the artists’ or audience members’ expression.

Indeed some level of distancing enables the spectator or viewer (especially in the contemporary theater) to contemplate and critically evaluate the performance in a way not possible from up close. This is because, the further one is from an object or performance, the less likely one is to attain a clearer view. One who is too close to an object or performance may not be able to observe it from a clearer or broader perspective. Those flying or sitting or standing above the object or performance may have a unique (abstract) perspective. In addition, positioning oneself somewhere in the middle, (not too close or too far) may enable one to have a (uniquely) clearer perspective. But the problem still lies in determining the actual psychical distance. From the performers’ perspective the notion of psychical distance would undermine the integrated nature and communicative functions of African performance, the levels of human interaction, and variations which are inevitable in the artmaking process.

It appears any mode of experiencing Ewe music and dance performance (whether conscious, unconscious, or subconscious) involves the operation of the psyche on some level. However, the term psychical distance may caution the evaluators or critics to avoid being so immersed in the performance or artwork and be overcome by their own subjectivity, emotions, biases, and prejudices in the evaluation process.

Pertaining to the formalist concept of art for art’s sake, I have elucidated the formal qualities such as circular, semicircular, linear, symmetrical, diag-
nal, linear, zigzag, undulating, volume, polyrhythm, tempo and melody, and the use of numbers or repetitions, some of which have symbolic or specific meanings in the various contexts. I have also referred to performance elements which have lost their original meanings and others that may now be conceptualized as abstract (due to the generational gap, the emergence of new means of communication, the lack of absolute knowledge and the operation of human beings on real and imaginary levels). However, the formal elements are evaluated on the basis of the contextual or cultural values. Contemporary works that reflect a fusion of local and foreign elements may be evaluated on the basis of the multiple cultural values that shaped them.

Further, the notion of aesthetic experience, which implies seeing things for their own sake, emphasizes subjective experience but no doubt involves the interaction between subject and object, and may be said to have been influenced by individual taste and preference. However, the aesthetic experience raises the question of whether the art is solely created for this particular mode of viewing. The emphasis on the aesthetic experience in the West in this contemporary era may be due to the increasing emphasis on individualism, ambiguities of cross-cultural arts evaluation, and the desire to explore the limits of human perception or conception. It is true that a given cultural art form may express values, some of which may conflict with the values of an individual or a social group. It is also true that some individual or group of evaluators may be prejudiced or biased towards certain artists and artworks. Indeed, subjective experience is valued in many African societies but this is held in check by cultural values. African societies emphasize collective meaning-making through the arts. Although such subjective or aesthetic experience may be meaningful to an individual, ultimately, meaning is socially constructed and it may be problematic to determine the meaning of the individual’s experience without relating it to the cultural codes. Despite the fact that a foreign observer who lacks knowledge of the cultural codes may perceive or conceive some African artworks on an abstract level, s/he would eventually resort to certain cultural values for a more meaningful evaluation.

Moreover, since the purpose of art education is to provide students with a broader learning experience, the aesthetic experience alone would not provide adequate knowledge about the arts. The extremes of the aesthetic experience would intensify ambiguities of meaning leading to multiple, random and conflicting evaluation of the arts. Such an experience would result in the inclusion of certain objects that were not originally regarded as art and the exclusion of those that were intended to be art, as Marcel Duchamp has demonstrated with the exhibition of a urinal in an art museum. The extreme of aesthetic ex-
experience would reverse the problematic cycle of defining the work of art. Thus, ultimately, any object that attracts this experience could become art.

It is also the emphasis on the aesthetic experience that contributes to the purchase of some cross-cultural art forms by the capitalist class and their installation in some art museums without regard to their cultural significance. This phenomenon is compelling artists in the developing countries to create to suit the taste and preference of some foreign consumers.

It is obvious that colonization, Western technology, and the mass media have immensely contributed to the erosion of the original contexts and purposes of artistic creativity, thus relegating many art forms to the status of entertainment. Technological mediation in the artmaking process is also leading to standardization and homogenization (narrowing the range) of the arts and the relegation of some traditional methods, processes and products to primitive status.

The emphasis on the aesthetic experience may in the long run lead to alienation and nostalgia but since human beings constantly desire collective meaning, this may ultimately lead to a situation whereby the views of the capitalists would emerge as dominant or a universal criteria for cross-cultural artistic evaluation. In this situation, the Marxist aesthetic theory that conceptualizes traditional Western aesthetics as reflecting the dominant capitalist ideology would become relevant. Such phenomena may undermine the various contexts of artistic developments.

It is worth noting that arts all over the world emerge from the sociological, historical, and cultural values and perform multidimensional functions. Even in times of social and economic crisis, many people desire to participate in music and dance. Similarly, many of the world’s peoples desire to express their shared and particular values through the arts even with the emergence of global capitalism, technology, and the media. New art forms usually develop during periods of economic crisis as a form of collective and individual expression. Therefore, in the era of cross-cultural interaction, it is important to create a cross-cultural awareness of the historical and cultural contexts of various artistic developments and the values that form the bases of their evaluation. Scope may be provided for individuals who would like to appreciate the arts on other levels to do so in recognition of the contexts of their developments and the limits of such experiences. What is required in this situation is the development of critical thinking skills, a feeling of interconnectedness, open-mindedness, respect, tolerance, flexibility, and sacrifice needed for global harmony.

Referring to the Ghanaian conception of beauty, Kofi Antuban states that “beauty is relative … that which satisfies a particular people intellectually and emotionally within one period of its history and may be detested in another” (Antuban, 1963, p. 89).
I would reiterate that aesthetics is an integral part of culture, shaped by environmental, sociopolitical, economic, and ethical values. Changes in environmental and cultural conditions are bound to affect a culture’s aesthetics. For example, the modification of traditional Ghanaian music and dance by contemporary arts institutions, the reduction in the number of performers and duration of performance time, the use of new technologies in the creative and performance processes, the fusion of some foreign and local elements, and decontextualization of some traditional performances as a result of Western influence, affect African aesthetics. Nevertheless, certain elements of African aesthetics remain valid and it is imperative to reconsider the essential African aesthetic values as a basis for formulating new aesthetic concepts. Knowledge of traditional African cultures, art forms, worldviews, and philosophies would facilitate the formulation of new aesthetic concepts which would enhance creativity, performance, research and intercultural music and dance/arts education.

6.11 Concerning African Music and Dance Criticism

Criticism may be referred to as a process of evaluating, judging or analyzing a particular activity, art form, phenomenon, person or object, etc. This is integral to the Ewe artmaking process. Criticism may emerge from the innate ability of human beings to discriminate or distinguish one thing from another, to distinguish themselves from others, or it may emerge from individual idiosyncrasies. Criticism may range from mild comments, descriptions, jokes, laughter, praise, ridicule, or insult to radical discrimination in our daily lives. Criticism may translate into the ideologies of social groups who view certain phenomena or cultural practices as conflicting, repressing, suppressing, or having negative consequences on their own values. For example, critical theory was developed in Europe during the 1920s and 1930s by theorists such as Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse (the Frankfurt School), who drew together the ideas of Marx, Freud and others to develop a body of argument to resist political and economic oppression and the rise of authoritarianism (Barrow, p. 74).

As a consequence, societies may relinquish part of this critical function to individuals or groups of people that they recognize as capable of undertaking it. Within African traditional societies, composers are recognized as social critics who usually address certain social vices in order to restore a sense of equilibrium. A body of elite cultural critics has also emerged in contemporary
African societies. In view of the fact that criticism may be ideologically driven, there is a tendency for such critics to misdirect the critical functions towards their own selfish goals, or through exercising their own discretion or imagination (or through the influence of certain ideological groups) to explore the extremes or express bias views, which may result in social conflict. For these reasons, negotiation among the various social groups, artists, and cultural critics is sometimes necessary.

Criticism may elucidate certain phenomena that may otherwise be repressed or remain unknown, or taken for granted in the artmaking process, or it may generate new perspectives toward life. However, radical criticism would destroy the culture/artwork and would leave no ground for further criticism.

We have seen that the Aŋlo-Ewe Halo songs of insult, exaggeration, and humor culminated in the suicide or self-exile of certain members of the society. Should African composers unduly insult every participant or spectator in the creative/performative process, the entire performing group and society would collapse. In addition, assuming some participants, or spectators, or institutions radically label certain performances as bad, or unworthy of presentation, they may end up discouraging people from participating in those performances, leading to their disappearance. If the various performers persistently argue among themselves on the basis of superiority and inferiority of each other’s performance, this would lead to conflict and would affect their future performances.

Assuming all members of a community/society share similar values and any individual idiosyncrasies are tolerated on social grounds or kept within a limit, the level of criticism would be minimal (although the society may desire to reflect on or evaluate its own experiences on the basis of its ethics). Societies become complex when people continue to interact and socioeconomic and political values continue to conflict with one another. In this situation, it is imperative to lead students to understand the values that underlie criticism and the limits of such criticisms. Students should be led to understand that criticism should not necessarily be negative; it may involve positive comments, jokes, or humor, and may be geared toward socialization or problem solving and education. They should also be led to recognize that the entire artmaking process is a critical process involving constant reflection or evaluation and choosing between alternatives and individual idiosyncrasies that together blend in unison, dialogue, contrast, interest, harmony, and balance. What is needed is a feeling of interconnectedness, tolerance, open-mindedness, and recognition of the limits of criticism for the sake of social harmony.

Adopting a critical attitude towards African music and dance forms would enable students to answer questions such as: why do many people participate
in African music and dance? Why do the various voices blend in harmony? Why do different people wear the same costume? Why do some people dance more vigorously than others? Why doesn’t the drum language strictly conform to the spoken language? Why are two successive beats performed with the same technique on the same instrument pronounced differently? Why don’t African songs conform to strict grammatical structure? When does a composer express insult in the songs? Why are military dances appealing to many people? Why do some songs of insult appeal to people? What are the major themes expressed in a particular song and in what context are they expressed? Why do composers sometimes express contradictory themes or terms? Other questions may include: What are the similarities and differences between the Akan and Ewe music and dance? What are the similarities and differences between Western, African Diaspora, and African music and dance? Why are women’s dances considered less vigorous? When do some women dance more vigorously than men? Why are the male and female atompani drums tuned differently? Further questions may include: Has the performance achieved its purpose? Is there an alternative way of achieving the end result? These and many other questions would elucidate the values that underlie the performances and the deviations that may call for effective criticism. The acquisition of the critical skills will enable students to elucidate the hidden meanings that are embedded in the various art forms or representations.

W. O. Adinku (1994) restates a critique report on the Ghana Dance Ensemble’s performance of Atsia-Husago, (a dance piece choreographed by Mawere Opoku based on the Ewe atsia and husago in 1966) as follows:

... Dancers, men and women crouch on the floor, with their foreheads touching the ground, undulating their bodies, and rocking from side to side, while three girls and three boys sang with sadness to the subtle and unobstructive accompaniment of drums and rattles. Slow at the beginning, the rhythms became more broken and percussive, while the actors mimed the pain they felt with incomparable agility and virtuosity. But man’s life does not consist only of unrelieved grief. It is then that the dancers rose and looked at life with new hope and serenity (Adinku, 1994, p. 35).

The above critical comment elucidates the participants in the performance, the dancers’ levels and movement qualities, types of musical instruments; tempo, feelings and other communicative and aesthetic values expressed in the performance.

In this chapter, I have discussed the ethics, appreciation, aesthetic evaluation, and criticism of African music and dance and have elucidated the socio-
historical and cultural values that shape them, drawing from Western aesthetic theories. Students should be led to understand the social, historical, and cultural values that shape African music and dance forms and form the basis of their evaluation and criticism. Contemporary arts educational institutions should combine the traditional African participatory modes of evaluating music and dance with the contemporary institutional modes to provide opportunities for students to express their values and to foster their sense of tolerance in the creative and evaluative process.
Chapter Seven

The Proposed African Music and Dance Curriculum Model for Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Bachelor of Arts Education, Degree Programs: Implementation and Procedures

In the previous chapters, I have provided a foundation and a conceptual framework for the African music and dance curriculum. There remains the implementation of the curriculum to cater to various students’ needs and desires. As indicated earlier, the complexity of human desires and the lower status accorded to the arts in this contemporary era poses a major challenge to the democratic arts education. I will now revisit some educational philosophies before outlining the curriculum model and implementation procedures.

7.1 Philosophy of Education

Many major philosophies of life and education have traditionally been defined by three criteria: What is good? What is true? What is real? (Wiles and Bondi, 1993, p. 43). As indicated earlier, the notions of good, truth, and reality reflect the value judgements of groups of people and individuals.

Generally, the various educational philosophies take into consideration the conception of human nature, human development, family, society, ethics, and the aims and objectives of education within specific contexts. In brief, the educational philosophy can help to suggest the purpose of education, clarify the
objectives and learning activities in school, define the role of persons working in schools, and guide the selection of learning strategies and tactics in the classroom (Wiles and Bondi, 1993, p. 37).

There are five main Western educational philosophies that deserve revisiting before outlining the curriculum content and implementation procedures:

(1) Perennialism draws from the classical definition of education and holds that education, like human nature, is constant and should focus on the development of rationality. It further holds that education is a preparation for life, and that students should be taught the world’s permanencies through structured study. The perennialists maintain that reality is the world of reason and that truth is often revealed to us through study and through divine acts and that goodness is found in rationality itself. They, therefore, recommend the teaching of the curriculum through highly disciplined drill and behavior control. The perennialist teacher, therefore, interprets and tells while the student is a passive recipient (since truth is eternal). All changes in the immediate school environment are superficial (Wiles and Bondi, 1993, p. 44).

(2) Idealism is a philosophy that espouses the refined wisdom of men and women. In this case, reality is seen as a world within a person’s mind; truth is to be found in the consistency of ideas; and goodness is in the ideal state as a thing to strive for. Idealism favors school teaching of the mind, such as found in most public schools. An idealist teacher would be a model of ideal behavior and schools would function to sharpen the intellectual processes, to present the wisdom of the ages and to present models of behavior that are exemplary. Students should have a somewhat passive role, receiving and memorizing the reporting of a teacher. Change in the curriculum would be considered an intrusion on the orderly process of educating (Wiles and Bondi, pp. 46–47).

(3) Realism is a philosophical concept that holds that the world exists as it is and the job of schools would be to teach students about the world. In this situation, goodness is found in the law of nature and the order of the physical world; and truth would be the simple correspondences of observation. Realists favor schools dominated by subjects of the here-and-now world, such as mathematics and science. Students should be taught to master factual information. The teacher should impart knowledge of this reality to students or display such reality for observation and study. Classrooms should be highly ordered and disciplined, like nature, and the students should be passive participants in the study of things. Changes in schools are perceived as a natural evolution toward a perfect order (Wiles and Bondi, 1993, p. 47).

(4) Experimentalism is another philosophical standpoint that conceptualizes the world as ever-changing, reality as what is actually experienced, truth
as what presently functions, and goodness as what is expected by public test. The experimentalist openly accepts change and continually seeks to discover new ways to expand and improve the society. The experimentalist’s school will emphasize social subjects and experiences. Learning should occur through a problem solving or inquiry format. Teachers aid learners or consult with learners who are actively involved in discovering and experiencing the world in which we live (Wiles and Bondi, 1993, p. 47).

(5) Finally, existentialism conceptualizes the world as one’s personal subjectivity, where goodness, truth, and reality are individually defined. Reality is a world of existing, truth subjectively chosen, and goodness a matter of freedom. Existentialist schools (if existing) would be places that assist students in knowing themselves and their places in society. The subject matter (if existing) would be matter subject to interpretation, such as the arts, ethics, or philosophy. Teacher-student interaction would center on assisting students in their personal learning journeys. Change in school environments would be embraced as both a natural and a necessary phenomenon (Wiles and Bondi, 1993, pp. 47–49).

In reality, the above educational philosophies overlap, especially when applied to African cultures or societies that often integrate the metaphysical/spiritual, real, ideal, experimental, and existential or individual values. The arts, being multidimensional, integrate all the above philosophical perspectives and human experiences. Before concluding on the relevance of the above educational philosophies to African music and dance education, I will briefly review Michael Oakeshott’s liberal education ideals and their implication for implementing this conceptual framework or curriculum.

Oakeshott refers to liberal education as a dialogue which liberates human beings from the distracting business of satisfying contingent wants. He further refers to “mode” as ideas that have achieved coherent structure, and postulates the logical character of the modalities of these ideas, without which each would remain unintelligible. Oakeshott maintains that there are different modes of experiencing the world and in each mode, distinct categories organize the observer’s thought. He refers to the poetic experience of delight and development and to the economic plan for the practical enterprise. But none of these perspectives provides a uniquely true or primordial representation of the world, nor does one mode deny the validity of the other.

Oakeshott is critical of modern societies’ being dominated by one mode: instrumental rationality, and further recommends the symbiotic existence of alternative modes of experience. In his 1995 essay, “Work and Play,” Oakeshott continues to investigate the danger of the dominance of one mode. He analyzes
the present situation, its obsession with work, and the corrupting influence that this has on education. The satisfaction of wants, according to Oakeshott, became the dominant mode of being for many Europeans over the last four hundred years, thus leading to its equation with happiness. The desire to satisfy "wants" now assumes a global dimension. Referring to work, Oakeshott states that

>'Work' is a continuous toilsome activity, unavoidable in creatures moved by wants, in which the natural world is made to supply satisfactions for those wants. It is something from which animals are exempt, except those who have the misfortune to be harnessed to human enterprise; and it is something unknown to a creature of mere needs. Indeed, 'work' is so far typical of the human species that it is reasonable to add it to the epithets by which we distinguish it: Homo sapiens is Homo laborans: a 'work-man' (Oakeshott, 1995, p. 3).

On the contrary,

>'Play,' in short, stands for something that is neither 'work' nor 'rest'; it is an activity, but not an activity that seeks the satisfaction of wants. For this reason, Aristotle called it 'non-laborious activity'—activity which nevertheless is not 'work.' It is a 'leisure' activity, not only because it belongs to the occasions when we are set free (or set ourselves free) from 'work,' but because it is performed in a 'leisurely' manner. A 'leisurely' manner does not mean merely 'slowly'; it means, 'without the anxieties and absence of cessation that belong to the satisfaction of wants' (Oakeshott, 1995, p. 5).

Thus, play is viewed as an activity which is not directed towards satisfaction of "wants": a non-laborious activity which is performed without the anxieties and absence of cessation that characterizes the satisfaction of wants. Oakeshott categorizes activities such as science, history, and philosophy under "play" since they can also be carried out for their intrinsic purpose of gleaning an understanding of the world and not for any instrumental purpose.

Playful activities, Oakeshott argues, are the real "civilized" ones. But there is a point in human life where the most playful activity is in danger of being turned into the handmaiden of usefulness in education.

_The point at which the corruption is most likely to appear, and where it is most dangerous when it does appear, is in education. In these days when the satisfaction of human wants is taken to be the only important activity, those who devise our systems of education are apt to find a place for all that I have called 'play' only if they can regard it as 'work' of an-
other sort. And generations may be deprived of that acquaintance with the activities of Homo ludens that was once thought to be the better part of education (Oakeshott, 1995, p. 7).

Oakeshott emphasizes the role of culture, history, and human freedom in any view of liberal education. He maintains that one of the key elements in our humanness stems from language, not as a mental object but as a living flow of discourse in time and conversation. It may be supposed that the diverse idioms of utterance which make up current human intercourse have some meeting-place and compose a manifold of some sort. The image of this meeting place is not an inquiry or an argument but a conversation (Oakeshott, 1967). Oakeshott holds that dialogue on the one hand is not hierarchical, and voices which speak in conversation do not compose hierarchy.

Education, properly speaking, is an initiation into the skills and partnership of this conversation in which we learn to recognize the voices, to distinguish the proper occasion of utterance, and in which we acquire the intellectual and moral habits appropriate to conversation. And it is this conversation which, in the end, gives place and character to every human activity and utterance (Oakeshott, 1959, p. 11).

In these ways, Oakeshott has reiterated the existence of the multiple modes of knowing and cautioned against the danger of the educational systems being dominated by one mode of knowing. He also questions the increasing emphasis on human rationality, the distinctions between play and wants, and humans’ desire to satisfy wants at the expense of other activities in an era characterized by the influence of technology and capitalism, and that influence’s effect on the educational system. He further stresses the need to avoid the danger of directing the curriculum or education towards the satisfaction of “wants” without regard to activities such as play, arts, and other humanistic subjects which constitute our essential values. This would liberate our educational system and ourselves from such predicaments. I have elucidated the multidimensional nature of African music and dance and their cultural significance. I would like to emphasize that adopting an holistic approach to African music and dance education will enable learners to engage in dialogue to satisfy the physical, social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, historical, and cultural needs/values, thereby offering us a more enriching, broader and in-depth educational experience. Such an educational process would involve a conversation between the various educational philosophies. This leads to my own educational philosophy.
7.2 My Educational Philosophy

My educational philosophy reiterates the various philosophies of human nature, family, society, knowledge, and school. It also echoes the African conception of humans as spiritual, social, physical, emotional and intellectual beings, located within specific or general environments; and humans’ desires to acquire the basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, socialization, knowledge, and education, including education in the arts.

I view human societies as made of up of individuals and social groups who are interconnected but exist in relative autonomy. I recognize individual differences and natural aptitudes and hold that knowledge is socially constructed through human interaction within specific environments, and that such interactions lead to constant shifting of knowledge, but the various modes of knowing continue to retain some of their essential values. I maintain that the arts and other human endeavors are essential modes of knowing and constitute part of the significant historical, social, cultural, and individual experiences.

I view contemporary educational institutions as extensions and organs of communities/societies that engage in accumulating, selecting, restructuring, and recreating communities’ or societies’ knowledge in ways that are relevant to the various educational levels and modes of knowing. I view teachers as senior learners and leaders who facilitate or mediate in the learning process, and students as co-mediators in the learning process. I maintain that effective arts education occurs through social interaction, dialogue, respect, tolerance and harmonious co-operation of the learners within a healthy environment.

Therefore, in the process of implementing the African music and dance curriculum, I engage in conversation with the various philosophical perspectives of human nature, human development, society, modes of knowing, and the role of schools, educators, and learners in the contemporary educational systems. I consider the essential human qualities, needs, and desires, such as desire to learn or know through participation, sensation, feeling, observation, memorization, reflection, repetition, variation of certain activities, and expression of individuality. I also take into consideration students’ will or liberty, needs for love, empathy and sympathy in the learning environment and process.

I have elucidated the transformation of contemporary families and societies and its effect on the family and community-based arts education and the greater responsibility that this places on arts educators in schools. However, parents should be encouraged to continue children’s music and dance education at home and in the communities from the early childhood. Given the complexity of the cultural/artistic heritage, schools alone cannot undertake the entire
arts educational process, and a home, family, ward, or community arts education will enable children to develop their artistic potentials for future arts education and to complement the schools’ arts education programs.

I have elucidated the interweaving of the creative, learning, and teaching processes and the need for adapting some of these methods to cater to broader social needs in the cross-cultural educational system. I have also indicated that despite the contextual basis of African music and dance, it is not suggested that the teaching/facilitating of African music and dance be confined to cultural bearers or specific age, sex, or social groups. Any competent person in the context or subject area may teach it. Attempts should, however, be made to involve competent cultural bearers in implementing the cross-cultural music and dance curriculum to facilitate the learning process and to give credit to them.

Since language is the bedrock of African music and dance, this requires a facilitator to be familiar with the various African languages for effective instruction. While it would be unrealistic to try to learn all the languages, it is imperative for a cross-cultural arts educator to understand the basic concepts, which would facilitate the teaching and learning processes.

Furthermore, knowledge of the culture’s creative, performance, teaching, and evaluative methods would facilitate cross-cultural arts education. However, this could be combined with other methods, including those that would emerge in the teaching and learning process within a cross-cultural setting. For example, an African music and dance educator in the West may combine the African and the First Nations’ interactive, dialogic, narrative and practical methods with other methods deemed appropriate. A number of music educators such as Orff, Dalcroze and Kodaly have suggested integrated approaches to music education that are relevant to traditional African methods of arts education, and can be employed to complement the African and cross-cultural teaching methods. Robert Walker has suggested a pancultural approach to music education, which involves treating the study of a single musical culture as a special unit within a broader definition of music education (Walker, 1990, p. 221). He further states that to approach music panculturally rather than unically initially requires the development of auditory Gestalts that relate to the autonomous qualities of sound *per se* than to the sound of any single culture. He goes on to say that the modern cultural environment is so culturally mixed and confusing that it is necessary to educate the ear in the subtleties of the autonomous quality of sounds prior to an education in the sounds of a particular culture. Such an approach is possible nowadays because the technology has advanced sufficiently to enable us to have at our disposal both the knowledge of these autonomous qualities of sounds and the equipment to produce any of them relatively easily (Walker, 1990, pp. 221–222). According to Walker,
the danger of the pancultural approach is that children might grow up knowing no particular musical culture. The advantage is that they can grow up knowing more about their own and other musical cultures that present practice permits (Walker, 1990, p. 222).

Such an approach may be considered a way of adapting to the current cultural environment, but if not carefully approached, it could undermine the cultural contexts of the various artistic developments. It may also lead to students’ appropriation of sounds that appeal to them and their use of them to create their own (eclectic) music without acknowledging the originators of the sounds. It is worth noting that, unlike in Western societies, many students in the “developing countries” may not have ready access to the technology or the variety of sounds. There is no doubt that students’ artistic orientation and creativity will be influenced by the sounds in their specific and broader environments.

However, the pancultural approach is also challenged by the contemporary debates of cultural appropriation and imperialism. The notion of cultural appropriation could be offset by the African philosophy of sharing on the ground that such an educational experience would reflect in students’ future performances and creativity, which would in turn benefit the various students and cultures. In addition, the issue of cultural imperialism may be counteracted by the fact that education involves subject-subject or subject-object interaction. The provision of opportunities in the learning process for students to express their own creativity and the inclusion of subjects from various students’ cultures in the specific or broader school curriculum would maintain a balance between the culturally specific and multiple cultural/artistic experiences. Students should be led to understand that despite the social construction and the transformative potential of any form of knowledge, the curriculum is also context-bound. I would suggest the need to introduce students to the cultural context of African music and dance before adopting the pancultural approach. This is due to the cultural significance of African music and dance.

In view of the collaborative nature of African performing arts, a collaborative approach may be adopted in the teaching and learning or social mediation process. The arguments against collaborative teaching include its time consumption, conflict of values, dominance of certain teachers and students, and individual students and teachers becoming apathetic. However, collaboration can enhance learning and teaching and creativity by generating multiple and enriching perspectives. It can also enable students to acquire social skills needed for future teamwork and leadership roles. Collaboration enables participants in the learning and creative process to develop skills needed for tolerating others’ perspectives, activities, and values, and these skills could be geared toward social harmony. The contributions of the various collaborators
need not be exactly the same; each role is equally significant. What seems trivial (for example, the playing of certain supporting instruments and bells) in the learning process may be very significant. But care should be taken to explore the potentials of the various collaborators. Given favorable educational environments, a collaborative approach would benefit students by broadening their scope of activities, understanding, tolerance, and flexibility. Adopting this collaborative approach would require bridging the gap between various students in the evaluation process.

Since African music and dance are an integral part of African life, students should be encouraged to draw from various subjects and disciplines (such as history, sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, language, physics, math, and political science) in their learning and creative process. Both the students and teachers can liaise with their colleagues in other subject areas and disciplines in and outside the school environment (where appropriate) to enhance their educational experiences. This may depend upon the time schedule, the relationship between/among the various subjects, students and teachers, their motivations, interests, etc. However, successful implementation of these interdisciplinary and collaborative methods will broaden students’ knowledge and pave the way for reintegrating the music and dance into the social fabric, culture, educational system, and for building a strong and harmonious society. Due to the practical nature of African music and dance, attempts should be made to bridge the gap between theory and practice in the learning process.

Another issue that confronts African music and dance educators in the West is that of ethical relativism. This manifests in the entire artmaking process, which is embedded with ethical values that reflect African communalism and belief in the existence of the Supreme Being, divinities, and ancestors. In contemporary Western societies, many people no longer hold these beliefs due to the technological and scientific developments that accelerated the transformation of these societies within the historical process. However, this seems to be an illusion since spirituality is an integral part of every human being. The West was able to colonize many of the world’s cultures with its religion/culture, which still forms the basis of its institutional ethics. Therefore, it is important for the West to tolerate other religious and ethical perspectives. It is one thing to participate in another culture’s art form which is ethically or religiously inspired, and another thing to fully participate or believe in that culture’s religious practices.

In outlining these curricular areas for the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Art, and Bachelor of Arts Education educational levels or year-groups, I recognize the progressive nature of contemporary schooling and the challenges posed to the age/grade educational model due to the technological and media devel-
opments, and diversity of students’ populations in the contemporary educational systems. These phenomena culminate to the blurring of adults, youths/students developmental stages and educational experiences (as indicated earlier). They may be regarded as part of the democratizing process to counteract the contemporary critiques of the educational system as representing the dominant culture’s knowledge or ideology and reproducing the socioeconomic inequalities through the hierarchical structuring of knowledge, grading, and promoting competition among students (as stated earlier). I have indicated that the basic social structural differentiation is inevitable and may reflect the social harmony, which is also manifested in African music and dance organization. I have also addressed the nature and order of knowledge as perceived by African and Western societies. In view of the emphasis on broader social values in both traditional and contemporary artmaking and educational processes, it would not be necessary to rigidly structure these curricular elements in hierarchical order for specific classes. Hence, my curriculum aims at providing equal opportunities for students to share the contributions made by the various structures of the society. The same curriculum model (which is geared toward the university arts education) could be shared with the elementary and secondary school students (albeit with some modifications). I, however, maintain that certain elements of this conceptual framework and curriculum are most relevant to specific educational or cultural contexts which would further manifest through learner-teacher interaction within specific classroom environments. Also, relative progress may be made on qualitative and quantitative bases through negotiation between the facilitators and students within a given classroom environment at a given time.

It is true that the teaching and learning methods vary from one instructor or learner to the other. But, I will outline the methods that emerged from the African artmaking process and other relevant cross-cultural methods as a point of reference and a guide to facilitating the cross-cultural African music and dance education.

Having clarified these issues, I will now outline broader curriculum areas and the implementation procedures. In doing so, I will utilize the Ewe contextual framework and draw from Ghanaian and other West African cultures.

7.3 The Curriculum Model, Implementation, and Procedures

The following curriculum areas emphasize the integration of African music and dance but provide scope for restructuring its elements. I acknowledge the
fact that there are other possible ways of structuring these curricular elements but maintain that these suggestions are guidelines for African music and dance educators. Below are the broader practical and theoretical curriculum areas.

**Practice**

1. African Music and Dance Performance (integrated and Instrumental, Movement and Vocal emphasis).
2. African Music and Dance Creativity/Composition (collaborative and Instrumental, Movement and Vocal emphasis).
3. Costumes, Make-up, Props, and other Visual Imagery.

**Theory**

2. African Music and Dance Creativity/Composition.

Below are the specific practical courses or subjects areas.

**Practice**

**African Music and Dance Performance**

This curriculum area should focus on integrated African music and dance performance and highlight the instrumental, vocal and dance elements. It should be taught throughout the duration of the academic program.

**First Year: Integrated African Music and Dance Performance**

The first-year African Music and Dance Performance course should explore the mainstream/secular music and dance forms such as *agbadza, gahu, gota, toko, damba, adowa, sanga, kpatsa, kpanlongo, bima, damba, taka,* and *dunba.* It should also include cradle songs, lullabies, didactic songs, fishing songs, *Gile,* xylophones, *premprensua* and others within the cultural environment.
Second Year: African Music and Dance Performance

The second-year African Music and Dance Performance course should explore social professional and ceremonial performances such as **bɔbɔbɔ**, **adevu**, **bawa**, **bambaya**, **sikyi**, **agbekɔ**, **kinka**, **mnani**, **dipo**, **gonge**, **mbira**, **sorsorne**, and **kuku** and other within the cultural environment.

Third Year: African Music and Dance Performance

The third-year African Music And Dance Performance course should explore secular, ceremonial, and professional music and dance forms, such as **adzogbo**, **gohu**, **nagla**, **fontomfrom**, **asafo**, **atrikpu**, **afli**, **vuga**, **aklama**, **kundum**, **zizihaow**, **mmobome**, **atsyia**, **sikyi** and **sinte** as well as other cultural art forms and the works of individual artists.

Fourth Year: African Music and Dance Performance

The fourth-year African Music and Dance performance course should involve a detailed instruction and a review of the various Ghanaian and other African music and dance forms such as **agbekɔ**, **adzogbo**, **adzida**, **kete**, **fontomfrom**, **asafo**, **kpegisu**, **mandiani**, and **lingigo**, as well as the works of individual artists. Students should be led through both indoor/stage and outdoor performances throughout the duration of the program.

First- to Fourth-Year Classroom Activities

Singing, Dancing, Playing of instruments: Collaborative Learning/Performance.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Students will acquire skills in integrated music and dance/dramatic performance as well as social skills needed for future teamwork, social harmony and professional development.

Methodology

A more integrated approach would involve teaching the various artistic elements within the same classroom environment. Another approach may involve teaching sectional structures of the music and dance in different classrooms, depending on the availability and accessibility of suitable locations. In any case, a team of instructors may decide to teach songs, instrumental performance,
and dance movements simultaneously or an instructor may decide to begin with a structural element such as vocal music before proceeding to the instrumental music and dance elements. This may have an advantage of making the best use of students’ voices before they become exhausted. Alternatively, an instructor may decide to begin with the dance unit to enable students to exercise their entire body in preparation for other units. Another instructor may choose to begin with the instrumental unit to enable students to become familiar with the instrumental sounds which are integral to the dance and songs.

The following is a collaborative approach to teaching integrated African music and dance, beginning with the vocal component.

1. A facilitator provides the song text in collaboration with another facilitator (in unison or dialogue), and clarifies the cultural context, meaning, and functions.

2. A facilitator introduces the song and either sings it from the beginning to the end, or involves the co-facilitator in singing the same lines, or responsive patterns, or in providing rhythmic or movement accompaniment.

3. The facilitators repeat the process and engage students in singing.

4. A facilitator introduces a new song with or without any instrumental accompaniment and allows the co-facilitator and students to sing the refrain or chorus or other parts or interline the singing, or sing the entire song, to be repeated by both facilitators and students.

5. The facilitators clarify the introductory sections, melodic phrases, tones antiphonal, gliding, pendular and interlocking melodic patterns, dynamics and finale of the songs.

6. The facilitators introduce accompanying instruments, such as bell, hand clapping, rattles and drums, repeatedly, simultaneously, or sequentially and encourage students to join in singing/playing repeatedly, in unison, dialogue and harmony.

7. The facilitators clarify the relationship between the song and instrumental patterns.

8. The facilitators introduce dance movements that correspond with the songs and instrumental patterns, while establishing clear points of reference/entry, timing, acceleration deceleration, dynamics and emphasizing the coordination of the various elements.

9. Individuals and group practice: The facilitators encourage individuals and groups of students to practice the sectional components as well as the vocal, instrumental, and dance elements together (involving role distribution).

10. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek further clarification on the activities.
11. The facilitators lead students outdoors to practice music/dance types or elements that cannot be performed in the classroom, for instance, stilt dance movements and some acrobatic and gymnastic movements.

12. Class presentations: The facilitators allow groups or individual students to present to the class. This may involve the whole group performing sectional music and dance elements in unison, or it may involve role distribution whereby some students play instruments (and possibly sing), some sing, and others dance. This should be followed by questions, answers and comments/feedback from peer groups or colleagues.

13. Guest performers: Competent guest speakers, or groups or individual performers should be invited to share their experiences with the group.

14. Field trips: Students should be encouraged to undertake field trips to nearby performance settings to observe and engage in dialogue with the performers on the various modes of presentation, and document some of them where appropriate (for future reference or presentation).

15. Memorization/journal/notebook entries: Students should document their significant learning experiences to facilitate the learning process and for future reflection.

16. Other Assignments: Students should be led to complete quizzes, including multiple choice questions and short written papers, to demonstrate their understanding of the artistic activities, concepts and contexts, and to highlight the integration of theory and practice.

Sectional Structures of African Music and Dance Performance

Instrumental African Music and Dance Performance

This course/unit should be taught within a period of three to four years, and should relate to the collaborative music and dance forms in specific educational contexts. It should focus on specific ensembles of the same family of instruments, mixed instruments, solo instruments and works of individual composers. It should highlight the interrelation of the various instruments and other performance components.

First Year: Instrumental African Music and Dance Performance

This should explore the repertoire of the music and dance forms such as agbadza, gahu, gota, adowa, damba-takai, kpatsa as well as atompani, dunba, solo signal drums, xylophone, etc.
Second Year: Instrumental African Music and Dance

This unit or course should explore the repertoire of the music and dance forms, such as, bɔbɔɔ bɔ, kinka, atsyia/takada, adevu, bamaya, agbekɔ, kpanlongo, sor-sorne, sinte, flutes/trumpets and adenkum.

Third Year: Instrumental African Music and Dance Performance

This unit or course should explore some of the following repertoire: adzogbo, agbekɔ, gohu, kete, fontomfrom, bawa, nagla, asafo, Senegalese djembe and dundun, premprensu, etc.

Fourth Year: Instrumental African Music and Dance Performance

This unit or course should explore the circular and ceremonial ensembles such as the adzida, nyayito, yeve, akom and brekete suites, fontomfrom and other African instrumental ensembles and solo instruments.

Activity

Playing of mixed instrumental ensembles and solo instruments, bells, rattles, drums, clappers, flutes, xylophones, thumb pianos, fiddles, bowed lutes, etc.

Objectives/Outcomes

Students will become familiar with African instruments, gain awareness of their cultural contexts, their originators and functions; acquire skills in tuning, handling, and playing the instruments; understand the musical structure and concepts used in describing/analyzing the structural elements; the relationship between the instrumental sounds and spoken text, songs and dance; develop analytical, evaluative and critical skills relating to African instrumental performance; demonstrate these skills in performance and theory; apply these skills to their future, performance, creativity, research and careers.

Methodology

1. The facilitator introduces students to the name of the musical piece, cultural context, musical instruments and materials used in constructing them; modes of tuning and sound qualities or timbre.
2. The facilitator leads students through warm-up movements involving arm, hand, and wrist exercises, hand clapping, chest, thigh and chin tapping accompanied by sounds and movements.
3. The facilitator demonstrates the appropriate playing techniques and introduces students to them.

4. The facilitator allows students some time to interact with the instruments by touching and playing them and engaging in dialogue with one another.

5. The facilitator introduces students to the instrumental sounds, tones, their basic divisions or rhythmic phrases, points of reference, linguistic syllables and texts, dynamics and silence, repeatedly, simultaneously or sequentially, proceeding from relatively stable to varied patterns.

6. The facilitator clarifies the musical structure and mode of coordinating the musical elements: steady and variable patterns in unison, dialogue, accentuation, syncopation, contrast and harmony (depending on the stylistic convention).

7. The facilitator expresses linguistic concepts, syllables and numbers to clarify the proper articulation of instrumental tones, pitches, phrases, divisions, tempi, dynamics/intensity and duration of the instrumental sounds.

8. The facilitator employs other classroom devices such as black board, colors, scripts, VHS or DVD players and other visual aids to clarify the learning.

9. The facilitator clarifies the relevance of instrumental sounds to songs, movements and other visual imagery.

10. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek further clarification on the activities.

11. Group activity: The facilitator divides the class into groups of two or more, according to the contextual requirements. S/he encourages students to practice the various artistic elements in solo, unison, dialogue, syncopation, hocketing and harmony while utilizing linguistic concepts at various tempi, duration and dynamic range. The facilitator goes round to interact with the students and assist those in difficulty.

12. Class presentation: This should emphasize group presentation and the blending of the various artistic elements as well as provide scope for solos, duos, and trios within the larger group. The facilitator may encourage students to incorporate dance movements and songs and change roles to provide opportunities for each student to perform the various musical/artistic patterns/elements.

13. The facilitator encourages peer groups or colleagues to listen, observe, contemplate, comment and participate in the presentation by clapping or playing minor instruments, dancing, or moving orderly to various locations to cheer their colleagues/peers at various levels where appropriate.

14. The facilitator engages students in discussion and note-taking after each presentation.

15. The facilitator allows students to take short breaks at various intervals and especially before they begin another section.
16. Other Assignments: Students should be led to complete quizzes, including multiple choice questions, and short written papers, to demonstrate their understanding of the artistic activities, concepts, and contexts, and to highlight the integration of theory and practice.

**Vocal African Music and Dance Performance**

The Vocal African Music and Dance Performance course should explore cradle songs, mainstream performance songs, the repertoires of professional and ceremonial songs, etc. This should be taught throughout the duration of the course in relation to other music and dance components.

1. The facilitator provides the song text to the students by oral and visual means: blackboard, paper, projector, or PowerPoint, and introduces students to the cultural context and the composer of the song.
2. The facilitator pronounces the song text to be repeated by students.
3. The facilitator introduces the song or melodic phrases to be repeated by students. This may involve dialogue/antiphony, interlining, and singing in unison (homophony), solo, polyphony and harmony (with or without instrumental and movement accompaniment).
4. The facilitator clarifies the various timbres, melodic and tonal ranges through practice and through audio-visual representation on the blackboard, paper, with colors, projectors, PowerPoint, CDs, and notation symbols.
5. The facilitator leads students to dramatize the main themes or images of certain songs, or relate the songs to specific environmental and cultural images, rhythms and dance movements.
6. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek further clarification on the activities.
7. Class presentation: Groups and individuals. The facilitator encourages the whole group, small groups, and individual students to sing while their colleagues/peers listen, observe, contemplate and hum the song, express their feelings or emotions and raise their two forefingers/hands in cheering them up. Students may move in an orderly manner to another location in the classroom to listen, observe, and contemplate on the performance on various levels. This should be followed by class discussion of individual and group presentations.
8. Memorization, journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and take notes of the songs, and record their own singing for future reference.
9. The facilitator may give students a short break at certain intervals to enable them to breathe and rest and prepare for another section.
10. Other Assignments: Students should be led to complete quizzes, including multiple choice questions, and short written papers, to demonstrate their understanding of the artistic activities, concepts and contexts, and to highlight the integration of theory and practice.

**Evaluation**

This should be based on students’ participation in the learning process, the mastery of performance skills, and their ability to perform in ensembles and solos, and the quality and quantity of their presentations, and their understanding of the performance concepts and contexts.

**Movements and Techniques of African Music and Dance**

This course/unit should involve a breakdown of selected African dance movements. It could be taught as part of the integrated music and dance course/unit, or it may be taught as a unique course in relation to musical rhythm/sounds.

**First Year: Movements and Techniques of African Music and Dance**

This course/unit should explore basic movements in West African dances, such as the contraction and release of the torso, the sideways shifting, and circular movement of the torso, hips and legs, feet positions, foot stamping, feet and arm movements and gestures; their effort qualities, timing, weight, flow, dynamics, levels, spatial organization/patterns and their cultural significance.

**Second Year: Movements and Techniques of African Music and Dance**

This should introduce students to African movements which are initiated or executed simultaneously or in sequence; their timing, effort qualities, levels, spatial organization and sociocultural values.

**Third and Fourth Year: Movements and Techniques of African Music and Dance**

This should introduce students to relatively more complex African dance movements initiated simultaneously and in sequence at various tempi, dynamic ranges, levels, clarifying their sociocultural significance or meanings. This should further include other movement combinations and students’ own improvisation.
Activity
Dancing or moving in relation to instrumental sounds and voices.

Duration
Ninety minutes to two hours

Objectives/Learning Outcomes
Students will understand the techniques of dancing African dance/music; acquire skills in dancing African and African related dances, develop analytical skills relating to African dance/music.

Methodology
1. The facilitator introduces students to the characteristics of African dance, and simple warm-up movements involving the use of the head, neck, shoulders, torso, rib cage, waist, legs, and feet repeatedly, simultaneously, or sequentially at various tempi and dynamic range (to be repeated by students).
2. The facilitator clarifies the movement qualities, phrases, timing, rhythms, dynamics, levels, directions, floor patterns, and their cultural significance.
3. The facilitator introduces new movements at relatively faster tempi, at various levels, duration, and dynamic ranges utilizing linear, symmetrical, vertical, circular, semicircular diagonal floor patterns and movements across the floor (after students have mastered the prevailing ones).
4. The facilitator encourages students to utter sounds and highlight certain rhythmic patterns in their movements.
5. The facilitator goes around to help those in difficulty.
6. The facilitator creates simple choreographies with selected movements to be experienced by the whole class, highlighting the beginning, climax, falling action or finale, sounds, and rhythms.
7. The facilitator leads students through a cooling-down section and encourages them to ask questions to seek further clarification on the activities, provide feedback, and take notes of their learning experiences.
8. Group Activity: The facilitator allows students to execute the movements at various tempi, levels, dynamic ranges and directions, in groups and solo.
9. Midterm and final presentations: The facilitator allows groups and individual students to perform selected movements to be observed and commented upon by their peers or colleagues.
10. Guest presentation: A competent guest artist should be invited to share his/her experience with the students.
11. Memorization, journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep written records of their significant learning experiences.
12. Other Assignments: Students should be led to complete quizzes, including multiple choice questions and short written papers, to demonstrate their understanding of the artistic activities, concepts and contexts, and to highlight the integration of theory and practice.

Evaluation
This should be based on students' class attendance, participation in the learning process and progress, determined by the mastery of skills and understanding of the dance movements, performance concepts and contexts.

African Music and Dance Composition/Choreography
This curriculum area should emphasize the integration of music and dance elements in the compositional process, and highlight instrumental, movement and vocal components. This should be taught throughout the duration of the course.

First Year: African Music and Dance Composition: Collaborative
The first-year African Music and Dance Composition course should explore the prevailing music and dance forms, structures and styles; fables, proverbs, legends, philosophy, religious texts, myths, environmental images and sounds—as a basis for creating new music and dance pieces. Students’ creative pieces could last between three to fifteen minutes and emphasize collaboration while providing scope for individuals and small and large groups to feature.

Second Year: African Music and Dance Composition
During the second year, students should be encouraged to draw from the traditional music and dance styles, environmental sounds, images and relevant cultural knowledge and experiences, topics and subjects, to create more elaborate music and dance pieces that should involve groups and solos and last between five and twenty minutes.

Third Year: African Music and Dance Composition
During the third year, students should draw from traditional and contemporary sources to create a more elaborate piece ranging between ten and thirty minutes long.
This should highlight movements, instrumental patterns/rhythms, songs and visual imagery in groups or solos.

Fourth Year: African Music and Dance Composition

The fourth-year African Music and Dance Composition should include a directed study based upon relevant social, cultural or educational themes geared toward historical and cultural documentation or reconstruction, problem solving, or generating new perspectives towards life. This should emphasize the integration of music and dance/drama and other visual imagery while providing room for featuring specific sectional structures and elements. Individual or group of students may be encouraged to focus on instrumental, vocal, or movement components.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Students will understand the African conception of creativity and the form, content, structure and styles of African dance/music; acquire skills in composing dance within African and African-related forms/styles; be able to combine the prevailing structural and stylistic elements and their own ideas to compose new music and dance pieces; perform these pieces in groups and solo; appreciate the importance of participating in the creative and performative processes; and apply this knowledge and these skills to their future education and careers.

Activity

Practical participation in the creative process, involving the use of dialogues, songs, instruments, folktales, legends, aphorism, philosophy, literary texts, improvisation, prevailing dance movements, and students’ own experiences and innovation.

Duration

Two hours

Methodology

The following suggestions are based on a collaborative approach to African music and dance creativity/composition.

1. The facilitator introduces students to the African conception of creativity and provides some examples of the prevailing stylistic conventions.

2. The facilitator divides the class into groups of two or more.
3. The facilitator encourages students to draw from the prevailing artistic elements: songs, rhythms, and movements, and from legends/cultural history, folktales, proverbs, social studies, philosophy, current affairs, environmental images, and other subjects to create new pieces.

4. The facilitator encourages groups to select their leaders and engage in limited division of labor.

5. The facilitator guides students to highlight improvisation and individual creativity within the group.

6. The facilitator encourages students to start from any structural component of their choice and move back and forth.

7. The facilitator leads students to engage in critical reflection, selection, elimination and modification of the various artistic elements.

8. The facilitator encourages students to blend the various artistic elements in harmony.

9. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek further clarification on the activities.

10. The facilitator goes around to help students in difficulty or offer them suggestions to enable them to overcome the difficulties and improve.

11. Group presentation: The facilitator allows students to present their work in progress, or finished products to the class (in African and relevant costume and using the relevant visual imagery) while their peers/colleagues and the facilitator observe, listen, and express their feelings and thoughts in an orderly manner.

12. The facilitator engages students in class discussion after the presentations through comments/feedback, criticisms, suggestions, and taking notes of their learning experiences.

13. Memorization, journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep written records of their significant learning experiences.

14. Students may present their final work to the entire department, school, or community at the end of the period and engage in dialogue with the spectators.

15. Other Assignments: Students should be led to complete quizzes, including multiple choice questions and short written papers, to demonstrate their understanding of the artistic activities, concepts and contexts, and to highlight the integration of theory and practice.

Evaluation

This should be based on students’ class attendance, participation in the learning process, and demonstration of their understanding of the creative skills; the quality and quantity of the creative products/presentations.
**Instrumental: African Music and Dance Composition**

**Activity**

Practical participation in the creative process, utilizing instruments, environmental sounds, spoken texts, syllables, contextual themes, song texts, dance movements, visual imagery, improvised materials, and students’ imagination.

**Methodology**

1. The facilitator reviews the concepts of creativity/composition, the rationale for composing music and dance forms, types, or pieces, composition setting and processes, with reference to some of the prevailing forms/styles, devices and techniques.

2. The facilitator encourages students to utilize the prevailing materials and create instrumental patterns based on the prevailing styles of instrumental/melorhythmic composition, and drawing from their own experiences and innovation.

3. The facilitator leads students to create new instrumental patterns or melorhythms through improvisation, imitation of specific themes and relating their pieces to dance movements, spoken language, visual imagery, and other experiences and their own imagination.

4. The facilitator guides students in shaping specific sounds, language and themes to the desired sounds/forms.

5. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek further clarification on the activities.

6. Group activity: Students should be encouraged to collaborate, and work as individuals.

7. Appraisal: The facilitator encourages groups and individual students to present their work in progress or finished pieces to the class while their peers/colleagues listen, observe, respond, or participate in the performance on some level and later engage in dialogue and criticism or offer feedback on the works. Students should be encouraged to exhibit their final work to the class, or to a cross-section of the school or community and later engage in dialogue with the peers, spectators, and instructors for feedback and ways of improving upon their compositions.

8. Memorization/journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to document their significant learning/creative experiences in their memories and reflective journals or notebooks and with CD and other recording devices.

9. Other Assignments: Students should be led to complete quizzes, including multiple choice questions, and short written papers, to demonstrate their
understanding of the artistic activities, concepts and contexts, and to highlight the integration of theory and practice.

Evaluation

This should be based on students’ participation in the learning process, demonstration of their understanding of the creative concepts and skills, relative progress made in creativity, manifested in the quality and quantity of the final products with due consideration to collaborative work, and individual inputs, students’ presentation of the final products and feedback from peers and other competent spectators/evaluators.

*African Music and Dance Composition: Vocal Emphasis*

**Activity**

The use of single or multifaceted themes: historical, socioeconomic, religious, political, philosophical, topical, and imaginary.

**Duration**

Two hours

**Methodology**

1. The facilitator introduces students to the concepts of creativity/composition, vocal compositions and styles, and the works of some leading composers, and encourages them to draw from the prevailing concepts and stylistic conventions.

2. The facilitator encourages students to employ textual and graphic representations of artistic elements in their creative process and to highlight timbre, melodic phrases, tones, rhythm, dynamics, timing, scores; introductory, call-and-responsorial or antiphonal patterns, sectional structures, and finales of the songs.

3. The facilitator encourages students to relate the songs to language, themes, visual images, dance movements, and instrumental patterns.

4. The facilitator encourages students to improvise in the creative process and engage in constant criticism through selection, elimination, and modification of the vocal elements and sections and blend the work in harmony.

5. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek further clarification on the activities.

6. The facilitator encourages students to present their work in progress in class while their colleagues listen, observe, provide feedback or comment and engage in discussion/criticism of the work.
7. Memorization/journal or notebook entries and CD recording: The facilitator encourages students to memorize and keep reflective journal or notebook entries of their significant creative experiences and well as record their compositions with CD and other audio-visual devices.

8. The facilitator encourages students to present their final work to the class, department, school, or to the public (in appropriate costumes and using props and other visual imagery), and invite the audience to participate at the appropriate time and later engage in dialogue with them to solicit their views on the performance/piece and ways of improving their creativity.

Evaluation

This should be based on students’ participation in the learning process, understanding of the creative concepts, acquisition of the creative skills, relative progress manifested in the quality and quantity of their work, and feedback from peers and other competent observers.

The Construction of African Musical Instruments

This course/unit should explore the material used in constructing the musical instruments, the factors that influence the choice of material; timbre and tuning of selected African instruments such as drums, rattles, bells, xylophone, atenteben and odurugya flutes, mbira, thumb piano, gonge, string fiddle, prenprensua, atsyiafuledege, bowed lute, govu, adakagovu or adakam, box drum, etc.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Students will develop understanding of the processes and skills for constructing, tuning, and repairing African musical/dance instruments.

Activity

Construction of instruments, using improvised and real materials such as animal skins, synthetic leather or materials, tins, bottles, wood/logs, pegs, strings, bamboo tubes, iron metals, beads, pen covers.

Methodology

1. The facilitator engages students in dialogue on the process of constructing instruments.
2. The facilitator introduces students to some constructional materials and technologies of constructing instruments, timbre design and tuning, and samples of instruments.
3. The facilitator demonstrates the process of constructing, tuning, deconstructing and repairing musical instruments involving the use of relevant concepts.
4. The facilitator utilizes audio-visual devices to clarify the learning/creative process.
5. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek further clarification on the activities.
6. Group activity: The facilitator divides the class into groups of two or more (depending upon the size of the class) and guides students to construct some musical instruments, such as drums, rattles, flutes, xylophones and bowed lutes.
7. The facilitator goes around to observe and help or offer suggestions to students in difficulty.
8. The facilitator leads students to dry instruments such as the drums and xylophones and tune them to produce the required sounds.
9. Field study: Students should be encouraged to undertake field trips to the sources of the constructional materials and construction settings, or workshops to observe the instrumental construction process in nearby locations and engage in dialogue with the craftsmen.
10. Class presentation: The facilitator allows groups and individual students to demonstrate the construction process, or present their work in progress or finished products to the class, to be followed by class discussion, or feedback/comments on the various processes and products.
11. Guest lecturer: A competent guest lecturer/artist/craftsman should be invited to interact and share his experience with the students.
12. Memorization, journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep a written record of their significant learning experiences.

Evaluation
This should be based on students’ class attendance, participation in the learning process and cooperation with peers/colleagues; understanding of the concepts that relate to the construction of the instruments, demonstration of the construction and tuning techniques or skills, and the final products.

Visual Imagery: Costumes, Make-Up, Props and Other Paraphernalia

Objectives
Students will gain understanding of the concepts of costume, make-up, props, and other visual imagery and their significance or functions in African
performances; become familiar with the materials used in making costumes, make-up, properties, and other visual imagery; acquire skills in making and using costumes, make-up, properties and other visual imagery; and apply these knowledge and skills to their future education and careers.

Activity

Students’ interaction with samples of costumes, make-up, props, pieces of materials, raffia, clothes, wood, clay, metals, etc.

Lecture demonstration on the definition, origin and significance of costumes, types of costumes, and other visual elements and their making process; practical demonstration of the costume, make-up, props, and visual imagery making process; observation of the costume making (practical and video presentation); participation in the process of making these materials.

Methodology

1. The facilitator leads students though and interactive lecture or dialogue on the definition, origin, functions, and significance of costumes, make-up, props, and other visual imagery.

2. The facilitator demonstrates the process of making some costumes, make-up, and props, using some samples of visual images and audio-visual representations as teaching aids.

3. Group/individual activity: The facilitator guides groups and individual students to utilize real and improvised materials for designing specific costumes, props, and make-up.

4. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek further clarification on the activities.

5. The facilitator goes around helping students in difficulty and later works with individual students outside class periods.

6. Class presentation: The facilitator encourages students to present their work in progress or final products to the class by exhibiting or wearing them in class and in performances, and describing the sources of material used and process of making them, followed by class discussion or feedback.

7. Guest artists: A competent guest artist should be invited to help share his or her experience with the students.

8. Memorization, journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep written and audio-visual records of their significant learning experiences.

9. Other Assignments: Students should be led to complete quizzes, including multiple choice questions, and short written papers, to demonstrate their
understanding of the artistic activities, concepts and contexts, and to highlight the integration of theory and practice.

Evaluation

This should be based on class attendance, participation in the learning process, understanding of the creative concepts, contexts and processes, acquisition of the creative skills and the quantity and quality of the final products.

Theory

Theoretical Subject/Course and Topic Areas or Units

The Historical and Cultural Context of African Music and Dance

This curriculum area should be divided into courses or units such as African music and dance history, the contextual framework of African music and dance, or African music and dance forms. These may be taught as general/survey courses or they may be subdivided into courses or units such as the history of secular/mainstream, youth, adult, male, female, professional, ceremonial/religious and individuals’ or specific music and dance forms or styles and elements.

This may be taught within a period of two to three years, once per year, and may run from the second to fourth year.

Second Year: African Music and Dance History (Part One)

This course should explore the historical developments of Ghanaian and other West African music and dance forms with particular reference to mainstream performances such as agbadza, atrikpui, atamga/agbekɔ, misego, Yewe religious suites, adzogbo, adzida, gohu, atsyaia, gahu, kinka, bɔbɔɔwɔ, adev, egbanegba, adabatram and gota of the Ewe. Further reference should be made to adowa, kete, fontomfrom, apirede, nyoorkrom, adenken and sekyi of the Akan; kple, kpatsa, asafo, dipo, kpan-longo and gome of the Ga-Adagme; bamaya and damba of the Dagomba; bawa of Nandom, nagila of the Kasena-Nankani; kundum of the Nzema, etc.

Third Year: African Music and Dance History (Part Two)

This course should review the West African music and dance history with reference to music and dance forms such as bata, atilogwu, sorso, sinte, djole,
mandiani, kuku and dunba, and draw from other African and African Diaspora music and dance history.

Fourth Year: African Music and Dance History: Comparative Studies and Extended Research.

This course should provide a comparative study of the African, African Diaspora, Western and other world music and dance history and should involve a directed study, or field research into specific cultures, contextual or individual music and dance forms/styles, and a major research paper or thesis written under the supervision of a lecturer/professor.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Students will understand the origins and developments of the various contextual African music and dance forms and styles, acquire skills in researching, analyzing and documenting the historical developments of specific music and dance forms, and will do all of this from comparative perspectives.

Activities

Lecture demonstrations, audio-visual and practical presentations, class discussions and student presentations.

Duration

Ninety minutes to two hours

Methodology

1. The facilitator lectures on the historical developments of African music and dance drawing from specific music or dance forms, and incorporating African narrative or storytelling methods to engage students in dialogue and practice in order to develop their interest, level of participation and self-esteem. The lectures should be enhanced by audio-visual demonstrations.

2. The facilitator assigns weekly readings in preparation for class discussions.

3. Group discussion: The facilitator divides the class into temporary study groups ranging from two to six or more (depending upon the size of the class) with leaders selected by the various groups and with opportunities to reshuffle the groups.

4. The facilitator allots a specific time period, for example, 5–30 minutes for a group discussion of the topics.

5. The facilitator interacts with various discussion groups and helps those who are in difficulty.
6. Group presentations: The facilitator allows the groups (with the leaders) to present their perspectives, to be mediated by the (whole) class through dialogue. This may involve practical demonstration, or dramatization of the origin and development of certain art forms.

7. Midterm assignment (individual presentations): This should be based on classroom lectures/discussions or students’ research findings on the relevant topics in the form of written papers, quizzes, oral, practical, or combined modes of presentation, to be followed by a whole class discussion/feedback.

8. Guest lecture: A competent guest lecturer may be invited from the culture or an institution to interact and share his or her knowledge with the students.

9. Memorization and journal/note book entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep reflective journal or notebook entries of their significant learning experiences during the entire period.

10. The fourth year’s extended research should involve periodic meetings with supervisors and the presentation of research findings prior to the final presentation, which may combine, literary, oral and audio-visual documentation.

Evaluation

This may take the form of continuous assessment, based upon students’ participation in class discussions, attendance, the quality and quantity of their written papers and presentations, journal or notebook entries and the final exams or research projects.

Suggested Readings

The class readings may include some of the following:
The Contextual Framework of African Music and Dance: African Music and Dance Forms

This course should explore the rationale for contextualizing African music and dance with reference to specific African music and dance forms, those of the African Diaspora, Western and other part of the world.

First Year: Contextual Framework of African Music and Dance (Part One)

During the first year, students should be introduced to the Ghanaian and West African contextual music and dance forms/styles such as cradle songs from various cultural groups; the mainstream, agbadza, gohu, kinka and gbolo of the Ewe; the adowa of the Akan; the youth/adult sekyi and sanga of the Akan; the bɔbɔbɔ, goto, gahu, kinka, tokoi, gohu, adzida and nyayito of the Ewe. Students should also be introduced to some of the following: kpanlongo and gome of the Ga; the bamaya of the Dagomba; the predominantly female takada, atsyia, adzogbo-kadodo, zizihawo and avihawo of the Ewe; the nyoonkrom, adenkum and nmobom of the Akan; the mnani of Northern Ghana; the predominantly male gakpa and adzogbo-atsyia of the Ewe; futahawo or atsyohawo, adevu and atrikpui and kpegisu of the Ewe; and aboafo of the Akan. They may further be exposed to some of the following: bawa of Nan-dom; the lobi-sebire of the Lobi; the ceremonial misego, zizi, atrikpui, Yeue, afa and brekete suites; vuga, asafo, aflui, akufade of the Ewe; the akom, fontom-from, asafo, kete of the Akan; the kple, asafo and dipe of the Ga-Adangbe; and the damba-takai of the Dagomba, etc.

Second Year: Contextual framework of African Music and Dance/African Dance Forms (Part Two)

During the second year, students should review the Ghanaian and West African music and dance forms and focus on the music and dance forms of other African and African Diaspora cultures, such as sorsorne, sinte, dunba of Guinea; gumboot dance of South Africa; samba of Brazil, rumba dance of Zaire; and of Afro-Cuba.

Third Year: Contextual Framework of African Music and Dance/African Dance Forms (Part Three)

During the third year, students should engage in comparative study of the music and dance forms of Africa, African Diaspora, and other world cultures.
Activity
Lecture demonstrations, audio-visuals, practical presentations and field research.

Duration
Ninety minutes to two hours

Methodology
1. Lecture demonstration: A combination of African narrative, participatory and lecture demonstration, and audio-visual presentations. The lectures should address the rationale for contextualizing, naming, and classifying/categorizing African music and dance and their contextual significance and functions as well as the various categories or styles of African music and dance and the changing context of their presentation.

2. Group discussion: The facilitator engages the class in small group discussion, ranging from two to six students (with opportunities to reshuffle the groups during the semester). These discussions should relate to the contextual music and dance forms; the mainstream, age, sex, occupational, religious/ceremonial and political bases of their organization and performance and students’ response to the subject/topics.

3. The facilitator goes around to listen to the groups, participate in their discussions and assist groups or individual students in difficulty.

4. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek clarification on the readings.

5. Large group discussion: The facilitator allows the groups (with their leaders) to present summaries of their discussions to the class (involving practical demonstrations) followed by class discussion and feedback in the form of questions, answers and comments.

6. Guest lecturer: A competent guest speaker should be invited to interact and share his or her knowledge with the students.

7. Field trips: Students should be encouraged to undertake field trips to relevant locations in order to participate and observe performances in specific contexts and conduct interviews on the rationale for contextualization and the contextual functions of the music and dance, the changing context of their presentation and its impact on the music and dance.

8. Class presentation/Assignment: Individual or group presentations based on the lectures or research findings. This may take the form of oral, practical, written papers, quizzes, or combined modes of presentation.
9. Memorization and journal/note book Entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep reflective journals or notebook entries of their significant learning experiences throughout the period. This may be inspected at regular intervals and during the end of the semester.

10. Midterm and final examination/presentations: This should take the form of take-home papers and a final written examination or project (that may include audio-visual representations).

Evaluation

This should be based on students’ class attendance and participation in discussions, the quality and quantity of their class presentations, journal or notebook entries, final assignments or exams, projects, and other modes of assessment deemed relevant.

Suggested Readings

These may include some of the following:
**African Music and Dance Creativity/Composition**

The curriculum area of African Music and Dance Creativity/Composition should emphasize students' collaboration but highlight sectional structures such as instrumental, vocal, movement, and visual imagery (costumes, make-up, props, and other paraphernalia). During the advanced stages, students should be encouraged to focus on sectional structures while demonstrating their interrelations. For example, Instrumental: African music and dance composition; Vocal: African music and dance composition; Dance: African music and dance composition. This course should further highlight solo and group compositions, and should be taught for at least a two-year period, once per year.

**First Year (or Introductory): African Music and Dance Creativity**

The first-year theoretical African Music and Dance Creativity course should cover topics such as the African conception of creativity and qualities of African composers/choreographers, cantors, and patrons. Additional areas should include the purpose of creativity/composition, the creative/composition setting and processes, creative product and an introduction to the concept of style in African creativity. The course should also address improvisation as an aspect of African creativity, continuity of African creativity/performance, bases of identifying creative products, and ownership of African music and dance.

**Second Year: African Music and Dance Creativity**

The second-year theoretical African Music and Dance Creativity/Composition course should explore new developments in African creativity/composition, the rationale for institutional and individual’s creativity/composition, creative/compositional settings, processes, the notion of style, the idea of progress/limits of creativity, the present modes of identifying African creative works, and issues of appropriation, ownership, and copyright. These should relate to both the integrated and sectional structures of African performing arts: music, dance, and drama with reference to specific contexts.

**Activity**

Lecture demonstrations, practical and audio-visual presentations, and class discussions.

**Duration**

Ninety minutes to two hours.
Teaching Methodology

1. The facilitator assigns weekly readings and assignments to the class on specific topics.
2. The facilitator engages students in interactive lectures on the relevant topics, such as the definition and purpose of creativity, the qualities of creative people, creative settings, processes, products and concepts, involving practical demonstration and the use of audio-visual devices (teaching aids).
3. Group discussion: The facilitator engages students in group discussions on specific topics or various concepts of creativity.
4. The facilitator allows individuals and groups to ask questions and present their views to the class, followed by responses or feedback from the class.
5. Midterm/individual student presentation: This should be based on selected topics, and involve the use of samples of relevant creative works or students’ work in progress, and may take the form of combined oral, practical, and theoretical modes of presentation.
6. Guest artist: A competent guest artist or composer/choreographer may be invited to interact and share his or her knowledge or experience with the students.
7. Field trips: Students should be encouraged to attend other classes or visit field locations or communities or dance studios to observe various creative/performative processes and styles and engage in dialogue with the artists.
8. Memorization and journal/note book entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep reflective journal/notebook entries of their significant experiences.
9. Term Assignments/papers and final examinations: Students should be led through midterm and final assignments, oral and written quizzes, and papers or examinations on relevant topics and present it in class, orally, literally or a combination of oral, practical, written and visual modes.

Evaluation

This should take the form of continuing assessment based on class attendance, participation, the quality and quantity of the class assignments, midterm and final projects/exams, journal or notebook entries and other modes of assessment deemed relevant.

Suggested Readings

These may include the following:
African Music and Dance Analysis/Interpretation

The curriculum area of African Music and Dance Analysis/Interpretation should explore the analysis of integrated music and dance and should highlight the sectional structures such as (1) group and solo instrumental sections: rhythmic structure, timbre, tempo, speed, duration, intensity and their sociocultural framework, and in relation to other performance elements; (2) vocal analysis should involve a sociocultural analysis of songs, vocal qualities, melodic scales, slopes, glides, pendular and interlocking melodic figures, polyphony in relation to instrumental sounds, dance movement and visual imagery; (3) dance/movement analysis should involve a sociocultural analysis of movement qualities: their reflection of sociocultural values/meanings; as well as their levels, weight, flow, dynamics, spatial organization, tempo, rhythm, language and their relationship with other performance components such as emotional, visual, ethical and harmonic elements.

Students should be encouraged to explore the culture’s analytical method, that of related cultures, and their own methods in the analytical process. This may be taught during the first and second year, once per year.

First Year: African Music and Dance Analysis/Interpretation

The first-year African Music and Dance Analysis course should emerge from a sociocultural basis and involve an analysis of relatively simple performance structures/sectional structures, practical, aural, and oral analysis involving practical demonstration and the use of linguistic concepts, graphic and other forms of representation.

Second Year: African Music and Dance Analysis/Interpretation

This should involve a detailed analysis of the relatively more elaborate music and dance forms/elements such as agbekɔ, adzogbo, fonɔtom from, kete, adzida, gohu, and bawa; sectional structures of various stylistic conventions from the culture’s premises and from cross-cultural and individual students’ perspectives, while clarifying their interrelations with other performance components.
Activity
Lecture and practical demonstrations, combining the African dialogic mode and audio-visual presentations.

Teaching Methodology
1. The facilitator lectures the class on the concepts of analysis and interpretation in relation to the topics, and leads students through the analysis of selected music and dance forms/elements, involving practical demonstration.
2. The facilitator utilizes audiovisual modes of presentation and notation to expose students to selected performances and structural elements.
3. The facilitator introduces students to various linguistic concepts and cultural analytical methods in analyzing the instrumental, vocal and dance movements and highlighting their interrelationship.
4. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek clarification on the activities.
5. Group/Individual Analysis: The facilitator encourages students to analyze simple and relatively complex music and dance components, utilizing the cultures’ analytical methods and those of relevant cultures as well as students’ own methods (depending upon the class composition).
6. Class presentations: The facilitator leads students to present their analysis of sectional performance structures in groups or as individuals through practical/cognitive, literary (graphic and symbolic) audio-visual or combined modes of presentation, and encourage their colleagues to observe, listen, participate, document, and engage in class discussion of the presentations.
7. Memorization and journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep reflective journals or notebook entries of their significant learning experiences. This may be inspected by the facilitator at regular intervals.
8. Final examination/term paper. Students should be led to investigate relevant music and dance forms, or focus on their own artwork or work in progress, and analyze or interpret them, utilizing some of the analytical concepts and methods discussed in the course. This could be presented in class or handed over to the instructor by the end of the semester.

Evaluation
This should take the form of continuous assessment based on class attendance, midterm, final examination and other modes of evaluation deemed appropriate. This should be based on students’ understanding of the concepts
and modes of performance analysis, their acquisition of analytical skills as demonstrated through their analysis of certain performance components throughout the semester, and in the mid-semester and final projects.

Suggested Readings

These may include some of the following:

*African Music and Dance Ethics, Appreciation, Aesthetic Evaluation and Criticism*

This broad curriculum area should be divided into courses, units or topics such as African music and dance ethics, African music and dance appreciation, aesthetic evaluation and criticism of African music and dance. Alternatively, African music and dance appreciation, evaluation and criticism could be treated as one broad subject area. These courses should be taught during the second and third years, or third and fourth years.

**Third Year: African Music and Dance Ethics**

This course should explore the ethical values that are observed in the art-making process, such as the consent of leaders, parents, and guardians; leadership roles, counselling, philosophical inquiries, prayers/rituals, supervision, discipline, punishment, and conflict management, all geared towards good, agreeable, and pleasing performances. This should be taught within one or
two years, once per year. In addition, it may involve comparative studies of
the ethics of African, African Diaspora, Western and other world cultures.

Objectives

Students will develop understanding of the ethical values that are observed
during the African artmaking process and how these values shape the music and
dance forms; acquire skills in analyzing these values and apply some of these
ethical values/elements to their own creativity, performance processes, and fu-
ture research.

Activity

Lecture, practical demonstrations, and audio-visual presentations.

Methodology

1. The facilitator lectures students on the definition of performance ethics,
and introduce them to specific and general ethical concepts and values related
to African artmaking process.
2. The facilitator utilizes practical and audio-visual presentations of these
ethical values and rituals to clarify the learning process.
3. The facilitator assigns weekly readings to students and encourages them
to read them in preparation for class.
4. Group discussion: The facilitator engages students in small group dis-
cussions on specific performance ethics and rituals and their significance in
the artmaking process.
5. Class presentations: The facilitator encourages groups and individual stu-
dents to review, investigate and dramatize some of the ethics and rituals and
present them in class, to be followed by class discussions, questions and feed-
back, to broaden students’ understanding of the topics.
6. Guest lecture: A competent guest lecturer may be invited to interact or
share his/her experiences with the students on relevant topics.
7. Midterm and final assignment/examination: This should be based on stu-
dents’ analysis, discussion and presentation of specific ethical values, rituals
and concepts and their significance in the artmaking process, including their own
responses or criticism, using practical, oral, literary, and audio-visual modes.

Evaluation

This should be based on students’ class attendance and participation, qual-
ity and quantity of the presentations and written papers or projects.
**Third Year: African Music and Dance Appreciation and Evaluation**

This curriculum area should focus on the bases and modes of appreciating integrated African performances; sectional structures such as instrumental, vocal, movement, and visual imagery.

**Activity**

Lecture demonstration, integrating practical and audio-visual devices.

**Methodology**

1. The facilitator engages students in interactive lectures on the definition and nature of performance appreciation and evaluation.
2. The facilitator demonstrates the appreciation and evaluation process in practice and through audio-visual presentations.
3. Group discussions: The facilitator encourages groups of students to review some ethical and aesthetic concepts and values, and present their responses to the class, followed by comments, questions and feedback from peers and the instructor.
4. Class presentations: individual and group presentation: The facilitator leads students to demonstrate or dramatize or present some of these modes of appreciation and evaluation (including some audio-visual materials) in class, followed by peer/group response in practice or through comments and questions on the meanings, likes and dislikes, taste and preferences, and discoveries in the process.
5. Guest lecture: A competent guest artist from the local or urban area may be invited to interact and share his or her experiences with the students.
6. Memorization and journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep reflective journal or notebook entries of their significant learning experiences.
7. Final examination: This should involve research and completion of theoretical and practical projects or oral and written quizzes, presentations and papers on some of the topics or issues raised by the course, and students’ responses to the issues from specific or cross-cultural perspectives.

**Evaluation**

This should be based on class attendance, participation, the quality and quantity of their weekly assignments, presentations, midterm and final exams/papers or projects.
Third or Fourth Year: African Music and Dance Appreciation and Aesthetics Evaluation

This curriculum area may be treated as two distinct courses or various units but it is presented here as a unique course in view of the interweaving of African performance appreciation and evaluation. This should be taught for one or two years, once per year, (depending upon the scope of knowledge and the aims and objective of the institution). This curriculum area should explore the various modes of appreciating integrated African music and dance forms and sectional structures, and the environmental, spiritual, biological, physical, social, emotional, philosophical, and ethical values that shape African music and dance and form the basis of their aesthetic evaluation. This course/unit should also address the problems of evaluating cross-cultural art forms and suggested solutions to them.

Objectives/Learning Outcomes

Students should understand the theoretical underpinnings of the appreciation and aesthetic evaluation of African and cross-cultural arts; develop understanding, appreciation, respect, and tolerance for cross-cultural art forms; acquire analytical and critical skills related to African and cross-cultural art forms; apply these knowledge and skills to their creative, performance, research process/projects and future career. Activity

Lecture demonstrations, practical and audio-visual presentations, weekly readings, and presentations.

Methodology

1. The facilitator engages students in interactive lectures on the definition, concepts and topics, scope and limits of performance appreciation and aesthetic evaluation, involving practical demonstrations and audio-visual presentations.

2. The facilitator allows students to engage in group discussions on concepts employed in appreciating and evaluating African and cross-cultural music and dance.

3. The facilitator engages students in the appreciation and evaluation process and encourages them to participate, observe and listen to performance at various distances and levels, and to critique, comment and document their observations, feelings, thoughts, tastes, and preferences while utilizing some of the concepts learned in class.

4. Class presentations: The facilitator allows groups and individual students to present their views based on the issues raised in class and their participation and observation of performances and creative process and their own work in progress.
5. The facilitator encourages colleagues or peers to listen, observe, inscribe, and participate in some presentations at certain moments or levels (these may involve cheering up their colleagues occasionally, fixing coins of their foreheads, etc.), followed by class discussions, critiques, and commenting on the meanings, likes and dislikes, tastes and preferences, surprises and discoveries in the presentation, using some of the concepts learned in class.

6. Guest lecture: A competent guest speaker should be invited to share his/her experiences with the students.

7. Memorization and journal/notebook entries: The facilitator encourages students to memorize and keep reflective journal or notebook entries of their significant learning experiences and discoveries in and outside the classroom.

8. Midterm/final examination: This may combine practical and literary modes of presentation: oral and written quizzes and presentations/papers.

Evaluation

This may take the form of continuing assessment based on student’s attendance, participation, quantity and quality of their assignments, midterm and final research papers, projects presentation and final examination.

Suggested Readings

These may include some of the following:


Third or Fourth Year: African Music and Dance Criticism

This course should be taught in the third or fourth year, once per year, and should involve a reflection on the definition, nature, scope, and limits of criticism; a review of the nature and purpose of creativity and performance; the historical cultural and critical functions of African music and dance; ambigu-
ities inherent in the creative, performative, interpretive and evaluative processes. Considerations may be given to questions of whether the artists have succeeded in communicating their intentions (themes, meaning, emotions), or achieving their purposes as well as discussions of conflicting or multiple perspectives about the origin, development, creative, performance and evaluation processes, and curriculum development and implementation process.

**Objectives**

Students will acquire analytical and critical skills related to the African art-making processes; understand the problems or ambiguities inherent in the art-making, and curriculum development and implementation processes; develop awareness of the critical functions of the arts and the use of criticism as a tool for improvement in the artmaking and educational processes.

**Activity**

Lectures, practical demonstrations, and audio-visual presentations.

**Duration**

Ninety minutes to two hours

**Methodology**

1. The facilitator lectures on the definition, nature, and limits of criticism with reference to specific contexts.
2. The facilitator engages students in critical reflection on certain art forms, artistic elements and creative processes, and encourages them to ask questions on relevant issues.
3. The facilitator engages students in small group discussion, asking the why, when, where and how questions.
4. Group discussion: The facilitator encourages students to demonstrate through practice where appropriate and engages students in large group discussion, involving reflections on specific artistic creations and processes, functions and outcomes.
5. Student presentations: The facilitator encourages students to present their critiques on the origin, development, and processes of specific music and dance forms or structural elements while pointing out contradictions, ambiguities, ironies, and suggesting ways to improve the process and products.
6. Guest lecture: A competent guest artist, composer or art/cultural critic may be invited to interact and share his or her experiences with the students. This should be mediated by the whole class.
7. Midterm or end of term paper: Students should be led to write critique papers on topics such as the creative and performative process, the process of meaning-making and theorizing in arts, and the curriculum development and implementation process, utilizing some of the concepts and perspectives shared in class.

8. Memorization and journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep reflective journal or notebook entries of their significant learning experiences.

**Evaluation**

This should be based on class attendance, participation, quality and quantity of their weekly, midterm and final presentation papers and projects.

**Suggested Readings**

The course readings may include the following:


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**African Music and Dance Curriculum Development and Implementation**

This course would address the various definitions of the curriculum and education, general and specific aims and objectives of curriculum development, research methodology, and literature review. It would also address the concept of human nature and human development, family, society, school, ethics; the use, relevance, needs, interest, intellectual values of the curriculum content, the issue of artistic/cultural representation, the contextual framework, educational philosophy and a curriculum model, areas, units and implementation procedures.

**Objectives**

Students will understand the definition and scope of the curriculum and the purpose of its development, its philosophical foundation, the curriculum development and implementation process and the factors that influence the selection of African music and dance curriculum content; acquire skills in the curriculum development and implementation; and apply this knowledge and these skills to their education, research, and future careers.
Activities

Lecture demonstration and discussion of the curriculum samples, weekly readings, audio-visual presentations, journal entries, or note taking.

Teaching Methodology

1. The facilitator engages students in interactive lectures on the definition and scope of the curriculum, aims and objectives of the curriculum, and factors that influence the curriculum development and implementation process while utilizing music and dance curriculum models and audio-visual representations to facilitate the learning process.

2. Small and large group discussions: The facilitator leads the class in small group discussions and through practical development of specific curricular areas or models.

3. The facilitator encourages students to ask questions to seek further clarification on the readings and activities.

4. Field trips: The facilitator encourages students to visit libraries and undertake field trips to communities or institutions to engage in research: through interviewing students, parents, and specialists in other institutions, and reviewing some curriculum modules or models.

5. Class presentation: Individual or group presentations on the curriculum development and implementation process, or on curriculum components, conceptual framework, etc., based upon the lectures and field research.

6. Guest speaker: A guest instructor or curriculum specialist may be invited from a local school, school board, and the office of curriculum development and implementation to interact and share his/her perspectives with students.

7. Memorization and journal/notebook entries: Students should be encouraged to memorize and keep reflective journal entries of significant experiences.

8. Final exam or term paper: This should be based on the theoretical and practical issues relevant to the curriculum development and implementation, and on students’ curriculum development and implementation processes and projects.

Evaluation

This should be based on class participation, attendance, and the quality and quantity of their class assignments, journal or notebook entries, midterm and final presentation/exam.
Suggested Readings

These may include some of the following:


7.4 Summary and Conclusion

In this book, I have reviewed some of the prevailing literature on African and Western performing arts, cultures, social theories, postcolonial theories, philosophy, and education. I have also provided an African music and dance conceptual framework, a curriculum model and implementation procedures for a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine arts and Bachelor of Arts Education: theory and practice. This curriculum can be implemented by elementary schools and colleges, other institutions and individual art practitioners with some modifications. Chapter One reviews the theories of human nature, human development, society, school, epistemology, and ethics. Chapter Two provides justification for the African music and dance curriculum by reexamining students’ needs, interest, and the use, relevance and reality of the curriculum content, as well as the issue of cultural/artistic representation. Chapter Three reconceptualizes the African artmaking process in light of the Western concept of originality and creativity and provides the basis for identifying African music and dance, utilizing the Ewe conceptual framework. Chapter Four presents the Ewe contextual framework as a basis for African music and dance curriculum with reference to their forms/types and styles.

Chapter Five provides an analysis of Ewe music and dance forms as part of the content: language, style, melody/song, instrumentation, timbre, performance techniques, rhythmic structure, dance elements, costume, make-up, props, visual imagery, emotional expression, harmony, and intellectual
values. Chapter Six discusses Ewe music and dance ethics, appreciation, aesthetic evaluation and criticism in relation to the major Western aesthetic theories as a basis for African music and dance evaluation and criticism. It further elucidates the biological, social, cultural, ethical, and historical values that form the basis of African music and dance evaluation and criticism. Chapter Seven addresses the contemporary challenges posed to implementation of the African music and dance curriculum and reviews the dominant Western educational philosophies and my own educational philosophy. It further outlines the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Fine Arts, and Bachelor of Education in African Music and dance curriculum model and its implementation procedures.

I acknowledge the fact that some educators or institutions may implement units or areas of this conceptual framework and curriculum that appeal to them, or relate to their specific educational practices while others may implement it as a whole or add new dimensions to it. Thus, the teaching methods and class activities can be expanded to include the African storytelling modes of teaching and learning, involving the facilitator and students serving as co-narrators, actors, actresses, music and performers, listeners, observers, and critics; riddles and other assignments. Changes in the environmental and social conditions, the emergence of new artistic creations, and new teaching methods would inevitably lead to modification of the proposed African music and dance curriculum and implementation procedures. In addition, successful implementation of this curriculum depends upon the availability of resources, teachers, patrons, and students. It is hoped that given proper patronage, this conceptual framework and curriculum would make significant contributions to African music and dance education. For this reason, I would appeal to governmental and other public and private institutions, states, communities and individuals to collaborate and reexamine the cultural significance of the arts in order to provide possible means of supporting and promoting it in our educational institutions and communities. This will enable us to sustain the growth of music and dance and restore their significant contributions to humanity and culture.
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