

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

DKU IN THE FUNERAL TRADITIONS OF THE BAKPELE:

SYSTEMIZATION AND DOCUMENTATION



HESPER KWAME ADESUA

2018

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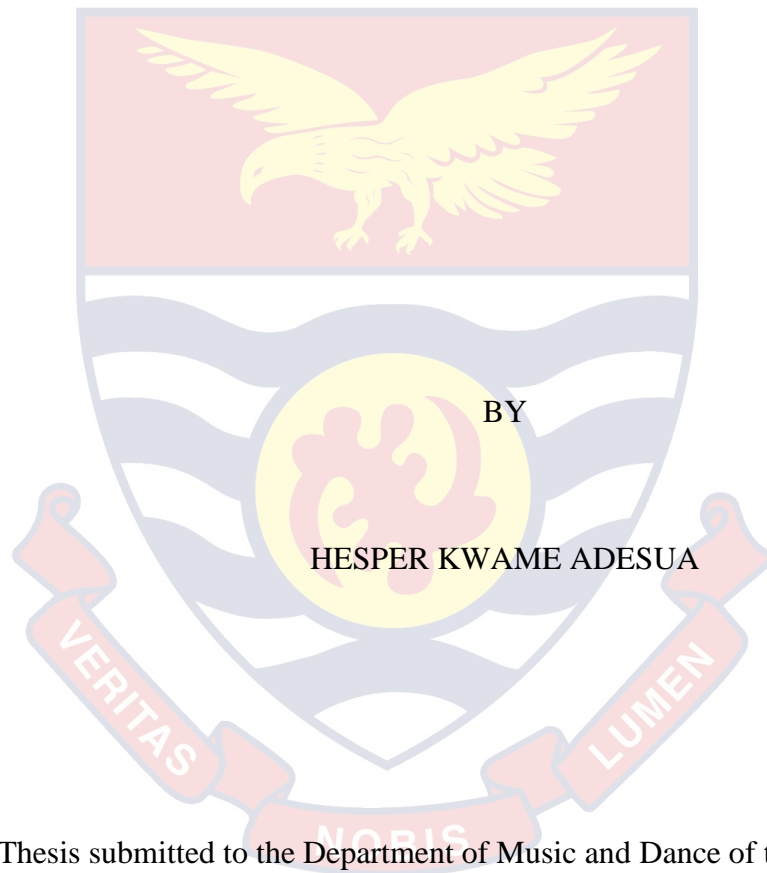
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SYSTEMIZATION AND DOCUMENTATION



Thesis submitted to the Department of Music and Dance of the Faculty of Arts,
College of Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast in Partial
Fulfilment of the Requirements for Award of Doctor of Philosophy Degree in
Ethnomusicology.

JULY, 2018

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:..... Date:.....

Name: Hesper Kwame Adesua

Supervisors' Declaration

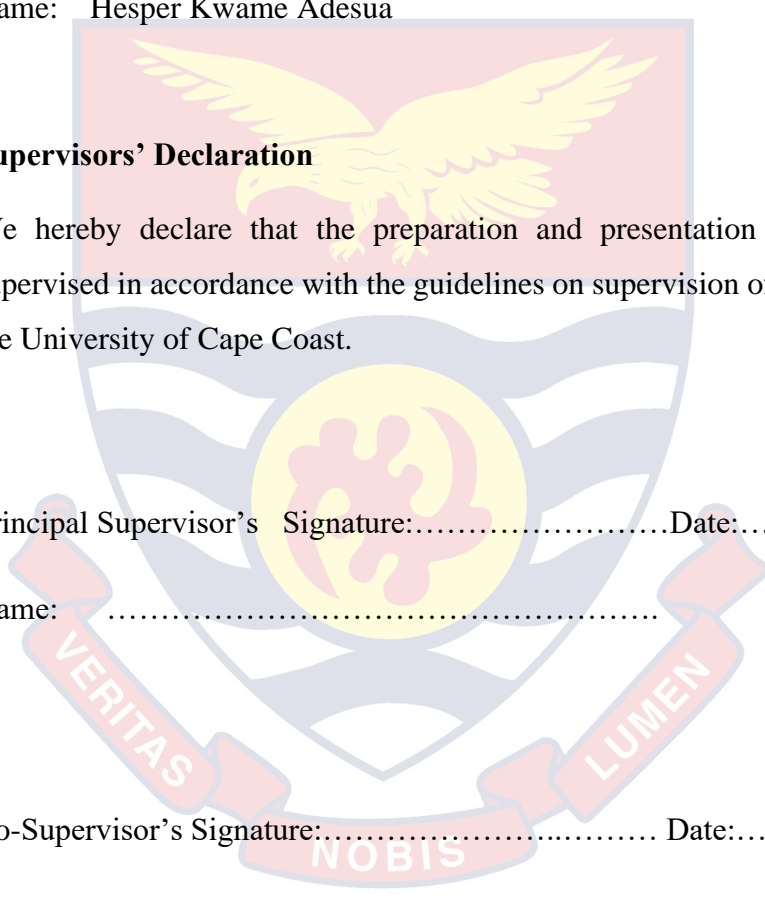
We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature:.....Date:.....

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ABSTRACT

The *Bakpele* (Likpe), in the Hohoe District, is one of the Guan speaking groups of the Volta Region. This research, which was carried out between August, 2013 and June, 2016, consists of studying *Dku* (dirges) as part of their funeral traditions. Following an initial study, I realized that *Dku* have not been given substantial ethnographic systemization and documentation. Analysing the problem of how ethnographically under-researched this topic area is, this study sets out to present a methodical documentation on the nature and structure of the genre. Research methodology included different interviews alongside participant observation, audio visual recordings, and library research. Recorded samples of songs were aggregated into sacred and secular components of lament and dance tunes while discussing the communicative and symbolic meanings underlying these songs. The study points out that the *Bakpele's* worldview on death relates the genre of which the latter impacts and ties the attitudes and behavioural fabrics of the entire *Bakpele* society that it serves. In addition to the paucity of documentation on *Dku*, some major social elements have been found to have adversely affected their trend of performance in recent times. In view of these findings, the thesis recommends continuous performance of *Dku* during the *Bakpele* funerals for the sake of preservation and sustenance. It also recommends that bereaved families of the various funerals gather at a designated place to receive mourners and visitors amidst the singing of dirges, as a way of improving funeral performances among the *Bakpele*.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the twenty- first century woman of the Bakpele.



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MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Corpus	Title in Language 1	Title in English
Corpus 1	<i>Yewole kukum deka deka.</i>	1 They are dying one after the other.
Corpus 2	<i>Tsyɔeviwo nɔfɛ</i>	2 Dwelling place for orphans
Corpus 3	<i>Amesiwo le wu nyem</i>	3 My adversaries
Corpus 4	<i>Mmi ale elo.</i>	4 All have been accomplished today.
Corpus 5	<i>Hagbe hena akpi tsotso</i> (Osee yee aye aye)	5 Signal song to end Akpi (Osee yee aye aye)
Corpus 6	<i>Dzesi hena akpivu tsotso</i>	6 Rhythmic pattern to end akpi instrumentals
Corpus 7	<i>Bofo buyifo</i>	7 We are capable
Corpus 8	<i>Asɔle eto ɔsɔ</i>	8 Western sacred art songs
Corpus 9	<i>Ayo leba, leba leba</i>	9 Homes have become desolate
Corpus 10	<i>Atɔni kele</i>	10 All including the branches
Corpus 11	<i>Akyeakpoliee.</i>	11 Allied hornbills.
Corpus 12	<i>Akukɔ di kenye</i>	12 The rooster has crowed
Corpus 13	<i>Kenye kamɔ diala ni</i>	13 Our vows which we vowed
Corpus 14	<i>Bekyese me</i>	14 Send me [wealth]
Corpus 15	<i>Bekyi aya kɔŋkɔnikɔ</i>	15 They go naked
Corpus 16	<i>ŋta sini mbe</i>	16 I'd have opened to have a glimpse
Corpus 17	<i>Kpɔm duu</i>	17 Stir at me
Corpus 18	<i>Akra maye ŋtu mɔ?</i>	18 Do I catch them up on foot?
Corpus 19	<i>Bikyɔ me afanto</i>	19 Leave me a sign of leaves.
Corpus 20	<i>Lɔ esu buɔsiɔsɔ mɔ.</i>	20 Send our greetings to them.
Corpus 21	<i>Udu weinsi ɔmbɔ bubɔ.</i>	21 He/she is gone for good.
Corpus 22	<i>Nyemenya ku kae wui o.</i>	22 I don't know the cause of his death.
Corpus 23	<i>Edu vɔ edzo.</i>	23 He / she has consumed everything and is gone.
Corpus 24	<i>Bimu wɔ site.</i>	24 Cover him with soil.
Corpus 25	<i>Owoe likpɔ o?Ewu likpɔ o.</i>	25 But who is dead? Grandma is dead.
Corpus 26	<i>Bubɔ wɔ diyo bofia.</i>	26 We have come to disband her

	property.
Corpus 27 <i>Owan n̄tɔ</i>	27 Cooked a meal of ashes
Corpus 28 <i>Minni okpa; bala mɛ.</i>	28 I'm not a dog to be driven away.
Corpus 29 <i>Eyɔmɛ menye tsadife o.</i>	29 The grave is not a tourists' site.
Corpus 30 <i>Boakya le asia mɛ.</i>	30 Let's meet at the market.
Corpus 31 <i>Dhɔ loo, n̄ua ke loo.</i>	31 Comrade, it is daybreak.
Corpus 32 <i>Ani yeso wɔ</i>	32 He was fed up
Corpus 33 <i>Miva kpem loo.</i>	33 Come in to support me.
Corpus 34 <i>Abui de megbɔ o</i>	34 The needle could not return
Corpus 35 <i>Minkɔ yoo lo; minkɔ hmm.</i>	35 I sighed and accepted.
Corpus 36 <i>Ameku le fome dom.</i>	36 The dead are keeping family relations.
Corpus 37 <i>Leyɔ mkpe; nte mfo mofɛ.</i>	37 It is cold, which way do I go?
Corpus 38 <i>Ketu amkpi ku aba kele.</i>	38 The river does not dry up together with its stones.
Corpus 39 <i>Uyi ato usɔnto lɔ kenye.</i>	39 A thistle has pierced the cantor in the mouth.
Corpus 40 <i>Biyifo bitɔ mɛ linsɔ mi ani.</i>	40 Do it for me; I will acknowledge you.
Corpus 41 <i>Menye egbe enye egblɔgbeo.</i>	41 This is not the day of reckoning.
Corpus 42 <i>Biensi kpo wɔ diye l'obia.</i>	42 Never again mention his name at gatherings.
Corpus 43 <i>Be se ukedu kasɔ leka kpa.</i>	43 Now that he is gone, the way is clear.
Corpus 44 <i>Mmi kamao etiki alo o.</i>	44 Henceforth, every case is ended.
Corpus 45 <i>Oyosate lɔmbɔ diyɔ.</i>	45 The landlord is absent.
Corpus 46 <i>Osɔmi lebele siku; ofati ndɛ simɔ.</i>	46 The door is drenched; the wall is laughing.

GLOSSARY

Phonemes in *Sekpele* (the language for the *Bakpele*) are not all that different from those of the Ewe and Akan pronunciations. The consonants and vowels are used just as they are in the Ewe and Akan languages. Examples are:

- “a” as in *atɔni* in *Sekpele* is like “a” in *amɛ* in Ewe;
- “e” as in *ambe* in *Sekpele* is like “e” in *egbe* in Ewe;
- “ɛ” as in *beɛ* in *Sekpele* is like “ɛ” in *amɛ* in Ewe;
- “o” as in *okpa* in *Sekpele* is like “o” in *godui* in Ewe;
- “ɔ” as in *atɔni* in *Sekpele* is like “ɔ” in *kpɔm* in Ewe;
- “i” as in *atɔni* in *Sekpele* is like “i” in *abui* in Ewe;
- “u” as in *ukubi* in *Sekpele* is like “u” in *abui* in Ewe;
- “ky” as in *bikyɔ* in *Sekpele* is like “ky” in *ɔkyena* in Akan;
- “ɔ̃” as in *bɔ̃* is not found in the Ewe and Akan languages.

One approximate *Sekpele* character that stands unique is the phoneme “ɔ̃”.

This letter has the normal three accent levels of high, medium and low, as illustrated with the word “*bɔ̃kywɔ̃sɔ̃*” in the examples that follow:

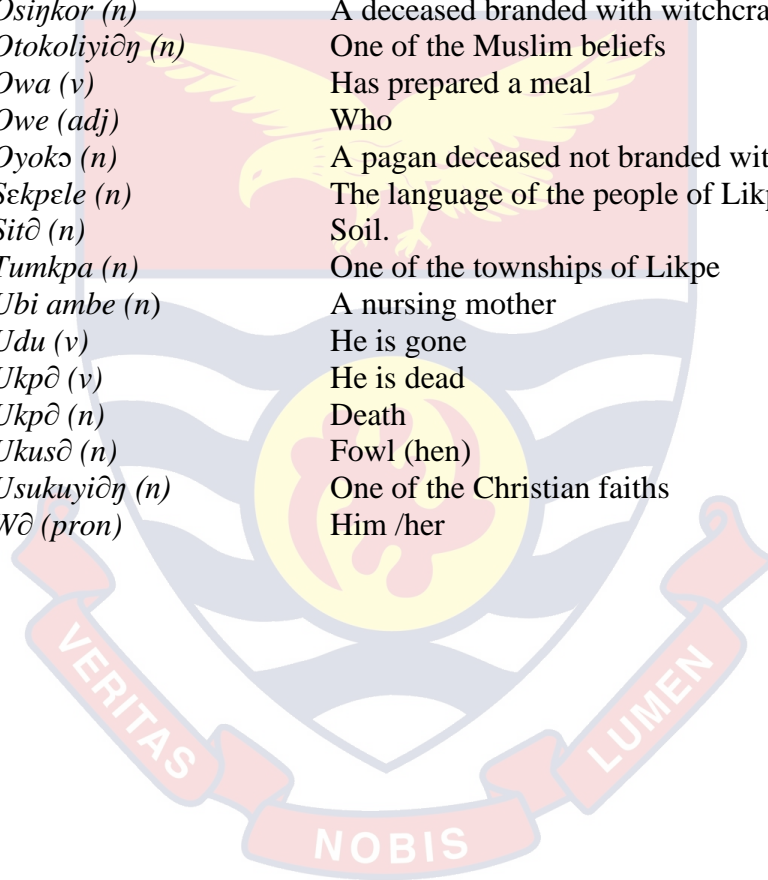
- Medium - medium - high as in “*bɔ̃kywɔ̃sɔ̃*” meaning marriage rivals;
- High - low - medium as in “*bɔ̃kywɔ̃sɔ̃*” meaning they were cautious;
- Low-low- medium as in “*bɔ̃kywɔ̃sɔ̃*” meaning they should be cautious.

Readers are to note that an application of the appropriate accent makes the actual meaning of the word to stand out. This notwithstanding, Wycliffe (2008) did not apply any mark to this character in writing out *Onanto eto Kakle Fɔ̃fɔ̃* (The New Testament in *Sekpele*.) This particular accent mark is, therefore, imaginary, depending on the context of its usage. Similarly, for this work, readers are advised to vary their voices according to the required contextual meaning.

Following are definitions of Sekpele terminologies.

<i>Afanto (n)</i>	Leaves
<i>Agbozome (n)</i>	One of the townships of Likpe
<i>Akukɔ (n)</i>	Cock (Fowl)
<i>Akpa (n)</i>	Feet
<i>Atɔni (n)</i>	Firewood
<i>Awumble (n)</i>	Dance for Letɔkli music in Kɔlɔ festival
<i>Aya (n)</i>	Nakedness
<i>Ayo (n)</i>	Homes (Houses)
<i>Bakpele (n)</i>	Local name for the people of Likpe
<i>Bakwa (n)</i>	One of the townships of Likpe
<i>Bakwa Kato (n)</i>	One of the townships of Likpe
<i>Bala (n)</i>	One of the townships of Likpe
<i>Bala mɛ (v)</i>	I have been excommunicated
<i>Bakpele (Adj)</i>	In their numbers
<i>Bekyese (v)</i>	Send (a gift or somebody).
<i>Bekyi (adj)</i>	They go with
<i>Biyiɔn (v)</i>	If you come by
<i>Blilo (n)</i>	Signal drum of Bakpele
<i>Bofia (v)</i>	Disband
<i>Buɔ siɔ sɔ (v)</i>	We greet.
<i>Bumu (v)</i>	Cover with soil
<i>Di (v)</i>	Eat
<i>Diyɔ (n)</i>	A house (A home)
<i>Etu (v)</i>	Has fallen
<i>Ewu (n)</i>	Grandmother
<i>Eyuwɔ (v)</i>	It is cold
<i>Gudeve (n)</i>	One of the townships of Likpe
<i>Kama (prep)</i>	Aftermath [Back]
<i>Kasɔ (n)</i>	The ground
<i>Katsan̄kla (n)</i>	Aboriginal chief of the then Bakwa
<i>Keku (n)</i>	Dirge
<i>Keku (n)</i>	Funeral
<i>Keku (n)</i>	Weeping
<i>Kele (adj)</i>	In its entirety
<i>Kenye (n)</i>	Mouth [Voice]
<i>Kɔlemɛ (n)</i>	Branches
<i>Kɔn̄kɔnīn̄kɔ (adv)</i>	Redundant element describing a state of vanity
<i>Kɔlɔ (n)</i>	Festival for the youth leader
<i>Kplɛ (adj)</i>	Mighty / Great
<i>Kpele (adj)</i>	Mighty / Great
<i>Kukurantumi (n)</i>	One of the townships of Likpe
<i>Kuyi (n)</i>	Tree
<i>Lɔ (conj)</i>	If
<i>Leba (v)</i>	Broken (desolate)
<i>Leba (n)</i>	Stone / Rock
<i>Lɛkɔyi (n)</i>	Day of unification
<i>Letsyayi (n)</i>	Day of meeting
<i>Letɔkli (n)</i>	The music for kɔlɔ festival

<i>Mbe (n)</i>	Mother
<i>Mbe (v)</i>	Have a look at / glimpse of
<i>Maye (v)</i>	Go on foot
<i>Minni (adj)</i>	I am not
<i>Dku (n)</i>	Dirges
<i>Dku (n)</i>	Plural for weeping
<i>Dku (n)</i>	Funerals
<i>Dta sini (v)</i>	I would have opened
<i>Dto (n)</i>	Ashes
<i>Dtu m̄ (adv)</i>	To catch them up
<i>Okpa (n)</i>	A dog
<i>Omamuyī (n)</i>	One of the pagan beliefs
<i>olo (n)</i>	A youth leader
<i>Osīkor (n)</i>	A deceased branded with witchcraft
<i>Otokoliyī (n)</i>	One of the Muslim beliefs
<i>Owa (v)</i>	Has prepared a meal
<i>Owe (adj)</i>	Who
<i>Oyok̄ (n)</i>	A pagan deceased not branded with witchcraft
<i>Sekpele (n)</i>	The language of the people of Likpe
<i>Sit̄ (n)</i>	Soil.
<i>Tumkpa (n)</i>	One of the townships of Likpe
<i>Ubi ambe (n)</i>	A nursing mother
<i>Udu (v)</i>	He is gone
<i>Ukp̄ (v)</i>	He is dead
<i>Ukp̄ (n)</i>	Death
<i>Ukus̄ (n)</i>	Fowl (hen)
<i>Usukuyī (n)</i>	One of the Christian faiths
<i>W̄ (pron)</i>	Him /her



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter provides a succinct background to the concerns leading to the identification of the problem of paucity of documented ethnographic materials on *Dku* (dirges of the Bakpɛle). The chapter outlines the problem for this study, the objectives and the field questions, approach to the fieldwork, and the subsequent analyses of data. It provides also the delimitations, definition of terms in this study and finally, the organization of the rest of the text for the thesis report.

1.1 Background to the Study

Music exists in all nations, among ethnic groups, and has existed as far back in time as we know about people and their cultures. In cultures, music is deeply integrated into societal activities, and the cultures of Africa are no exception. Among these cultures, musical languages, musical styles and functions have differed considerably.

People in different cultures value music for different reasons. Music will for example, sound differently from one culture to another because social groups or societies develop their own tastes about what sounds beautiful as music. They have their own musical traditions and their different reasons for using music in their communities in such ways as music for recreation and entertainment, and music for festivals. Musical performances could also be carried out by individuals singing incidentally, or playing on an instrument to pass the time. Societal music is also performed occasionally for the religious ceremonies that mark the cycle of man's

life such as birth, puberty, marriage, and death (ritual songs for death include dirges).

Funeral rites, which are customs associated with death and burial of humans, are distinctively observed to mark the end of human life on this earth. These rites are not only associated with religious beliefs of indigenous societies in the world about death and the life after death, but they also have important psychological, philosophical and socio-cultural values that enhance their survival.

In Ghana, one can identify two different ways of mourning amidst weeping and wailing that characterize the expression of deep sorrow for the dead. On the one hand, the outpouring of feelings on such occasions has resulted in the recital of some traditional poetries and eulogies. On the other hand, mourning is expressed through funeral songs like dirges in their vocal or instrumental media. Among the various African societies, dirges play vital roles in the celebration of the dead.

Bakpele is the local name for the people of Likpe. They are an ethnic group located in the Hohoe District of the Volta Region as one of the Guan speaking groups. Bakpele, like other Guan speaking people, perform dirges to mourn the dead, based on their worldview, specifically, the concept of death and the life hereafter.

Dirges being special songs that are performed during death and funeral celebrations are vital to the African and for that matter, to every culture. The study of dirges in cultures leads to a better understanding of the many diverse views about death as an institution in these cultures, just as it is viewed among the Bakpele.

1.2 Problem Statement

Bakpele have different types of funeral celebrations which are basically determined by the religious affiliations of the deceased while alive, and at other

times determined by the influence of the bereaved family on the community. Funeral types depend also on the deceased's status in society and the type of death that he passes through.

As part of the Ghanaian culture, attendance and participation in funerals across ethnic groups and societies is eminent. I have attended several of the Bakpele funerals, at which *Dku* (Bakpele traditional dirges) were performed as part of the funerary celebrations, much to my admiration. My interest in these songs enticed me into further research on this genre.

After some initial research, I realized that there have been some researchers like Asamoah (1967), Agawu (1988), Sracoo (1989), Agordoh (1991), Ampene (2010) and Amu (2011) who worked at different places in the Region and on different topic areas. Even so, apart from Asamoah (1967) who extended his study of the Northern Eweland to include part of Bakpele, and Sracoo (1989), who studied *Letorkli*, a traditional dance type of the Bakpele, there was no other such study specific to *Dku* (the Bakpele dirges).

Analysing how under-researched my study area is, I could assert that there was not much ethnographic documentation done on *Dku* (dirges of the Bakpele). Admittedly, in this regard, the **problem** for this study is that there are no adequate ethnographic materials on *Dku*, as a musical type of the Bakpele.

Sracoo (1989) in his introduction, recommends to other researchers in similar fields of study to search into traditional musical types of the Bakpele. He writes:

I have realized that there was no literature on letorkli musical type and, perhaps, on the people of Likpe as a whole. It is hoped that

the result of this project [his project on letorkli] will pave the way for further research of this and other musical types of the Bakpele (P.1).

My study on *Dku* (the Bakpele dirges) will come as a sequel to Sracoo (1989:1).

Notwithstanding this paucity in ethnographic documentation, a few elderly women are located in the remotes of Bakpele who are knowledgeable in *Dku*. It is imperative to play on these few existing literatures for full recording, systemization and documentation of this art. This is perhaps, the only major way Bakpele cultural heritage, by way of *Dku* could be preserved, protected and maintained in all human endeavours for posterity. This aside, such a large body of the arts may be lost forever.

1.3 Theoretical Orientation

A conceptual framework may be of use in investigating the performance of the funeral tradition of an ethnic group for purposes of preservation and to improve performance. For this study, I dwelt on the Phenomenological Theory associated with the work and writings of the Viennese Alfred Schutz. Schutz, (in Stone, 2008:165) defines the theory as “a research framework that focuses on studying human experience with attention to the details of subjective interpretations.” The theory was carried to its logical conclusion by Berger & Luckmann, (1967) (in Stone, 2008:166).

A basic sociological assumption of this orientation is that social experiences are defined as meaningful experiences. In this assumption, Schutz was interested in the nature of meaning and agrees that meaning arises in the context of social interaction by which human experience is the ground of all experiences.

Another assumption is that meaning is created in highly shared meaningful experiences, which are commonly associated with linguistic symbols. These shared experiences make interaction possible. The focus of investigation is the “life-world,” the whole sphere of everyday experiences, orientations, and actions through which individuals pursue their interests and affairs by manipulating objects, dealing with people, conceiving plans, and carrying these plans out (Schutz & Luckman, (1973) (in Stone, 2008:166).

In brief, Phenomenologists focus on the ordinary ebb and flow of ordinary life with concern for the minute interactions in which people engage as they live their lives, where critical issues within the life-world is the subject meaning of the person’s membership in his community. Finally, the sociological assumption says a common worldview depends on the belief of the members of a community that they share common views.

Phenomenological assumptions in music say that music can be regarded as occurring within a “finite province of meaning.” By this, Schutz meant that when one is performing music, different rules and meanings are created than in the world of everyday life. This statement does not mean that music does not relate to the larger world. He continues that the study of the musical process involves the analysis of communication. There is the sharing of the other’s flux of experiences.

In addition to phenomenology as the conceptual theory, I used an eclectic of multiple theories including the Performance theory, the Feminist theory, Modernization, Humanistic, Structural Functionalism, and the Instinct theory to express more views on the various sub-topics, explaining what happens at the time and why it happens. This approach is in accordance with Stone (2008) who writes:

In many cases, ethnomusicologists have drawn from a variety of theories or approaches, and the boundaries between them are

treated as porous and permeable. To try and pigeonhole various ethnomusicologists as espousing this or that particular theory would be to ignore the reality of practice within the field. Many scholars mix and march theories with considerable ease (P. xi).

1.4 Philosophical Position

There are a number of considerations that underpin the philosophical position of every research. This research was patterned after the epistemologic stance as its paradigm. Epistemological issues deal with the question of knowledge acceptability in a discipline; the methods through which knowledge is acquired and how that truth is determined. This Philosophy, to my study, is the metaphysics of what each member of the Bakpele society considers as being real and normal.

Epistemological position can be of the interpretivist or the positivist view. I adopted the interpretivists' position for my study. In this way, understanding and interpretation are from my own perspective and point of reference. I advocated for realistic context and not a universal truth. Assumptions in epistemology show also the relationship of the researcher to that being researched. This research holds onto the interpretivist epistemological position on grounds of the multiple interactions that I had with the various stakeholders of Bakpele tradition. My close familiarity with the Bakpele culture makes it the most ideal and recommended approach for a study on their *keku*. I interacted with my consultants so much so that my report depicts facts from an insider. Here, I was immersed in the research situation for which the values and beliefs became my driving force in interpreting findings, out of which I made subjective conclusions.

The positivists' position, on the other hand, is opposite to the interpretivists'. Babbie (2005) explains that:

they place emphases on the application of the natural sciences' approach to the study of social reality. They are of the belief that the world conforms to fixed laws of causes and effects whereby, complex issues are tackled using simplified or fundamental approach... With this position, the researcher views issues objectively from a detached position of the research situation. Neutral observation of reality takes place without biases from the researcher.... When taking the positivists' dimension, an uncommitted neutral position is impossible. (P.8).

The interpretivists' philosophic stance is inconsistent with the positivists' approach to data collection and analysis and, thus, I adopted interpretivism as the basis for engaging the research problem. I used the woman of the Bakpele alongside a repertory of keku that she uses at the five phases of the Bakpele funerals as my study objects.

1.5 Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance of this study on *music-culture* explained by Titon & Reck, (2005:12) suggest much more than just documenting and describing music. Research goals for this study sought to identify who the Bakpele are, investigate the trend and context of *Dku* performance in relation to their worldview on funerals and explore ways of systemizing the corpus and finally, to undertake a critical reflection and interpretation of insights gained to improve the practice of funeral traditions of the people, not losing sight of preserving the intangible cultural heritage.

The point of emphasis throughout the study was on genuine participation and involvement with maximum understanding and thus maximum intensity of enjoyment, allowing the work of art to unfold its fullness. In doing this, I looked at what the music sounds like, the details of performance and the language issues that emerged in describing the music. I analysed also, how the music relates the Bakpele's belief on death as a system, and how it ties attitudes and behavioural fabric of the entire Bakpele society that it serves. Finally, I sought the biography of Bakpele traditional musicians who create, and who perform the music.

1.6.1 Objectives

Objectives of the study were to:

- 1, Find out who the Bakpele are.
2. Investigate the trend and context of *Dku* performances in Bakpele funerals as against other mourning songs.
3. Collect *Dku* that are used at the various phases of Bakpele funerals in relation to their worldview on funerals.
4. Conduct musical and textual analysis of the collected *Bakpele eto Dku*.
5. Explore ways of systemizing the genre with the view to improving funeral practice.

1.6.2 Field questions

Based on the objectives, the following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. Who are the Bakpele?

2. What is the trend and context of *Dku* performances as against other mourning songs in Bakpele funerals?
3. What *Dku* are used at the various phases of the Bakpele funerals in relation to their worldview on funerals?
4. How rich are the musical and textual resources in *Bakpele eto Dku*?
5. In what ways can *Bakpele eto Dku* be systemized with the view to improving funeral practices?

1.7 Practical Significance

This study on *Dku* is important because it focuses on knowledge that has hitherto been least explored ethnographically, and has also claimed an art which could die out through time. The Bakpele will benefit from the research findings since it systemized and documented the content of *Dku* in their cultural context so as to encourage continuity, to sustain and preserve the general cultural relevance of the Bakpele for posterity.

A study on *Dku* will go a long way to supplement academic institutional demands for ethnographic teaching and learning materials. It will also, meaningfully, espouse to people in other cultures, things that could be learned about the culture of the Bakpele, and to make it possible for as many people as possible to have access to this knowledge through documentation. Findings of this study will also be beneficial to researchers in other fields like ethnomusicology, art music composition, education or music history.

1.8 Scope

The Bakpele are settled in four clusters. These are Bala cluster, Mate cluster, Bakwa cluster and finally, Avedzeme cluster. My study covered all the four

clusters. However, I limited my data on musical illustrations and demonstrations to Bala cluster made up of Likpe Bala, Likpe Kukurantumi, Likpe Yikpakofe and Likpeto.

I considered three funeral types for this study. The first of these is religious funerals where the deceased was affiliated to a particular religion; and for this study, Christian, Traditional African Religion and Islam were considered. The second type of funeral I considered consists of those for the atheists. These are non-religious funerals but of which the deceased was said to have believed in the existence of a Supreme God. They are agnostics who do not have any concrete knowledge about any deity. On the other hand, they could not say there is no God for, they are not clear if God does exist or not.

The third category of funerals is that for the infidels. These are atheists who, emphatically, do not believe in the existence of any deity. The funeral style for non-deity believers opt for religious-free service, which is, most often, carried out by humanist officiates, in which the word “God” or any reference to prayer is omitted.

These three funeral types are all observed among the Bakpele for people who passed away through normal death, that is, death through old age or through illness but not accidental deaths. Funeral types for accidental deaths have their peculiar observances. In all these funeral types, *Dku* play vital roles at the various stages of the celebrations which I closely monitored in my study.

1.9.1 Limitation

There is no literal work without criticism. The shortfall of this work is found in the notation of the music which I did oral-aurally from listening to my consultants. Rhythmic movements and pitch location of the songs might not be as

accurate as one may experience in situ. This shortfall, however, cannot render the work as invalid since the playback received from “Finale 2006” sounded very close to the live performance.

1.9. 2 Delimitation

wikipedia (retrieved 2015) defines a dirge as a piece of music of a mournful character, a somber song expressing mourning used to accompany funeral rites. Other definitions say it is a funeral song or tune, or one expressing mourning in commemoration of the dead; it is a poem or lament for the dead; a solemn, mournful music. On the other hand, Wikipedia gave a series of synonyms, to explain the word “Funeral Song”. These words are elegy, hymn, chant, cry, march, jeremiad, keen, monody, requiem, threnody, death march, death song and dirge among others.

By these synonyms, we can deduce that the term funeral song is the universal terminology that engulfs all other songs including dirges, which are suitable for performance at funerals, depending on the type of funeral. All these types of funeral songs have their characteristics which are peculiar to the funeral traditions of the consumer.

My study which is peculiar to African traditions is more concerned with the dirge type of funeral songs. For this reason, I have delimited and narrowed my study to traditional dirges of Africa, and, for that matter to *Dku* of the Bakpele.

In much the same way, verifiable by observation, Islam does not recommend elaborate funeral celebrations, nor allows the performance of traditional songs. For this reason, my scope delimited Islamic funerals from the study.

1.10 Researcher- Consultant Relationship

Wachsmann's (1969:165) definition of ethnomusicology expressed the idea that "true ethnomusicology is the study of music outside one's own culture." Regardless of this idea, my choice for the research community is in accordance with Titon & Reck, (2005) who, writing on *Selecting a subject*, commented that the main point of ethnomusicological projects is to "document some aspects of a nearby music-culture and to interpret it based on the topic [one has] chosen." They write:

You can approach the choice of a research subject in different ways. First, you might try to chart the music you hear daily: ... A second approach is to examine the music in your own background. Explore your memory of songs and music. ... A third approach is to explore music in your community- your school community or your hometown. Here you can interview people, listen to musical performances and possibly take part in them yourself, and gather a lot of information (P. 338).

I have chosen to study and to systemize and document *Bakpele eto keku* as a musical type of my home community. In doing this, I distanced myself as a native while closing up as a researcher, so that my report reflected that of an insider without biases.

1.11 Chapter Organization

The study is organized into seven chapters. Chapter One begins with a general introduction, focusing on the research problem, theoretical and practical significance. The Chapter also touched on the theoretical orientation, philosophical

position of the study, the theoretical significance, the objectives, and the field questions.

Chapter Two reviewed some literature related to the study. Chapter Three explains the methodology touching on the research design, the population and sampling, the research instruments, the fieldwork and data collection and analyses procedures.

The fourth chapter is the presentation of the first part of results from the fieldwork. It relates to an exposure into the history, the geography and the socio-cultural background of the Bakpele. The Chapter contains also a brief and systematic documentation on the functions of *Dku* in Bakpele funerals, showing the interplay of music and rituals at the various phases of the celebration.

The fifth Chapter presents the second part of findings - the corpora which are the musical and textual information on *Dku*. The information explores structures embedded in the songs. The sixth Chapter discusses the findings on the content of the music, the performance practice, and the context of usage in connection with the worldview of the Bakpele, with the view to improving practice.

Finally, Chapter Seven gives the summary and conclusions drawn from the study; here, recommendations and suggestions for further research in areas related to the topic are put forward.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Overview

This chapter reviewed related literature in three major sections this way: section one reviewed literature on the study area, earlier works done relating to my thesis topic, and on religions. Section two reviewed literature on issues relating to the Bakpele and their worldview on death and funeral celebrations. The third section of the review touched on the musical and textual aspects of the corpus, and finally, on documentation.

2.1 The study area

Demographic characteristics, according to the Ghana Statistical Service (2002) describe the Volta Region as a region located along the southern half of the eastern boarder of Ghana. It lies within latitude 5° 45” N and 8° 45” N and longitude 0° 77” W and 1° 28” E (Retrieved from www.ghanadistricts.com/home). It shares the eastern border with the Republic of Togo whiles the Greater Accra, Eastern and Brong Ahafo Regions occupy the west, with Northern Region to the north. To the south is the Gulf of Guinea. The region occupies an area of about 20,570 square kilometres, stretching from the south to the mid-north of Ghana. More than half of the land area of the region falls within the Volta River Basin, with the Volta Lake draining a substantial portion. The region’s mountains form part of the Togo-Attakora range, which stretches from parts of Ashanti and Eastern Regions into the Republic of Togo. The highest mountain in Ghana - Mount Afadjato (*Avadzeto*) and the highest waterfall in West Africa – Wli (*Agumatsa*) Waterfall, both located in the Hohoe District of the Region are parts of this range.

For the purpose of this study, I adapted the three-zone ethnic demarcation of the region as quoted in Agordoh (2002:91) as follows: Southern Ewe Zone, Northern Ewe Zone and the Non-Ewe speaking Zone. The Southern Ewe Zone covers the following Administrative Districts: Tongu, Keta, Adidome, Sogakope, Akatsi, Denu and Agortime Ziope. The Northern Eweland stretches from Adaklu District through Ho, Afadjato, Dayi, Kpandu and Hohoe. Finally, the Non-Ewe speaking zone stretches from Biakoye District through Jasikan, Kadjebi, Kete Krachi, and Nkwanta. Some of these non-Ewe speaking groups are, however found in dispersion, mixing up with the Ewe-speaking groups of the Northern zone. See the ethnicity map of the Volta Region at figure 2.1.

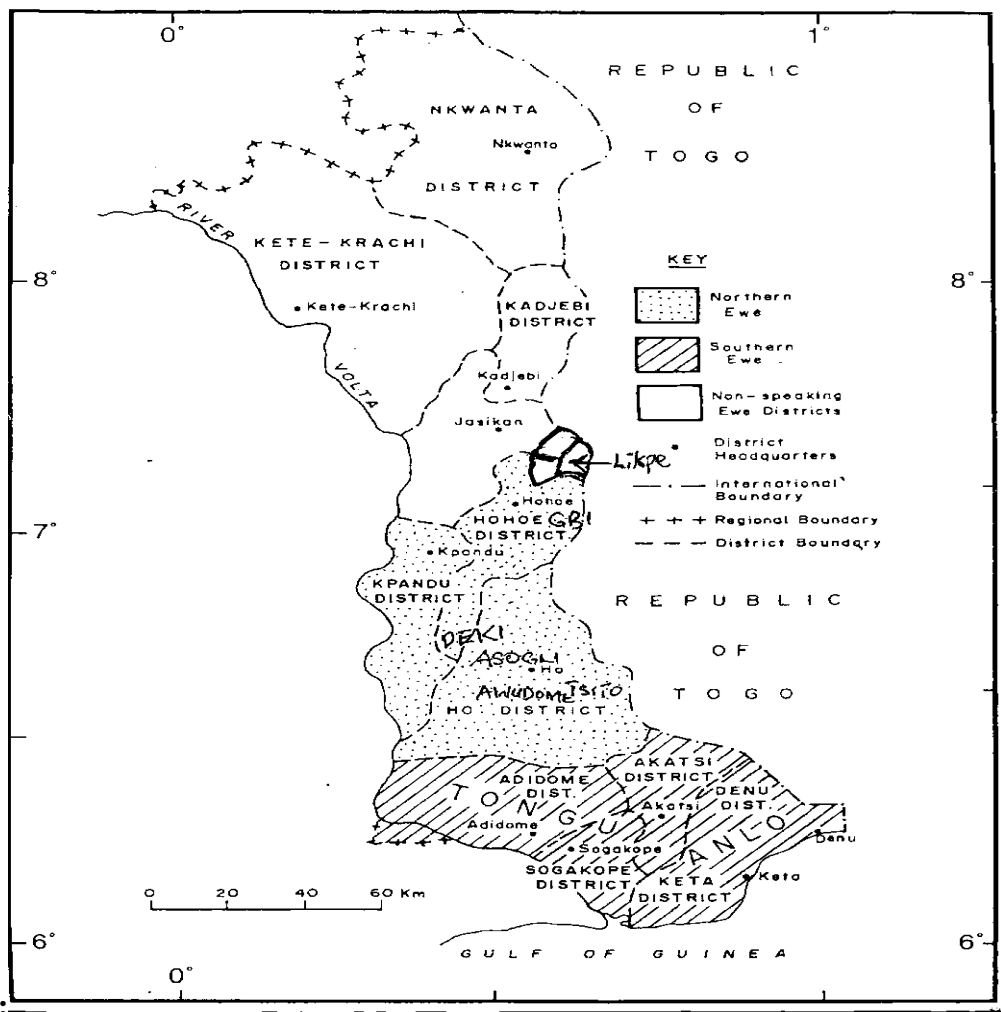


Figure 2.1: ethnicity map of the Volta Region

Source: Agordoh (2002)

Ethnicity in the region covers a wide range of groups. Ghana has over 50 ethnic groups whose common values and institutions represent a collective national heritage. Each of these ethnic groups, brought together by dint of history, has unique cultural features and traditions that gave them their respective identities. Ever since independence in 1957, the emerging civil society of Ghana recognized the need to promote unity within the then cultural diversities, and Ghana has since enjoyed relative unity, stability and peace (NCC 2004:1).

One misconception of the Volta Region is that it is a region full of Ewes. The Ewes may be the single largest and predominant ethnic group, forming 68.5 % according to the Ghana Statistical Service (2002), but are by no means the only one. North of Hohoe, the last Ewe post, are a myriad of different ethnic groups including Likpe, Nkonya, Buem, Bowiri, Lolobi, Akpafu, and Santrokofi; all of whose languages are of Guan origin, forming 9.2 %. There are other relatively large groups like the Akans (8.5%) and Guruma (6.5%), as well as other smaller groups in the northernmost parts of the region which constitute the remaining 7.3 %.

According to the Statistical report, despite the high proportion of Ewes in the Hohoe District, almost a quarter of the population is Guan, of which Likpe is one. It is a region that can count both native Ewe speakers and native Twi speakers, in addition to the other ethnic groups, as its citizens.

In the Volta Region, Christianity as a religion constitutes 67.2 % of the total population. This is followed by Traditional religion 21.8 % and Islam 5.1 %. An additional 5.3 % have no religious affiliation while 0.6 % belong to other religions. In the Hohoe District, where Likpe is located, Christians account for 80.0 %. All other religions account for the remaining 20.0 %.

The region is heterogeneous with different languages of which most of the ethnic groups located in the Region have their indigenous dialects they speak.

However, the official language is Ewe. The people of the region are part of the larger Ghanaian population with just about every ethnic language group represented. There are eight major groups in the region and about 62 sub-groups who speak 56 dialects. A breakdown shows that the Akans comprise over 19 sub-groups while the Guans constitute 18 sub-groups, among which are the people of Likpe.

Information by [google.com/site/ghanaplace](https://www.google.com/site/ghanaplace) retrieved (2015) states that there are different traditions of migrants into the mountain areas of the region from places as diverse as Ahanta in the Western Region of Ghana to Togo. The communities that now live in these mountain areas speak a variety of languages known collectively as the Ghana–Togo Mountain Languages (GTML). The peoples are: Adele, Akposo, Animere, Avatime, Bowiri, Buem, Likpe and Mawu, (Mawu, now Split into two political entities called Akpafu and Lolobi). The rest are Logba, Nyangbo, Santrokofi and Tafi. Many GTML speakers also speak Akan and Ewe.

[google.com/site/ghanaplace](https://www.google.com/site/ghanaplace) (2015) continues that by the year 2003 an estimated population of 23,000 people would be speaking the Kwa languages which are categorized as follows:

Category “A” Potou – Tano made up of Central Tano and Guan.

Central Tano comprises Ahanta, Akan, Abron, Fanu, Twi, Anyin, Baoule, Chokosi, Jwira Pepesa, Nzema, Sefwi, Cherepon, Chumburun, Dwang, Efutu, Foodo, Gua, Kyode, Larteh, Ginyanga, Gonja, and Kplang. Guan comprises Nehumbulu, Nkami, Nkonya and Ntrubo Abure, Fotile, Krobu, and Mbato.

Group “B” Ghana–Togo is sub divided into Na-Togo and Ka-Togo. Na-Togo is made up of Adele, Basila, Lelemi, **Likpe**, Logba, Santrkofi, Siwu Mawu (spilt into two political entities now called Akpafu and Lolobi). Ka-Togo is made up of Ahlo, Akebu, Animere, Avatime, Bowili, Akposo, Nyangbo and Tafi. Likpe,

my study area belongs to the Na-Togo group of sub-languages.

Dakubu (2006), comments on the linguistic evidence, saying that “there is no evidence that the language of Likpe was once spoken elsewhere, but some families of Likpe have a tradition of coming from Atebubu. He continues that:

in this case the immigrant Likpe acquired the language of the indigenous people of Bakpele [Bakwa], but were themselves a minority group, and that the immigrant Ewe applied an intentional corruption of this description to them following the stone-sharpening incident (P. 54).

2.2 Earlier research

Nketia (1955:2) remarks that among the Akan, it is the custom for female members to sing dirges for their dead relatives. He mentioned *nnwonkorɔ* and said are not only sung for the living but also to the memory of the departed. Nketia continues that the role of the older women as custodians of tradition is notable among the Akans. Similar observations made by Sutherland-Addey & Diaw (2005:9), among the Yoruba of Nigeria, and Monts (1989:226) among the Vai of Liberia show that the practice is common in many African societies. In one way or another, people get involved in choral music willingly, and at other times unwillingly.

According to Nketia (1966), choral music is the most social form of musical activities among Africans. By this, he meant that in so far as music has connections with what goes on in society, choral music shows this connection very clearly. In much the same way, Allan (1996:3) notes that music has, through the ages, been associated with religious, political, national and international movements.

Conquery-Vidrovitch (1997:1) in line with Nketia (1955:2) noted that some older women hold important roles in our societies. Conquery-Vidrovitch (1997:1) cited the Yoruba of Nigeria in their performance of *oriki* (Yoruba praise chants). Sidikou (2001) adds to this observation by citing the transfer of knowledge through praise and ritual songs performed by women of Songhoy-Zarma in Niger. So also in Niger, the women, through *jesere* (women narrator of traditions and history) are a store of knowledge of their history and genealogy. Here, the *jesere* of Niger could be equated to the *kwadwomfoɔ* (male praise singers) of Asante in Ghana and also the *Griotes* and *Griottes* of Senegambia and Mali.

There are other African countries where various studies were conducted on the role of women in music. In Kenya, Opondo (1991) reported of *dodo* songs of the Oruma women's group. He observed, however, that despite the influence of Christianity, traditional practices were not completely barred in Kenya by the missionaries because aspects of traditional marriage coexisted with those of Christians.

Barber (1992:282-284) found that *oriki* (Yoruba praise chants) are performed by women of that society during their daily routine in the household and during life cycle ceremonies such as marriage, funerals and at annual festivals, just as it is obtained in some other traditional African societies. Sutherland-Addy & Diaw (2005) referred to these female *oriki* singers as *oloriki*.

In his study among the Vai of Liberia, Monts, (1989) discussed the role of Vai women in music making. He identified three main factors that have influenced female musical participation in view of the social changes taking place. These are the decline in men's secrete society, the acceptance of Islam and the migration of men from rural to urban areas. According to Schmidts, (1989:237-238) the Kpelle

women of Liberia, as well, exhibit their unique verbal art through songs of advice. This situation also, according to Hale (1998:232) occurs among the *griottes*.

Hale, (1998:220-221) explained that the *Griottes*, in Niger, Senegambia and Mali are the female counterparts of *Griotes* known for their numerous functions among which include reciting genealogies, recounting histories and praise singing. He continues that the advice of the *Griottes* sometimes extends to forms of solidarity, which represents social power. He continues that women sing songs of advice exclusive in ritual contexts.

Amu, (2011:4) indicates that the missionaries, in doing their work in Africa, adopted antagonistic attitude towards African cultural practices. Citing an example, she quoted Becker, (1998:9) who reported that “in Namibia, missionaries proscribed the performance of initiation rites of young Owambo women, because they considered the lyrics of the songs obscene and sexually explicit.” Similarly, Dor, (2005:443) in Amu, (2011:4) noted that “the missionaries encouraged the segregation of the converts from their unconverted family members, and persuaded them to regard all their musical types as heathen, while they promoted Western music.” As a result, everything traditional was considered evil and therefore frowned upon.

Dowoeh, (1980) observed that *gbolo* is one of the oldest female musical types that was performed in Peki and Hohoe traditional areas of northern Eweland. So also, Amu, (2011) in her study of female musical bands in the Ho Asogli traditional area observed that:

Musical types performed by men, women and mixed bands, such as *adevu*, *akpi adabatram*, *gbolo*, *totoeme*, *gumbe*, *aviha*, *akpese*, *gabada* and *bɔbɔbɔ* seem to be dying. The few surviving bands, however, continue to perform their music during festivals and

other social gatherings to remind society of their existence in the past (P. 3).

Some research has already been done on dirges of some ethnic groups of the Eweland of the Volta Region, studying aspects like musical structure, linguistic and the place of dirges in the context of funerals. Asamoah, (1967) studied mourning songs from the following ethnic groups along these perspectives: Ho Ahoe, studying *Adzohawo*; Logba Alakpeti, studying *Avihawo*; Likpe Agbozome, Likpe Mate and Likpe Bala, collectively, studying *Kpetavi* all under the same study topic of “Mourning songs of the Northern Eweland.”

In much the same way, Agawu, (1988) studied funeral dirges among the people of Lolobi and Akpafu. *Sinɔ* in Siwu (funeral dirge among the people of Lolobi and Akpafu) are special types of songs that are sung during the period of public mourning preceding burial. He described the musical structures of these dirges, the performances, and their place in the larger context of the funeral.

2.3 Religions

Allan, (1996) defines religion as:

A set of symbols and ideas that focus on the meaning of life and the nature of the unknown. The symbols are important because they describe visions of the ultimate nature of both world and human experience in it, and they establish in people ‘powerful’ pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations that affect their feelings and behavior. Ideas about existence and unknown constituting a religion are shared among members of a community

of believers. The profane is what we experience directly as ordinary aspects of the natural world, but the sacred is outside the natural world and inspires feelings and awe (P. 2).

In the same way, Durkheim, (in Schaefer, 2004:309), defines religion briefly as a “unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things.” These two definitions described religion as involving a set of beliefs and practices that are uniquely the property of religion, as opposed to other social institutions and ways of thinking.

Durkheim, (in Schaefer, 2004:309) argued that religious faiths distinguish between certain transcending events and the everyday world. He referred to these realms as the sacred and the profane. The sacred, he said encompasses elements beyond everyday life that inspire awe, respect, and even fear. People become a part of the sacred realm only by completing some rituals such as prayer or sacrifice. Believers have faith in the sacred; this faith allows them to accept what they cannot understand like death and the life after death. By contrast, the profane includes the ordinary and commonplace. It refers to what we can experience directly as ordinary aspects of the natural world. As a profane experience, death involves the cessation of biological functioning and physical and mental experience.

Religious belief systems focus on describing the ultimate nature of reality and the place of human beings in it. Most religions can be categorized as one of a few major types, each of which corresponds to a different view of the sacred and the profane, and the relationship between the two. He mentioned some major religious types of the world as theistic religion, animistic religion, ethicalist religion, and the ecclesia. Within these religions are smaller institutions like the church denominations, the sect, and the cult, each based on their beliefs. Allan,

(1996:7) reported a survey on some major beliefs in selected western countries.

This information can be presented on Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Percentage of People Reporting Belief in God or Universal Spirit and Life after Death

COUNTRY	PERCENTAGE		
	PERCENTAGE WHO REPORTS BELIEF IN "GOD OR A "UNIVERSAL SPIRIT	PERCENTAGE WHO REPORTS BELIEF IN LIFE AFTER DEATH	WHO VALUE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AS "VERY IMPORTANT"
United States	94	69	56
Canada	89	54	36
Italy	88	46	36
Australia	80	48	25
Belgium	78	48	26
United Kingdom	76	43	23
France	72	39	22
West Germany	72	33	17
Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Finland	65	35	17

Source: Allan, (1996:7)

From the table, it can be seen that apart from United Kingdom which rated “life after death” differently, percentages of the three variables run proportional one to another and from country to country. Countries with high percentage for those who “believe in God” have similarly, high percentage for those who “believe in life after death” and also for those who rated “religious belief” as very important. This is a common belief among Africans who believe in the existence of God that there is also a life after death.

Allan, (1996:7) narrated that religions employ a variety of practices called rituals through which their beliefs are acted out to maintain relationship among believers and between believers and the supernatural. Rituals are of varied degrees among religions. Some are just uttering a simple word, or as complex as an elaborate ceremony involving sacred objects and specialized roles. Among such rituals is the singing of songs.

The African is often said to be highly religious and because of that all the stages of his life passage including death and funerals, are designed to reflect the relationship between humans and supreme beings. Magic, taboos, curses, omens, talismans, amulets, medicines, divinations, witchcraft and ritual murder took the centre stage of most of our customs. These traditions are practised to propitiate the spirits in times of catastrophes, but some of these practices are now withheld with the advent of science.

Berger, (1967) (in Allan, 1996:22) said “the steady rise of scientific thinking that begun in the seventeenth century undermined religion as a framework for explaining the natural world.” In his example, Wilson, (1982), (in Allan, 1996:22) observed that Physical science challenged the Christian view of the origins of the universe and human life, and in no industrial society is the Biblical version of creation widely used as an explanation of the natural world.

In fact, Allan (1996:22) cited anthropologists like Weber, Marx, and Durkheim who challenged religion by focusing on social rather than divine causes of social conditions. They even went as far as arguing that religion, itself, was a human creation. Irrespective of the nature of the practice, the fact has been established that Christian Religion and Traditional Religions compete one another for change in different ways.

Omenyo, (2006:26) rightly asserts the “difficulty to delineate the traditional religious system of Ghana, for Ghana is ethnically complex nation characterized by a multiplicity of traditional religions.” The influence of Christianity on the African tradition in Ghana dates far back as the fifteenth century, about the year 1471, when the then Gold Coast had the first Christian contact with the Portuguese. This novel religion continued to the nineteenth century when the Wesleyan (Methodist) and Basel (Presbyterian) missions came in to lay the base for the Christian church.

As the church established itself and began winning converts, the natives who converted were not allowed to practice their traditional music again inside or even outside the church. This is because African music and dance was often tied onto religious beliefs and these indigenous religions were seen as “pagan” by the church. Agordoh (1991) could not have put it better: “traditional Ewe music was one of these so-termed pagan practices which were not allowed to filter into Christian worship.”

African tradition therefore, began to fade away gradually in the face of Christianity. Even so, African traditional music continued to thrive alongside Christian music creating a religious conflict between Christian converts and those who continued to practise their inherited music and culture. From then on, up to about the year 1640, missionary activity in Ghana was intermittent as it had to be abandoned several times because of health hazard, lack of personnel and the unpreparedness of the natives for the gospel message.

Church activities in Ghana became lively again when missionary attempts were resumed in the 1880s, using adaptation as the main approach of spreading the gospel message. They adapted to the culture of the people. In arriving at a new place, the missionaries devoted the first year to learning the language and custom of the people. They, therefore, adjusted to the life situation of their would-be

converts in matters of dress and food, among others, just to create an opening for the word.

Ecclesia, (1997:17) observed that “in most cases, the culture of the people to be converted were regarded as devilish, bad and pagan due to lack of understanding of the true nature of the culture of the people.” The effect of this was that religious confusion was created in Africa.

Traditional ritual songs stand out distinct from Christian ritual songs because of their deity point of reference. Even though they both have similar roles, they have different virtues. There are, for example, songs for the various stages of funeral celebrations in our societies prior to the arrival of Christianity in Ghana. These songs brought in a change in the style of worship.

Songs, whether chanted by priests, his immediate attendants, or his congregation, form a major factor in any religious gathering. They usually praise the deity who is being venerated; but they may also warn the “wicked person” against his repeated iniquity, ask for favours, or thank the deity for favours supposed to have been granted by the deity.

2.4 Worldview

According to Asante, (2007:11) “worldview is a perception of reality on the basis of which people organize their lives.” This assessment that worldview is how things look to a group of people, signifying that worldview is subjective to the perceiver.

According to Gifford, (2004:vii-xii), the traditional worldview is ‘resilient and underpins most of the spirituality and practices’ of an ethnic group. Omenyo, (2006:26) asserts that “to a large extent, most of the features of the Akan Traditional

Religion are largely applicable to other ethnic groups.” There are categories of even hierarchies in the spiritual world of the Akans:

The Supreme Being (*Onyame*)

The Lesser gods (*Abosom*)

The Ancestral Spirits (Ancestors)

The Lower spirits (*Nsamanfoɔ*)

Human person (*Hohom*)

One thing worth noting is that the above hierarchies portray a highly spiritually condensed realm of interaction with the exception of the Supreme Being who is believed to be distant from humankind. Again, the Akans have quite a number of mythological explanations for the partition between the Supreme Being (*Onyame*) and the Humans (*Hohom*).

The Supreme Being, to the Akans is seen as an all-powerful creative force whose origin is unknown. He is regarded as the creator (*oboadeɛ*) and the owner of the world (*asaase wura*). Omenyo, (2006) writes:

He is thought to be immanent as well as imminent; thus, He is believed to be present and active in the affairs of humans. Akans conceive of God as the preserver of the world and He is known principally in terms of what He is believed to do for humankind. Thus, there are such descriptions of God as giver of sun (*amowia*), giver of water (*amonsu*), giver of rain (*totrobonsu*) and the reliable one (*twereampɔng*)...He himself is not generally worshipped directly; however, his help is involved in times of crises. Thus, there are very few direct approaches to God (PP. 26-27).

God is conceived as a Spirit who transcends all things and so requires intermediaries through whom he functions and humankind also approaches him through these means – deities and ancestors. The deities or the gods (*Abosom*) are viewed as children of God - the Supreme Being. The deities are conceived of having the ability to inhabit and manifest themselves in various tangible forms such as water (*nsuobosom*), rocks and caves (*bosombuo*), house (*fiobosom*) and other natural objects. This is probably the reason for the popular description of African Traditional Religion as animistic.

The ancestral spirits (*nananom nsamanfoɔ*) are dead relatives who, Akans believe, are alive not seen (except for occasional self-disclosure to individuals in dreams). To become an ancestral spirit, it is believed that one must possess certain qualities: the moral life of an ancestor should be good; one must have enough offspring; one must have died a natural death; one must have grown old enough and must have been provided a befitting burial and funeral. Again, it is important to note that the ancestors are spirit entities who are engaged in the day-to-day lives of their respective families.

The lower spirits are conceived to be spiritual entities who may take the form of amulets and talismans or beads which may be worn around the waist, wrist or the neck, or, may be hung at the entrance of a house or room. The lower spirits also include evil spirits such as terrifying giant (*sasabonsam*) who are said to be empowering witches and wizards (*abayibonsam*) for destructive acts in the community. And so, to combat such diabolic acts, one usually wears the charms and amulets as spiritual protection weapons.

Finally, the human person or spirit, in the traditional Akan belief, is a complex spiritual entity. It is believed that every person has a soul which is from God, the personality of soul (*sunsum*) from her or his father, and blood which is

inherited from the mother. Thus, the human person, being spiritual by nature, is able to interact with the supernatural and live accordingly. Indeed, such a complex spiritual worldview of Akans as well as other ethnic groups, is probably dictating pace for the society.

2.5 Death

People have conceptually wrestled with the meaning of life and death for thousands of years. Sociologically, the most essential thing about these concepts is that “they deal with beliefs about the known and the unknown according to the worldview of each society” (Allan 1996:2). Death is universal and ultimately beyond human control. Death is inevitable, and also a mystery. Blay-Amihere. (in Daily Graphic 2013), in a tribute to Awoonor recollects a Fante song which talks about the mystery of death and which features the words literally translated:

<i>Mennim bebia mewu mada;</i>	I do not know when, where or how I shall die.
<i>S' ekwan muo (huo), Se anana bia</i>	Shall it be at home or a strange place?
	Peacefully or through an accident;
<i>Èye me som asem.</i>	It [death] remains a mystery to me.

Death is regarded by the African as one of the crises of life. There is the belief that “death is not the end but a transition from one state [of life] to another. It is a passage from this earthly existence to another world” (Amponsah, 1988:55). The belief in survival after death occupies an important place among Africans and that is why there are religious and social rites associated with it. It is to complement

these reasons about death that there are varied funeral traditions and ritual observances in our societies.

Amponsah, (1988:55) continues that funerals are very significant social institutions for both the living and the dead. We can say they are an affirmation of man's transition of life. Without this ritual action by the living, a soul cannot become an ancestral spirit. The African has a cause for its celebration because it is believed that another ancestor has been identified to watch over the living.

2.6 Funeral Celebrations

Funeral celebrations are as old as the human culture itself, predating modern Homo sapiens to at least the 300,000 years past (Retrieved from Encarta Encyclopaedia of Congress 2009). For example, in the Shanidar cave in Iraq, there were found bones of a mammal, a member of the species of Homo neanderthalensis - "Nandy" as he was called, who was believed to have died about the past 48,000 years. In the Scientific literature he is referred to as Shanidar I, because he was the first adult human remains that were identified as Neanderthal from a cave near the village of Shanidar, high in the mountains of Kurdistan in northern Iraq, Whitten, Philip & Hunter, (1987) in an anthropological report wrote:

There were skeletal remains of a male [...] female, and baby all appeared to lie in a niche bounded on two sides by large stone blocks. The Nature of soft soil and the position of the stone blocks lead to believe that a crypt had been scooped out among the rocks and that the three had been interred and covered over with earth (Pp. 20 & 21).

In other examples from Pontenewydd cave in Wales and also other sites across Europe and the near east, skeletons have been discovered with characteristic layers of pollen, which suggest that the Neanderthals buried the dead with gifts of flowers. This has been interpreted as suggesting that they believed in an afterlife. This leads us to conclude that the Neanderthals, who lived in Europe from about 28,000 to 200,000 years ago, were among the first humans to practice deliberate burials (Encarta Encyclopaedia 2009).

Today, washing the body, dressing it in special garments and adorning it with ornaments including religious objects like amulets are common practices in Africa, similar to those of the Neanderthals in the disposal of dead bodies. These practices cut across the various ethnic groups in Africa and for that matter the Bakpele, my study area (Amponsah, 1988:17).

2.7 Dirges

A dirge according to Collins, (2005:447) is a “chant or lamentation for the dead, especially one forming part of a funeral rite.” According to wikipedia (retrieved 2015), the word “dirge” was in use as early as the year 1175, as a word derived from the antiphon song in the ‘Middle English dirge’ (title of a mass that was sung at the time). The word was modified in the thirteenth century from the Latin word “*dirige*” (direct) imperative of “*dirigere*” (to direct), taken from the antiphon “*Dirigere, Domine, Deus meus, in consepectu tuo viam meam*” meaning “Direct, O, Lord, my God, my way in Thy sight” taken from Psalm 5:9, which opened the Matins Service for the Dead. The word was modified again from “*Dirigere*” to “*Direge*” from which the word “dirge” finally was formulated.

Dirges come in different traditional names but serve the same purpose of lament. In Northern Ewe for example, they are called *Avihawo*, and are,

appropriately, in a sad vein. They are mourning songs which express self-pity, hope or praise for the dead. Most of these dirges are performed as vocal music by female bands.

Vocal music plays a prominent role in every celebration of the African. Songs are employed on every conceivable occasion of the African. In Ghana, songs are used on both joyful and sorrowful occasions. Sarpong, (1974) puts it like this:

Every Ghanaian tribe has many songs for such sorrowful occasions as during festivals, when they are defeated in war, and at the time of drought or national famine. War songs are a common-place in Ghana. However, if any significance is to be attached to songs in Ghana, it is definitely the religious one (P. 122).

The lyrical content of dirges moves people. Sarpong, (1974) continues that

They may move them physically, inspiring them to dance or sing; they may also move them inwardly, inducing a heightened state of consciousness. As an invisible force, music can circumvent the rational and penetrate the heart, kindling the emotions. ...[It] can bring people together in profound ways, focusing their attention and feelings in a communal experience, reinforcing their connections to each other, perhaps even serving as a bridge to unseen worlds (Hast, Cowdery, James & Stan, (1999 P. 21).

The performance of dirges at funerals transcends mourners and community members alike as an invisible force.

2.8 Avihawo

One female tradition worth examining from the Ewe community is *aviha* (singular). Nobody exactly knows when and where *aviha* started but one account places its origin in Ewedome (Mid-Eweland) of the Northern Ewe speaking zone where it is linked to *akaye* music. On the other hand, Agordoh, (1991) mentioned *avihawo* while classifying Anlo songs by the occasion of performance when he said: “*avihawo / konyifahawo* (dirges), *dɔwɔhawo* (work songs), *avahawo* (war songs), *fefehawo* (play songs).” This tells us that the whole of the Ewe speaking communities, both the north and south, use this genre to mourn the dead.

Avihawo (which is also called *akayehawo*, to differentiate the genre from *avihawo*, literally meaning a mourning song), is a female tradition, performed by elderly women of an average age of fifty. This is how Amlor, (2011:60) puts it: “Avihawo mainly involves women who remember their deceased children and relatives by soliloquizing in a declamatory style. These declaimed words express the singers’ deep sorrow and grief.”

Instrumentation is a light one. A normal *akayeha* ensemble is made up of a number of *akaye* (container rattles) which are owned by the individual women. On very few occasions, one *asivui* (a small drum played with the hand) is added, and played by men, to support the *akaye*. There is no prescribed costume for the performers, except that most of the women appear in the usual red and black colours to portray the normal funeral setting.

Membership of *akayeha* performing groups is open to all women who have the desire to perform at the time of each performance. One of the principal aims of forming the group is to mourn with bereaved families. There are no monetary gains for members or performers, apart from the social interactions that they share when they come together during bereaved occasions.

Performances are held during funeral celebrations of elderly people in the community, and this takes place during the pre-burial and after burial activities. The women performers parade the streets around the place of mourning, and periodically, hold stop-overs, creating an arena for dance. Some of the song texts in *avihawo* praise the deceased while others ridicule death by making reference to the havoc it caused in the home of a deceased.

Unlike *Dku* which have temporal leaders, *akayehawo* (*akaye* groups) have permanent leaders who organize themselves for performances. The dance type involves the middle level, forward bent with the vigorous use of the trunk and the limbs, while shaking the *akaye* at the same time, rhythmically, in an ensemble.

The structure of the songs is the typical solo call, and chorus response form. The chorus response is not in unison, but harmonized spontaneously in two, three or four parts, whatever the case might be. Texts of songs are those that narrate social, philosophical and psychological issues. Song texts in Corpora 1, 2 and 3 are musical examples of *avihawo* found in the surrounding Akpini traditional area.

Corpus 1 Yewole kukum.

Solo: Yewole kukum deka deka loo;

Chorus: Vɔvɔm yewo le loo

Kukum deka deka loo

vɔvɔm yewole loo.

Solo: Amesɩ do nuwɔe newɔe kaba

Chorus: Agbe melɔa be nonɔ ye o

Do nuwɔe newɔe kaba loo

‘gbe melɔa be nonɔ ye o lo

Corpus 1 They are dying.

Solo: They are dying one after the other.

Chorus: They are being wiped away;

Dying one after the other,

they are being wiped away.

Solo: Whoever decides on a thing, should it outright.

Chorus: Life would not want it to be lived.

The decider should do it outright.

For, life would not want it to be lived.

Solo: Amesi do xɔ tu netui kaba; Solo: He who decides to build should do so outright.

Chorus: Agbe melɔa be nonɔ ye o ... Chorus: For, life would not want it to ...

Corpus 2 Tsyɔeviwo nɔfe

Corpus 2 Dwelling place for orphans

Solo: Tsyɔeviwo nɔfe nɔfe loo;

Solo: The dwelling place for orphans

ke wole enu be tsyɔeviwo nɔfe

it is often said that the dwelling place

yae nye agbalime nɔfee.

for orphans is the living room.

Chorus: Tsyɔeviwo nɔfee loo;

Chorus: Dwelling place for orphans, yes.

tsɔoeviwo nɔfee loo.

dwelling place for orphans, yes.

Corpus 3 Amesiwo le wunyem

Corpus 3 My adversaries

Solo: Le wunyem, le wunyem.

Solo: My adversaries, my adversaries.

Amesiwo le wunyem lawoe

My adversaries are

gale lɔnyelawo dome

found among my sympathizers

gale baba dom nam loo.

also consoling me.

Chorus: Le wunyem, le wunyem

Chorus: My adversaries, my adversaries

Amesiwo le wunyemlawoe

My adversaries are

gale lɔnyelawo dome

found among my sympathizers

gale baba dom nam loo.

also consoling me.

2.9 Ebibinwom

One other vocal tradition located in a different culture in Ghana, worth examining alongside *Bakpele eto keku*, is *ebibindwom* (Fante sacred lyrics). According to Saighoe, (1999:12), it is a music genre that is believed to have evolved from *adenkum* and *asafo*, which developed during the office of the Methodist Priest Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman. It was performed by the non-

literate members of the Methodist Church in Cape Coast. By the year 1830, Rev. Freeman realized that the illiterate members of the church did not participate in the singing of the English hymns and as a result, encouraged members especially the females to sing biblical texts to traditional tunes.

Adenkum is a musical type performed by Fante women as recreational music. The women are usually the female wings of the *asafo* groups that sung to welcome their male counterparts back home and to entertain them after the men's military exploits. *Asafo* as we know them, is a warrior association that constitutes members who perform traditional military music. Saighoe, (1999:12) confirms that *ebibindwom* has borrowed *adenkum* and *asafo* traditional melodic and the cantor-chorus forms.

2.10 Musical description

Nettl, (1964) identified three approaches to the description of music. These are systematic, intuitive and selective. In the systematic approach, one:

identifies all possible, or, many, or, for practical purposes, a selected group of aspects of music, and to describe each of these aspects in an individual composition, or in a body of musical composition which, for one reason or another, are assumed to have something in common justifying their description as a unit (P.135).

With the intuitive approach, which is an:

alternative to the systematic element-of-music approach, one attempts to identify the most striking, the most important aspect of a piece of music, or of a musical style. This procedure seems to be

most rewarding in Western music, in which one can sometimes identify the composer's wishes and intentions (P. 136).

The third is the selective approach. He recommends this approach for ethnomusicological studies because:

many ethnomusicological studies do not attempt to describe a piece or a body of music in its entirety but, instead, analyze only one or a group of related aspects. ... Some of these studies are purposely selective of the aspect of music which they treat; others are selective because their authors have assumed certain aspects of music to be more fundamental than others (P. 37).

Contrasting the three approaches suggested by Nettl, (1964:135-136), and looking at the aspects of the music for this study, I assigned my study to the third approach of music description - the selective approach.

2.11 Documentation

Literature on documentation as a subject area is very scant and old. It was very difficult finding a meaning for the word appropriate to my work. Many dictionaries did not discuss the word even though it could be found in them. Rather, they gave meanings to "documents". Cambridge, (1996:408), for example, defines it as "a paper or a set of papers with written or printed information, especially, of an official type." It gave another definition as "written instructions about how to use something. In much the same way, Collins, (2005:461) gives the meaning of documentation as "a piece of paper, booklet, etc. providing information, especially, of an official nature." Other definitions by Collins say "a piece of text or graphics, such as a letter or article, stored in a computer as a file for manipulation by document processing software" and "to record or report in detail, as in the press on

television.” All these definitions do not give the appropriate meaning relating to this work. Earlier and for that matter, old definitions sound more appropriate.

Bradford, (1953:48) defines documentation as:

the process of collecting and subject classifying all the records of new observations and making them available, at need to the discoverer or the inventor. Without documentation, the recorded observations are merely scattered items separately of little use, which get buried in the great mass of scientific literature, like needles in a haystack (P. 48).

By this definition, Bradford (1953:48) points out that knowledge is locked up in all spheres of human endeavor and is made to lie dormant if it is not tapped and assembled. He made it clear that information is made valuable only if one knows where to find it. He therefore, concludes that there is the need to assemble and document all information and sort them out according to their special areas, so that one could find them out instantly, whenever one needs them.

Bradford's definition and in-depth explanation of documentation are very relevant to this research, in the sense that this is just what is lacking in my subject area. Knowledge in *Dku* is locked up in the minds of the rural folk and left untapped for easy reference, and may die out with the passing away of the aged.

Looking at documentation under the nature and purpose, Bradford, (1953) asserts that documentation contributes towards the progress of society since progress depends largely on the availability of recorded information. According to Shera, (1966:22) the term documentation is not of recent origin, rather it is the attempt to define it precisely that has been unsuccessful. She

noticed that it has been described in such vague terms as: “a process by which documents are brought together, classified, and distributed, documents of all kinds, of all the areas and of all human activities;” a view which according to her, Otlet, a pioneer documentalist also shared. Bradford, (1953:48) summed these views up that although scholars such as Otlet and Die have written on the subject, literary critics regard Bradford, (1935) as the “father of documentation” in the English-speaking world.

According to <https://en.wikipedia./wiki/Documentation>, documentation is a set of documents provided on paper, or online, or on digital or analog media such as audio tape or Compact Discs that are distributed via websites, software products, and other on-line applications for accessibility and application. Wikipedia remarks, however, that it is becoming less common to see hard copy (paper type) documentation. This remark on paperless type of documentation is demonstrated in Titon & Reck, (2005: xiii) which, contains musical examples recorded in sound on accompanying set of CD ROMs to replace the transcriptions in musical notations in Titon & Reck, (1992) second edition which contained musical examples transcribed on staff notation.

In Ghana, in the past decades, the literacy level to keep musical information was limited. More so, the media of musical storage was not as advanced as we have them today. This has been a set-back, to *keku* documentation as well. Of late, the coming in of new technologies has virtually changed the global strands of music. For example, storage device media technology evolved from vinyl through audio-cassettes to Compact Discs and mini-discs. Similarly, replay devices evolved from gramophones through large in-house stereo systems to compact and portable audio devices.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the methods and procedures used in investigating the problem defined for the research. It describes the research design, the target and the sample population, and the procedure used in obtaining the sample. It also accounts for the types of research instruments administered and also the process of data collection and the methodology of analyses and presentation.

3.1.1 Research Design

The most appropriate design best suited to the aims and objectives of my study, which sought for an in-depth investigation into Bakpele eto *Dku*, is the case study design. In his classification of designs, Blismas, (2001) identifies four different design frameworks which he said are consistently employed by researchers as viable options to addressing questions posed in both the social sciences and in ethnographic research. The four options are experimental design, survey design, action research design, and case study design. He further pointed out that an assessment of the research is required in order to decide on an appropriate choice of design because it is this that enables the researcher to connect empirical data to its conclusion in a logical sequence.

In his definition of research design, Babbie, (2005:114) said it involves a set of decisions regarding the topic to be studied, the population, the method to use for the study, and finally, the purpose for which the study was to be carried out. Simply put, he said it is the logic that links data and its analyses to the initial

research questions. With reference to Bryman, (2005:5), and for the fact that I needed to understand behaviour, and the meaning of that behaviour in its specified social context, I adopted the case study design.

Relating the design to my study, the case study design was appropriate because of the study's contextual nature and its in-depth investigation for empirical data. This design reflects on the importance that I attach, among other things, to understanding keku and its behavioural meaning in the tradition of Bakpele funerals. In the practical terms of applying the processes of case study, the design guided me on the detail description of the cases I selected. In its application, the design became the structure that guided me in executing my techniques for collecting data and their subsequent analyses according to the field questions.

Stake, (2005b:449) identifies three general types of case studies as follows: intrinsic case study where the researcher seeks to understand the particular case holistically; instrumental case study where the researcher needs to generalize his study or provide insight into a larger topic; and multiple case study which is used to investigate a larger phenomenon or a larger population from which other cases are drawn. By this classification, my study is patterned after the intrinsic case study design. This is because even though, the various parts of keku performances could be viewed as unique, they involve related activities holistically.

In this same vein, holistic approach as viewed by Hesse-Biber, (2011:13) is one in which the researcher is continually cognizant of the relationship between epistemology, theory and method, and looks at the research as a process rather than an event. Putting together Yin, (2008:101) and Hesse-Biber, (2011:13), I took to the intrinsic holistic case study design. In this regard, I viewed all my research choices right from the topic selection to the final presentation as interrelated. It would be observed that each of these cases to my study was unique and stood at a

different stage of completion but they collectively presented a holistic view on keku as a funeral tradition of the Bakpele.

In much the same way, Creswell, (2007:74), and which was reiterated by Hesse-Biber, (2011:258) pointed out that the unit of analysis in a case study can be distinguished according to its size, “such as whether the case involves one individual, several individuals or a group, an institution or more broadly, a whole community or even a larger social entity.” My cases covered a whole community and for that matter, an ethnic group.

They continued that cases could also consist of a “living, or non-living entity such as a programme, a policy or an activity”, for which the case(s) must be well selected. Here also, my cases consist of both living and non-living entities. The women are the living beings who provided the repertory of songs, while the entire study is a non-living programme in the form of a traditional institution.

Considering Stake, (2005b:449), Yin, (2008:101) and Hesse-Biber, (2011:258) collectively, the selection of cases for this research followed a deliberate sampling approach. Three cases that I carefully selected for my study are stated below:

- (i) *Dku* in the context of funerals
- (ii) Content of keku
- (iii) Bakpele’s views on life after death.

One school of thought on case selection using a self-selection principle, and not random and unbiased sampling, has been pursued and argued as a valid selection strategy. Miles and Huberman, (1994) argue that a self-selection principle of cases reduces the potential variations on findings in case studies. Much to the arguments of Miles and Huberman, (1994), I have chosen these cases to literally reduce extensive variations in making my cases holistic. By these cases, my study gave a

holistic meaning to how the Bakpele make sense of their life experiences, and their understanding of the world.

Being an ethnographic study, I took cognizance of the Bakpele culture, thereby, making the report natural. In my study, I did not only analyse and describe the content of the songs but also holistically explored their context in funeral celebrations in relation to Bakpele's worldview on funerals.

3.1.2 Research strategy

The decision to follow any particular strategy depends collectively on the purpose of the study, the type of study and the availability of information for the study. My study was patterned after the qualitative strategy which falls in line with Bryman, (2004), who states that a qualitative research strategy may be adopted, among other things, when there is no clear demarcation of variables but which involves exploring behaviours or attitudes.

My justifications for using qualitative strategy are that my study did not involve any creation and subsequent testing of theory or hypothesis. Instead, expected concepts were assessed using non-statistical techniques involving the creation of typologies. The study sought for providing an in-depth and holistic approach to the funeral traditions in order to systemize and document findings through idea development. Again, my study covered issues in detail rather than numerous descriptions. I used this approach in order to gain the insight I needed, to understand and appreciate the attitudes and behaviours of the Bakpele. My findings and subsequent conclusions drawn on the study were therefore, applicable only within the context of the Bakpele tradition. Another justification for using qualitative strategy is that questions for my study were soft and flexible, descriptive

in structure and were administered using the techniques of interviews and observations.

According to Hesse-Biber, (2011:5), qualitative research best follows the inductive approach to data collection. He continues that in qualitative research, there are six sources of data collection, and these are documentation, archival records, physical artefacts, interviews, direct (non-participant) observation, and participant observation. Out of these six sources, I combined the last three which are interviews, direct (non-participant) observation, and participant observation, in collecting data for my study. These sources have their strengths and weaknesses and no single source has a complete advantage over the rest. Hence, the need for me to combine these sources.

Finally, my study mode was non-linear. The cause of a current action was driven by the previous one. Here, the interview guide questions were driven by critical issues raised at the discussion, and these in turn, directed the data collection. Qualitative research has not escaped criticism from researchers. According to Bryman, (2004), critics of qualitative research argue that the strategy is too impressionistic and subjective; more so, findings are not based on systematic views about what is important and significant. They argue out also that the system is difficult to replicate because these tests rely on unstructured instruments for data. Again, they argue that because there are hardly any standardized procedures to follow, the quality of findings depends on the researcher's ingenuity.

Qualitative approach is again said to have problems with generalization because its scope is often restricted. It lacks transparency due to the difficulty which sometimes arises from the establishment of what the qualitative researcher actually did and how the conclusions of the study were arrived at. A point of interest here is that all these criticisms levelled against qualitative strategy are issues that

guarded me throughout the fieldwork and also during data presentation and discussions. Hesse-Biber, (2011:40) however, argues that the two known strategies - quantitative and qualitative, even though, differ in many ways can complement one another, as in a mixed method approach. He finally cautions that there is the need for a clear orientation of the researcher to his research; for, this, he said is what shows the way in which the research objectives are framed. In this regard, to give my study a clear orientation, I addressed this study using only the qualitative approach.

3.2 Population and Sampling

3.2.1 Population

My study targeted the entire Bakpɛle population which comprises the following:

- (i) all male adults above 18 years;
- (ii) all female adults above 18 years;
- (iii) all male and female traditional leaders
and
- (iv) all Christian religious leaders.

This population is drawn from the four clusters of the Bakpɛle according to their settlements as follows: Bakwa cluster, Bala cluster, Mate cluster and Avedzeme cluster. The total population of the study area, according to the report of the Ghana Statistical Service, (2002) is 13,292. See Table 3.1 for the details of the population distribution.

Table 3.1: Population distribution of Bakpɛle by clusters

Town/Village	Population			Totals
	Males	Females	Totals	
Bakwa Cluster				
Likpe Bakwa	940	942	1 882	
Likpe Nkwanta	109	138	247	
Likpe Todome	424	377	801	
Likpe Valanteine Kope	6	2	8	
Likpe Alavanyo	96	77	173	
Likpe Adugekope	1	4	5	3116
Bala Cluster				
Likpe Bala	1 043	1 113	2 156	
Likpe Kukuranrumi	1 065	1 014	2 079	
Likpeto	4	6	10	
Likpe Yikpakope	5	6	11	4256
Mate Cluster				
Likpe Mate	821	858	1 679	
Likpe Abrani	603	620	1 223	
Likpe Kafliku	38	35	73	
Likpe Seglakope	11	14	25	3000
Avedzeme cluster				
Likpe Avedzeme	75	89	164	
Likpe Agbozome	811	1 001	1 812	
Likpe Koforidua	414	388	802	
Likpe Wodome Torgbi	73	66	139	
Likpe Kugbani Kope	1	2	3	2920
Totals	6540	6752	13 292	13292

Source: Ghana Statistical Service

3.2.2 Sampling

I used simple random selection to sample out two clusters of the four, thus, Bala and Bakwa clusters for my fieldwork. Interviewees and artistes were selected from the Bala cluster for the first and second phases of data collection; thus, interview of the presumed knowledgeable in keku and the recording of songs respectively, while

the third phase of data collection – the Focus Group Discussions (FGD) covered both Bala and Bakwa Clusters. Avedzeme cluster was purposively selected for the pilot study. This is because of its contiguity with the other remaining two clusters.

To select interviewees for the interplay of music and rituals in Bakpele funeral, I used reputational case selection procedure initiated by a queenmother to purposively sample out three elderly women presumed to be very knowledgeable in Bakpele funeral celebrations. In recording the songs, I did not use any specific sample size to begin with. I sampled out performers iteratively. In this type of sampling, I experienced a backward and forward movement between sampling and theoretical reflections and stopping at the saturation point. This is in accordance with Bryman, (2004) that theoretical sampling entails the sampling of interviewees until the researcher's categories achieve theoretical saturation.

In sampling out discussants for the FGD, I contacted sectional heads of the various identifiable stakeholders of keku, who also used reputational case selection to present their representatives. My choice for purposive sampling was to gain a deeper understanding of dirges of the Bakpele. This is in accordance with Patton, (2002) and Liamputtong, (2011:50) who argue that “purposive sampling adds ‘power’ to focus group research because it ‘selects’ information-rich cases which can best generate the desired data.”

Describing the size of a focus group, Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, (2008:375) said focus group interviews are collective conversations which can be made up of small or large size discussants, in accordance with the focus of the group. They cautioned on the avoidance of sample biases and overlapping effects which may arise as a result of ill-representation of members and also the imbalance in size of members respectively.

The six communities that I sampled out in the study communities for focus group discussions are shown on Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Sample for Focus Group Discussion

	Cluster	Names of Communities	
Bala	Likpe Bala	Likpe Kukurantumi	Likpe Yikpakope
Avedzeme	Likpe Avedzeme	Likpe Abgozome	Likpe Koforidua

In the light that the performance of *Dku* at Bakpele funerals is generally accepted to be a female tradition, I adopted a ratio of two females to one male in my FGD sample. A sample size of seven (7) was constituted as follows:

Female adults over 50 years	2
Female adult under 50 years	1
Female representative of the Queen mother	1
Male adult over 50 years	1
Male elder representative of the Chief	1
Christian religious leader (male or female)	1
Total	7

This number - seven (7) is in accordance with Liamputtong, (2011:3) who suggests that focus group interviews involve a group size of 6 to 8 people who are drawn from similar social and cultural backgrounds or, who have similar experiences or concerns. Arguing this out, he said that participation is likely to be low in using larger groups. Instead, smaller groups of participation are likely to yield better results since each person has much to say on the topic. Participants are likely to be very much involved in, or, are emotionally pre-

occupied with the topic. He thus, suggested a range of 6 to 8 members. In this wise, my FGD size was narrowed down to seven (7), made up of 4 females to 3 males or 5 females to 2 males depending upon the representation for religious groups.

I worked in clusters for the FGD for the reason that cluster sampling is less expensive but cuts across the population. The rationale for these clusters, from anthropological viewpoint, is that Bakpɛle in their four clusters, share common boundaries and therefore, have common traits with one another. This is an observation by Agordoh, (2002:22) that regions or units that share common boundaries are likely to have similar traits than those far apart.

3.3.1 Instruments

The main instrument that I used is interviews. I used three interview types in accordance with Patton, (2002) who recommends the use of multiple sources of data collection in a research to complement one another. These interviews are interviews using a guide containing semi-structured items, participant observation and also focus group discussion.

3.3.2 Types of interviews

Interviews, according to Patton, (2002) are used when data are to be collected to understand complex behaviours and processes in-depth. Interviews, therefore, follow given lines of enquiry which are fluid and not rigid in nature. He identifies three types of interviews as structured, semi-structured and unstructured. In this research, I followed the semi-structured interview approach to allow for in-depth and free flow of information from interviewees.

Apart from the interview types mentioned by Patton, (2002), Bryman (2004) also noted that there are three main approaches to interview designs. The choice of any of the approaches he said is determined by the extent to which both the interviewer and the interviewee can conveniently interact to elicit information. These approaches are Informal conversation interview approach, Formal Interview guide approach, and Standardized open-ended questions approach. The views of Patton, (2002) and Bryman, (2004) guided my choice of the semi-structured formal interview approach.

The flexible nature of my semi-structured formal interview, allowed the interviewees to participate fully and more comprehensively, as viewed by Patton (2002). The main characteristics of my study which relates Bryman, (2004) in using semi-structured interviews to elicit explicit data are that:

- Data were collected through formal styles of questioning;
- Responses written down were supplemented with recordings for easy analysis;
- Responses were limited to the subject in question but the interviewees were free to add more details when there was the need;
- Semi-structured interviews provided more details and topical answers about the issue being investigated; and finally,
- All respondents received barely the same major issues.

My purpose for introducing focus group discussions into the study was in accordance with Kitzinger, (2002:57). It permitted me to enter into the world of the participants for which my report reflected one from an insider. Liamputtong, (2011:3) explains further that it is an aid to describing and finding meaning and interpretation to controversial issues. This approach helped me much to explore

further, and to validate conflicting issues that came up at interviews with the “knowledgeable” and at the song recording phase. FGD helped me to also explore expert opinions and knowledge from these exemplary stakeholders.

In my study, FGD revealed to me how the various stakeholders view keku as part of funeral tradition, and what interests them most in its performance. The same forums were used to assess the performance of keku among Bakpele in recent times. This source opened up a wide range of probing, however, without losing control of issues that were discussed.

3.3.3 Data Collection Procedures

To facilitate the administration of instruments, I wrote a letter to introduce myself and my assistants to the Likpe Traditional Council, stating the objectives of my research and also to seek for permission and cooperation of stakeholders. Three research assistants teamed up with me for the data collection. One of these was a musician with academic knowledge up to the level of a first Degree while the second assistant was a District Cultural Officer of the Ghana Education Service. They were given an orientation on assessment based on the interview guides. This orientation enabled them to follow the semi-structured questions systematically, to note critical issues raised, and to record these issues objectively at all the discussion sessions. The remaining research assistants took the pictures and the video coverage.

Ahead of the fieldwork, I went out on three weeks of feasibility study of the study area. In the study, I looked at the conduciveness of the cultural calendar, while studying the political, social and economic states of the area. During this period also, I selected and prepared the individual consultants and

discussants ready for both the interviews and the FGD sessions respectively. This is in accordance with Creswell, (2007) that in a qualitative study “the researcher needs to select a site or sites to study, [cases] such as programmes, events, processes, activities, individuals or several individuals.” The main equipment that I used for the fieldwork was a handy audio-video recording machine model Q2HD.

3.3.4. Pilot study

After I have designed my instruments and also taken my co-fieldworkers through an orientation, we went out on a one week of pilot study at Avedzeme (a neutral cluster from the sample of clusters) to test both the instruments and the personnel. The tests took place at Likpe Koforidua and Likpe Agbozome communities both within Avedzeme cluster.

3.3.5 Fieldwork

I collected data in three main phases as follows:

- Phase 1 Interview for the interplay of songs and rituals to establish data;
- Phase 2 Recording and collection of songs;
- Phase 3 Focus group discussions to discuss controversial issues and to corroborate.

At phase one of data collection to establish facts, I gathered information on the interplay of songs and rituals in the context of Bakpele funerals. I collected data using in-depth and open-ended interview questions and direct observations. A total of eight sessions were held with the supposed “knowledgeable”. An additional two sessions were held with another three

“knowledgeable” to corroborate the initial information collected. A sample of the interview guide that I used for phase one, which I adapted from Liamputtong, (2011:77) is shown in Appendix “A”. Appendix “B” also shows the sample format for the notes-taking.

Following the technique of bi-musicality, my research assistants and I were partially involved in the performances while we observed and recorded the songs at the same time. See Appendix “C” for the sample of the song recording guide which I adapted from Liamputtong, (2011:77). Figures 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 respectively show some of the scenes of performances at a funeral.



Figure 3.1: Researcher in keku performance



Figure 3.2: Researcher receiving gifts of toffee during performance



Figure 3.3: Researcher interacting with some performers

Some of the initial recordings that I organized within the natural settings experienced some obtrusions, when the artistes noticed the presence of a camera. These obtrusions happened even though, I briefed the participants enough during the feasibility study, as recommended by Bryman, (2008) that “participants need to be fully aware of the presence of the recording machines

and to understand its purpose.” Due to this interruption of data, we immediately organized for an artificial stage setting, which was still within the funeral environment so as to augment the initial recordings.

At the close of recording the songs, a total number of seventeen women artistes assisted in recording forty-four dirges. Out of this number of dirges, I sampled out and notated twenty, representative of the five phases of a normal Bakpele funeral, for purposes of analyses. Text for the remaining twenty-four dirges (not notated) were used for textual analyses. I collected the text for another ten mourning songs from both Bakpele and the neighboring Ewe-speaking Akpini traditional area.

I conducted the Focus group discussion sessions in a semi-formal participatory mode. That is to say, the sessions were not the strict question and answer type but that a point made by one member was commented on by others, as recommended by Casley and Kumar, (1988). Questions did not follow a particular order but there was a checklist to ensure that all issues were covered. See Appendices “D” and “E” for the sample discussion guide and the sample checklist respectively, which I adapted from Liamputtong, (2011:83).

In taking notes, I adapted Davidson and Colleague’s (2010:69) template for FGD note-taking as presented in Appendix “F”. On the average, each of the six FGD sessions was held within the duration of one hour.

Being a case study, I spent a considerable time among the Bakpele. By that I had much information on their everyday life including their language, traditions, and other practices that have links with my study. This is in line with Berg’s (2007) explanation of anthropological approach to research. He said researchers usually are interested in the behavioural regularities of the society;

their everyday life, language and language use, rituals and ceremonial relationships.

In all cases, I captured data into field notes, jotted and scratched notes as well as on video tapes as appropriately suggested by Sanjek, (1990) and Lofland & Lofland, (1995) (in Bryman, 2004). On the whole, the fieldwork covered a period of sixteen months instead of the twelve months suggested in the proposal. See Time schedule presented in the form of a Gantt chart in Figure 3.4 and which was also translated onto a graph in Figure 3.5.

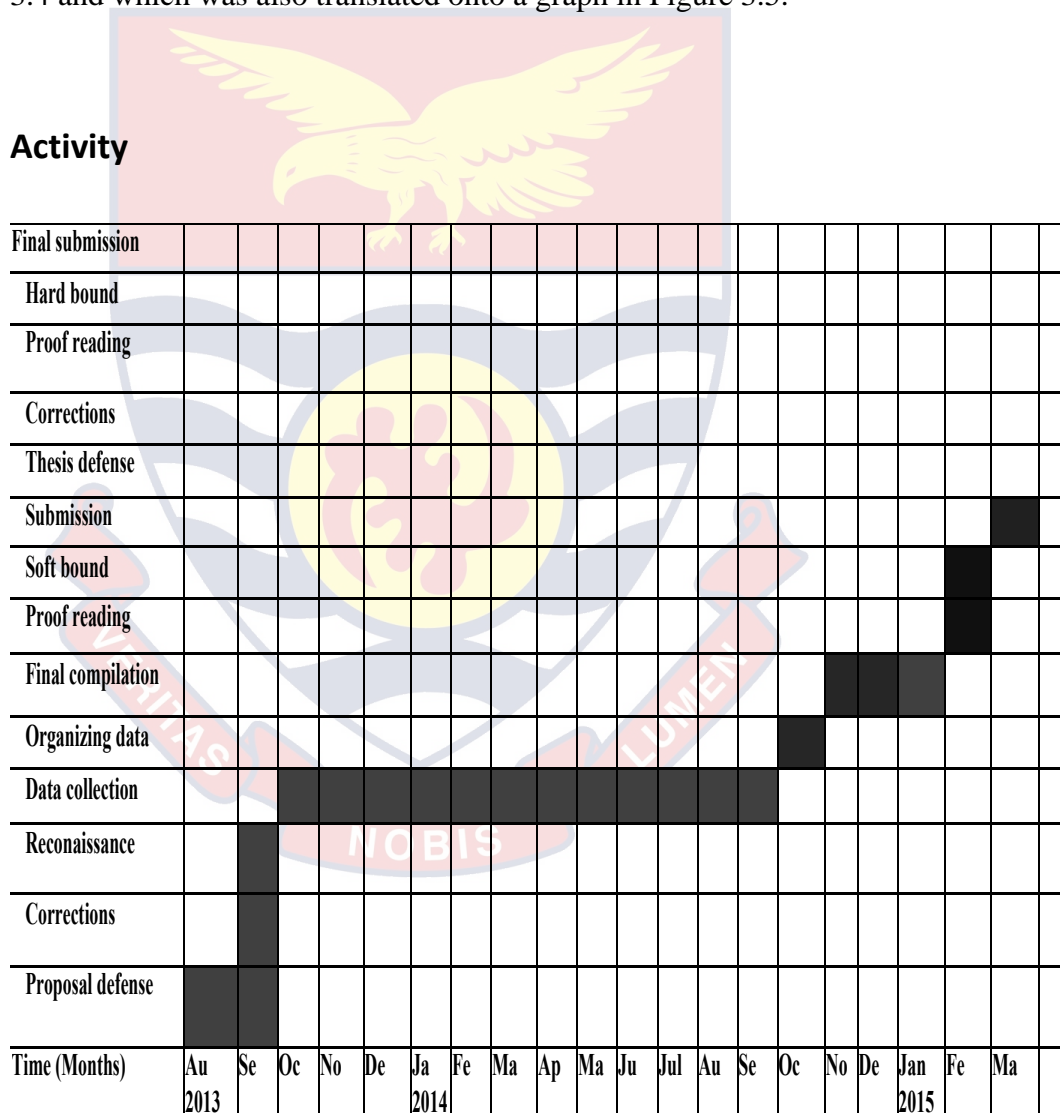


Figure 3.4:Gantt chart suggesting timelines

PROPOSED AND ACTUAL TIMELINES

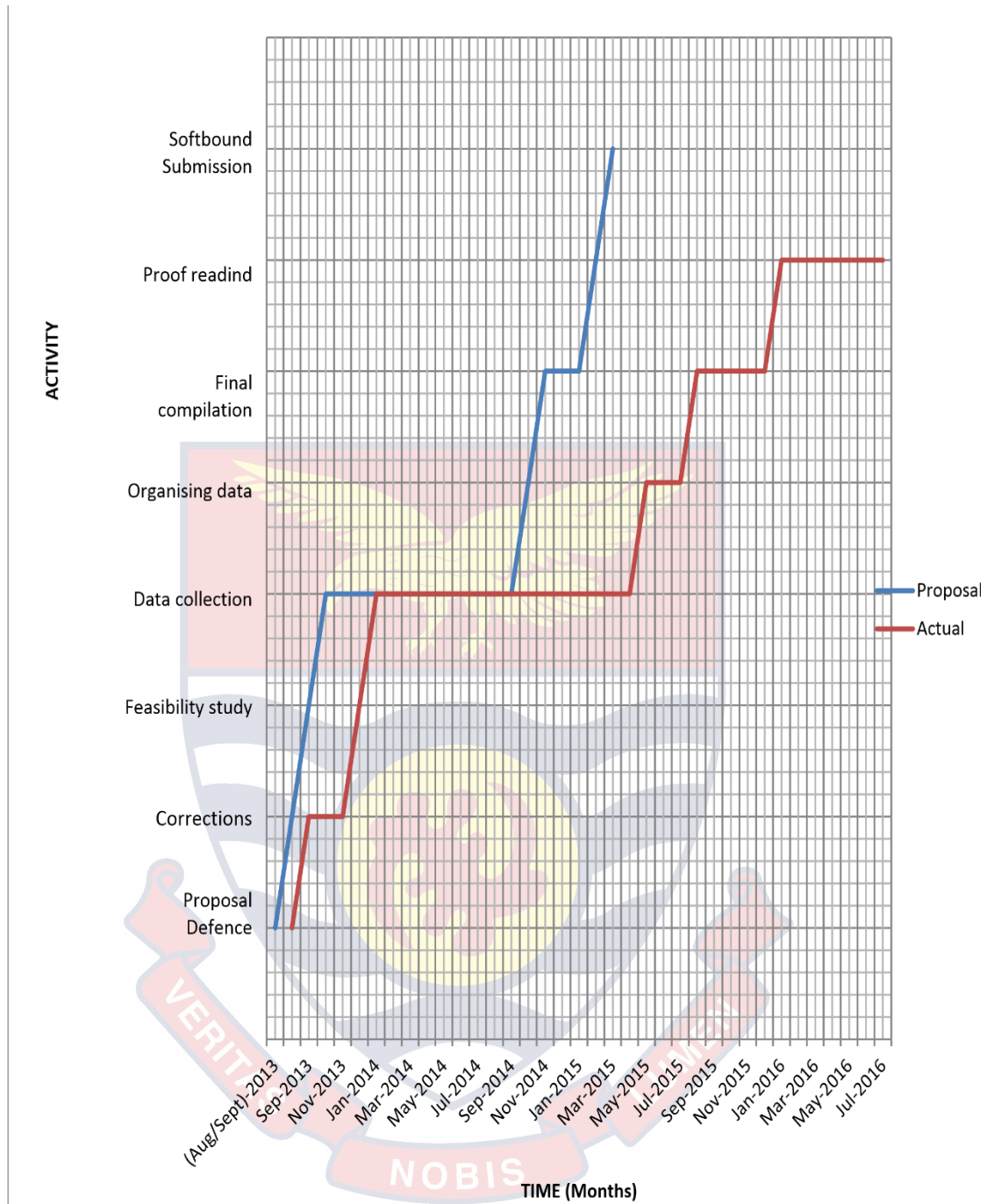


Figure 3.5: Graph of proposed and actual time lines

From both the Gantt chart in Figure 3.4 and the activity graph in Figure 3.5, it can be seen that data collection was proposed to have started in October, 2013 and to have ended in September, 2014, a period of 12 months. Due to some hindrances, the actual data collection started in January, 2014 and ended in May,

2015, covering a period of 16 months. This brings the total months for the data collection period to 27 months, gaining 15 months more than the proposed 12 months.

I sourced also for secondary information from institutional and faculty libraries to supplement the primary data I collected. These libraries include the main University of Cape Coast (U.C.C.) library, the Department of Music and Dance library, U.C.C., the University of Ghana African Studies Departmental library, and the Prempeh II library at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Kumasi. See Table 3.3 for the summary of the data collection.

Table 3.3: Summary of Data Collection by Research Questions

S/N	FIELD QUESTION	PHASE OF DATA COLLECTION	SAMPLE TYPE AND DATA COLLECTION TYPE	CHAPTER OF THESIS	HEADING OF THESIS CHAPTER
1	1) Who are the Bakpele? 2) What is the trend and context of <i>Dku</i> performance against other mourning songs in Bakpele funerals? 3) What <i>Dku</i> (dirges) are used at the various phases of the Bakpele funerals in relation to their worldview on funerals?	Phases 1, 2 and 3	Interview with the knowledgeable for the interplay of songs and rituals. Recording and collection of songs with female artistes. Focus Group Discussions with stakeholders of keku.	Four	PRESENTATION OF RESULTS "A" Historical-Geography and Cultural Background
2	4) How rich are the musical and textual resources in Bakpele eto <i>Dku</i> ? 5) In what ways can Bakpele <i>Dku</i> be systematized with the view to improving funeral practice?	Phases 2 and 3	Recording and collection of songs with female artistes. Focus Group Discussions with stakeholders of keku.	Five	PRESENTATION OF RESULTS "B" The Corporal (Musical and Textual Analysis)

3.4.1 Data Organization and Analyses

I organized phase one data - “The Knowledgeable” using the following different qualitative analytical techniques concurrently, taken from Yin (2008): *case description*, where I adopted a descriptive framework for organizing the illustrations and demonstrations. Another is *explanation building*. Here, I analyzed data by building an explanation about each of the cases I selected. Finally, I *marched events* observed logically and empirically.

I organized data phase two - Recording and collection of songs into two main categories: keku as dance tunes and keku as laments. That after, I did the melodic analysis of the songs under the elements of sound, and structure in relation to musical context for the two categories. On few occasions, however, the two categories were discussed jointly.

The categories of songs from which I selected my illustrations are those performed at dawn to traditionally greet the corpse (adult laments), those sung to publicly mourn while the body is lying in state, those sung on the way to the cemetery. The rest are songs sung at the grave side of *Oyokɔ*, those sung on the second day of burial (including grandchildren’s lament), and finally those sung during the 90th day rituals for female adults (adult laments). It is these stages of Bakpele funeral celebrations that are marked by the highest level of mass singing.

Data for phase three - focus group discussions were organized into a four- step model, and can be identified in Figure 3.6. This model is in line with suggestions offered by Hesse-Biber, (2011:317).

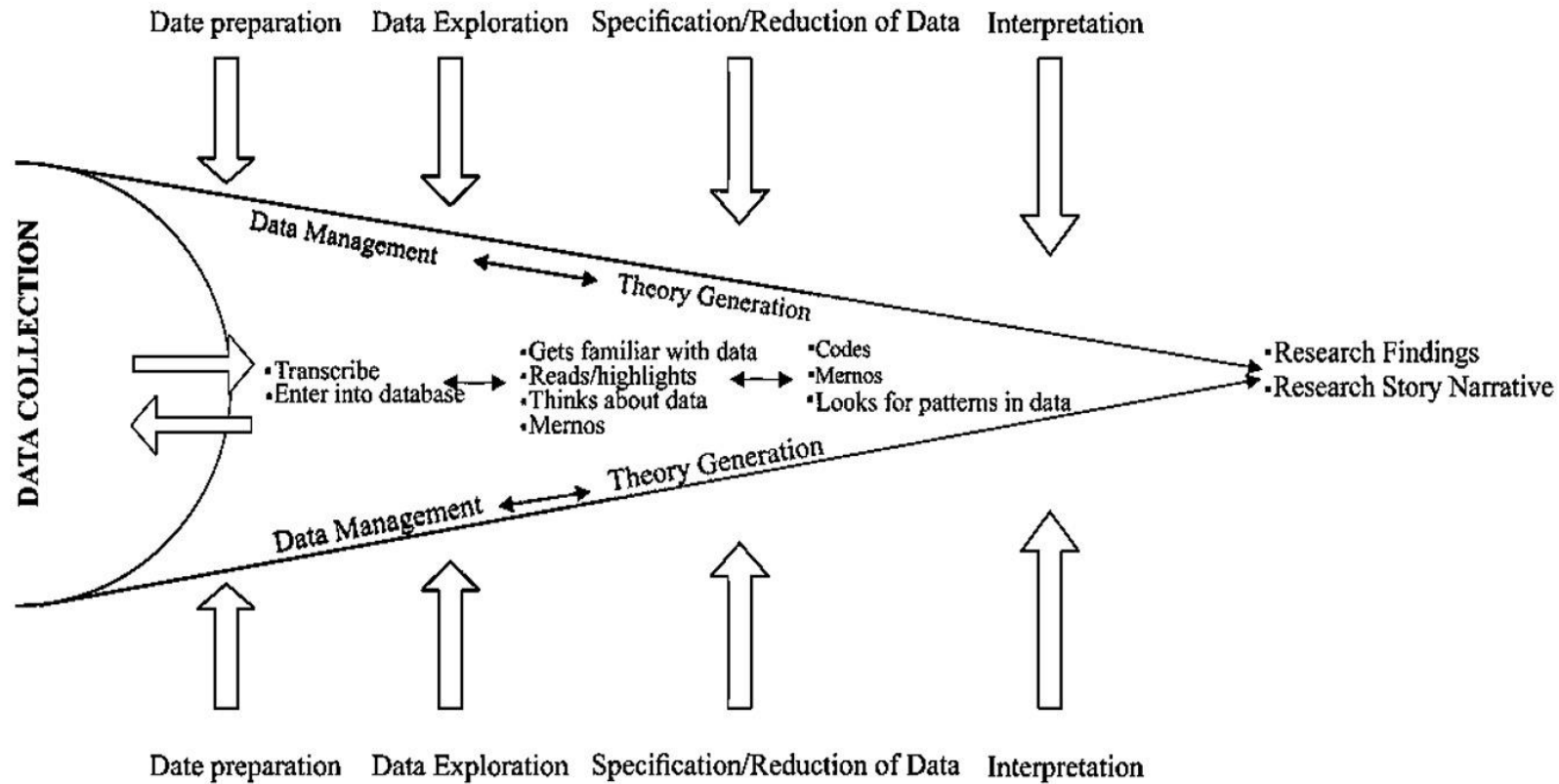


Figure 3.6: Four-step model for FGD data analysis

Source: Hesse-Biber, (2011:317)

Relating the figure to my study, steps 1 and 2 explain the data preparation and exploration. The 3rd and 4th steps reduced the data into categories for specific interpretation. It can be observed from the direction of arrows in the figure that as the interpretation moves from one step to another, the data reduced towards the research objectives. The descriptions were general at the beginning but became more detailed as the discussions folded up.

The language that I appropriately used for this part of phase three analysis is Discourse Analysis. I emphasized the field of discourse so as to give a clearer picture of the discussion sessions. I took note of the way statements were made to support or refute arguments. This is in accordance with Bryman, (2008:476), who recommends that in taking notes at focus group interviews, it is essential to keep track of the individual contributions of the discussants, to be used in the analyses. According to him, “if this element is lost, the dynamics of the focus group session will also be lost, and a major rationale for doing focus group interviews [...] would be undermined.” By Bryman, (2008:476), my interest in the focus group discussion was not only in what the participants say, but also in the way they say it and the way they express and demonstrate it. Here, the action is revealed and analysed solely in the speaking and the demonstrations. On the other hand, according to Potter, (1997) (in Bryman, 2001) and contrary to my study, Conversation Analysis, is much more of emphasis on naturally occurring talks.

Berg, (2007), quoting Miles and Huberman, (1994), observed that there are a number of procedures used by qualitative researchers to analyse their data. Three of these approaches they mentioned as interpretative approach, collaborative social research approach and social anthropological approach. The most suitable of these approaches to my study is the social anthropological approach. Describing it, Berg, (2007) said researchers who follow this orientation often might have conducted various sorts of field or case study activities to gather

data. My study qualifies for this approach to data analysis because I adequately spent a considerable time in the field where I conducted different activities of case study on the topic.

3.4.2 Establishing validity and reliability

To establish the extent of validity of my research findings, I put the interpretations against competing knowledge claims by asking myself series of questions as drawn from Cohen, (2011:180) thus:

- * Are the findings telling a convincing story?
- * Are all my procedures valid?
- * Does any negative case change my interpretation?
- * How did my findings impact the woman of Bakpele?
- * How did my findings impact the wider social context of Bakpele funerals?

By the argument of Cohen, (2011:180) for validation, I have well approached this checklist, with responses that resonate with my findings. In addition to the checklist, samples of recorded works were played on a local radio – Sekpele F.M., to augment activities of bereaved families of some funerals that occurred during the period of fieldwork. This performance on radio served also as a way of creating awareness on the research findings in the communities, as suggested at the FGD sessions. I have therefore, appropriately addressed the subject of validity.

In order to meet the requirements for establishing reliability, I subjected my study to the natural setting as the principal source of data. Data were socially situated and culturally saturated, and were presented in terms of my consultants and not me the researcher even though, I was fully part of the research. On the whole, there was the concern for process and not just the outcome.

Similarly, I subjected findings to few questions to test reliability. Such of these questions were addressed: “What do I think is going to be the response of Bakpele if the same interviews were conducted to another set of people on the same issue of keku?” “What do I think is going to be the attitude of Bakpele if their funeral traditions were revised?” Responses to these questions confirmed that reliability was well taken care of.



CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS - PART ONE
(HISTORICAL-GEOGRAPHY AND CULTURAL
BACKGROUND OF THE BAKPELE)

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the historical, geographical and the cultural background of the Bakpele so as to understand the social, philosophical and psychological meanings underlying their keku. The underlying information is followed by the description of the music itself.

4.1 Origin of the Bakpele

Anecdotal evidence linked some ethnic groups of present day Ghana such as the Akans, some Voltaic people and Mamprusi, Dagomba and Gonja tribes of Northern Ghana to the great medieval empire of Ghana. This ethnographic study is in accordance with Warburton, (1972) that:

No work of art can be fully appreciated without an understanding of the life and circumstances of the artist or composer, his forerunners and the contemporaries who affected his work, the performer, and finally, the place and period in which they lived (P. 1).

Fishman, (2007) recounts the following tradition concerning the origin of Likpe that many years ago the Ewe people were chased from their home by the tyrannical rule of an ancient chief of the lands that are now called Benin. Fleeing further and further, a section of the Ewes finally arrived in a virgin forest, unblemished by the hands of men. There, the people begun a small settlement.

Another rendition according to Dzamboe, (2012) and also Aboagye, (2010) say that the Bakpele ancestors were known to have migrated alongside other Guan states from the ancient Ghana Empire between AD 1050 and 1076. They arrived in the present-day Ghana in the early part of the 12th century and moved south-eastward along the Volta valley. Legend, they said had it that they moved along and established several settlements; the best remembered were in the region in and around present-day Atebubu in Brong Ahafo region. Their ancestors were believed to have abandoned these settlements because of the hostility of neighbouring tribes.

They then moved eastward along the northern edge of the “Guan crescent”, through the countries of Nchumburu and Krachi in the Volta Region until they reached the western side of the Togo-Attakora Range along the borders of Atwode and Adele. From there, they turned southward through the regions of Tribus (Ntrubos), Akebus and Akposos. The group moved further south and settled at a place known as Likpeto, where they were warmly received by their hosts the Bakwa. See the migration map in Figure 4.1.



Figure 4.1: Bakpele migration map

Source: Composed by Hesper Adesua

There are some other oral narrations which say that the migrants moved from the area around the present-day Atebubu southwards and established settlements at the foot of the Akwapim range at areas like Larteh. From there, they moved northwards to finally settle at Likpeto.

4.2 The Names Bakpele and Likpe

There were two similar narrations from Fishman, (2007). One says that in those days, everyone fetched water from the river and did so at the same time. One of those times, a pregnant woman who was living on the fringe of the settlement was lynched. One other rendition of Fishman, (2007) says that there were regular attacks on Bakwa by the people of Gbi who had then settled further south between Bakpele and the people of Ve to the south and those of Nkonya to the west. The attacks reached a peak when a pregnant woman, who had gone to fetch water from a stream, was killed by a Gbi sniper with a bow and arrow. This incident was enough to exhaust the already overstretched patience of the Bakwas.

The two separate narrations of Fishman, (2007), together continued that the murderers refused the custom of replacing the deceased with a member of their own tribe and, thus provoked, the plaintiffs began their preparation for war by sharpening stones to be used in battle. Scouts from the majority party saw this action of stone sharpening, which in Ewe translates as "*li kpe*" (chip stones), and returned, with the news of an impending conflict. The majority thus, acquiesced to the custom and presented the minority group now known as the Likpe, with a new bride just to end the move of going in for a battle. Some writings say the Gbi elders immediately sent emissaries to render their sincere apology for the death of the woman and, thus, made peace with Bakpele.

Another tradition according to Dzamboe, (2012) and also Aboagye, (2010), similar to Fishman, (2007), avers that the original Likpe lands were discovered by the Bakpele; later, a section of the Gbi from Peki joined them and was settled at the northern side of the Koloe

stream. But when the newcomers started to acquire more lands than necessary, their movements were quickly restricted. The tradition adds that as a result of the restriction on their ambition towards territorial aggrandizement, a bitter war was envisaged. During the preparation for the war, the Bakpele, together with their kinsmen – the Bakwa chipped stones to be used as flint–locks; hence, they were nicknamed in Ewe Likpeawo which in English translates as “stone chipping people.” This name was later modified as Likpe by which the Likpeawo became known.

In their preparation for the war, the Likpeawo were highly determined for total victory, however, with bloodshed. The war with the Gbi having been averted due to certain thoughts, the Bakpele voluntarily evacuated and moved northwards into the Togo range where they were settled by the native chief Katsankla of the then Bakwa tribe. Togo ranges were chosen because of its remoteness and inaccessibility in the event of enemy attack, and because of the availability of wild game and fertile hills and valleys. The settlement of the migrants and the co-existence with the people of Bakwa led to a union locally known in Sekpele as “*Lekɔyi*” (other translations say *Letsyayi*). By custom, *Lekɔyi*, the Day of the union is celebrated bi-annually with pomp and pageantry.

In investigating further, the origin of Bakpele and their identity, Ampene, (2010), tends to support the tradition that the people of Likpe, Santrokofi, Lolobi and Akpafu are all Guan speaking ethnic groups that occupied the region long before the Ewe migrated from Notsie in Togo in 1720. By this assertion, Ampene further deduced that the present settlements of the Bakpele are derived from three main sources: the first group are people whose origin is traceable to the Guan stock of Bakpele (namely Tumkpa and Bakwa subdivisions); the Bakwa holds the legend that they emerged from a cave near Bakwa Kato. The ancestral cave is now a National tourists’ site. The second group of the Bakpele belong to the Ewe tribe: Gudeve and Agbozome.

The third group comprising Mate and Bala is of the Akan origin that arrived in Likpe

in about 1786 from Atebubu in Brong Ahafo through the Ashanti Region. This route of movement is evidenced in the activities of four families - the Asamoah and Kosidua families of Likpe Bala on the one hand and the Okyere Baffour and Nana Agyekum families of Donaso near Ejisu Ashanti on the other hand. These families, according to my consultants - Kokudua from Likpe Bala, and Danquah from Donaso, continue to relate one another on matters of funeral and other social activities.

The two names - Likpe and Bakpele will be used concurrently in this work.

4.3 Location of the Bakpele

Bakpele traditional area is located about ten kilometres to the north-east of Hohoe as one of the non-Ewe speakers of the region. It shares common boarders with Wli traditional area to the south, Buem to the north, Akpafu and Lolobi to the west and the Togo-Attakora mountains to the east. Bakpele, led by six leaders, accepted the offer done them by their host head – Katsankla of Bakwa and chose various sites for their townships. Alloh and Lemboe founded Abranikrom; Akonto and Lesiaku founded Akontokrom; and, Ntri and Samba (some suggested it is Kukpali also called Kugali) founded Tunkpa (Okumasi). Bakpele came into contact with another group of kinsmen known as the Basio who were also an advanced group, but who settled on hills near present day Lolobi Ashambi. The three divisions of Bakpele – Abranikrom, Akontokrom, and Okumasi – later settled at the present day Mate, Bala and Tumkpa, respectively whiles Bakwa retained their original settlements. See Figure 4.2 for the satellite image map of the Likpe lands lying within the Universe Traverse Mercator (UTM) Zone 31 above Equator with the Metric grade values of 790000 N and 900000.00 N; 230000 E and 240000 E.

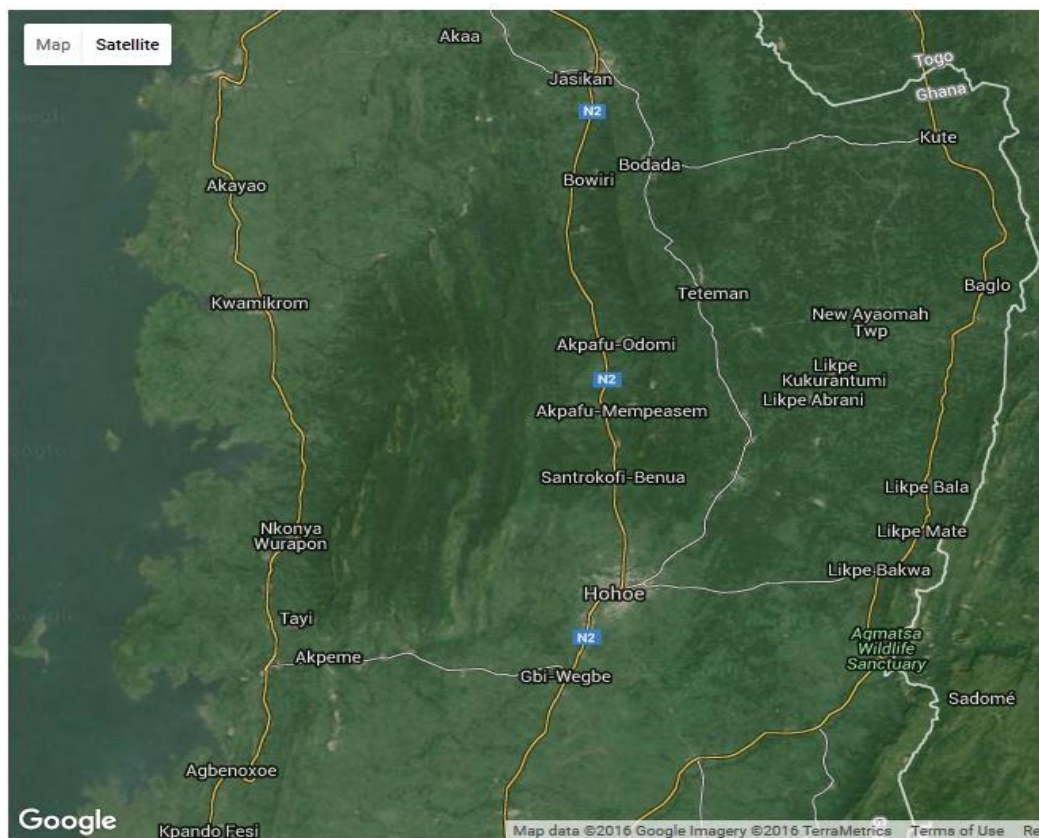


Figure 4.2: Satellite image map of Likpe

Source:(www.ghanadistricts.com/homeHYPERLINK"<http://www.ghanadistricts.com/home>")

4.4 Socio-Cultural Background of the Bakpele

4.4.1 Ethnicity and religion

Likpe is presently made up of twenty (20) towns, villages and settlements. According to Ghana Population and Housing Census (2002) report figures, Likpe has a total population of 13,292. Refer back to Table 3.1 for the population distribution of the Bakpele according to the four clusters and towns, villages and settlements.

Besides indigenous traditional religion, two major religions in Ghana are found among Bakpele: Christian religion which dominates is followed by Islam. According to a newspaper report Daily Graphic (December 23, 2005:20), Catholicism in Likpe was 100 years old in the year 2005 by which time the Evangelical Presbyterian Church had already

fully established herself. Formal education is available for all to, at least, the basic level thereby, bringing literacy rate to an appreciable level.

The Bakpele are basically cash crop and peasant farmers. The main cash crops cultivated are cocoa and coffee. They produce foodstuff like the tubers and cereals for subsistence; rice (both hilly and paddy) is their staple food. The main commercial activities for the women are palm oil extraction and native soap manufacturing. Social amenities available, according to the year 2002 census reports, classified the area under semi-urban. Political administration of the area is under the Hohoe Municipal Assembly while the Traditional supervisory role is played by the Likpe Traditional Council with its paramount seat located at Likpe Mate. The individual towns and villages, however, have their local chiefs and queen mothers who see to the day-to-day administration of the towns as it is the practice in most traditional areas in Ghana.

Human migration to other parts of the country in search for jobs of various types and a higher standard of living, settling in cities and becoming salary workers are as well, part of the lives of the Bakpele in recent times. There are some who commute to work in the neighbouring city of Hohoe and others who moved to settle there. There are also others who travelled to settle in other towns all over the country and went home only on festive occasions.

4.4.2 Likpe dialect

The mother tongue of the people of Likpe is called *Sekpele* and also known as *Bosele Mu*. See the ethnologic listing in Figure 4.3 for the local languages spoken in Ghana.

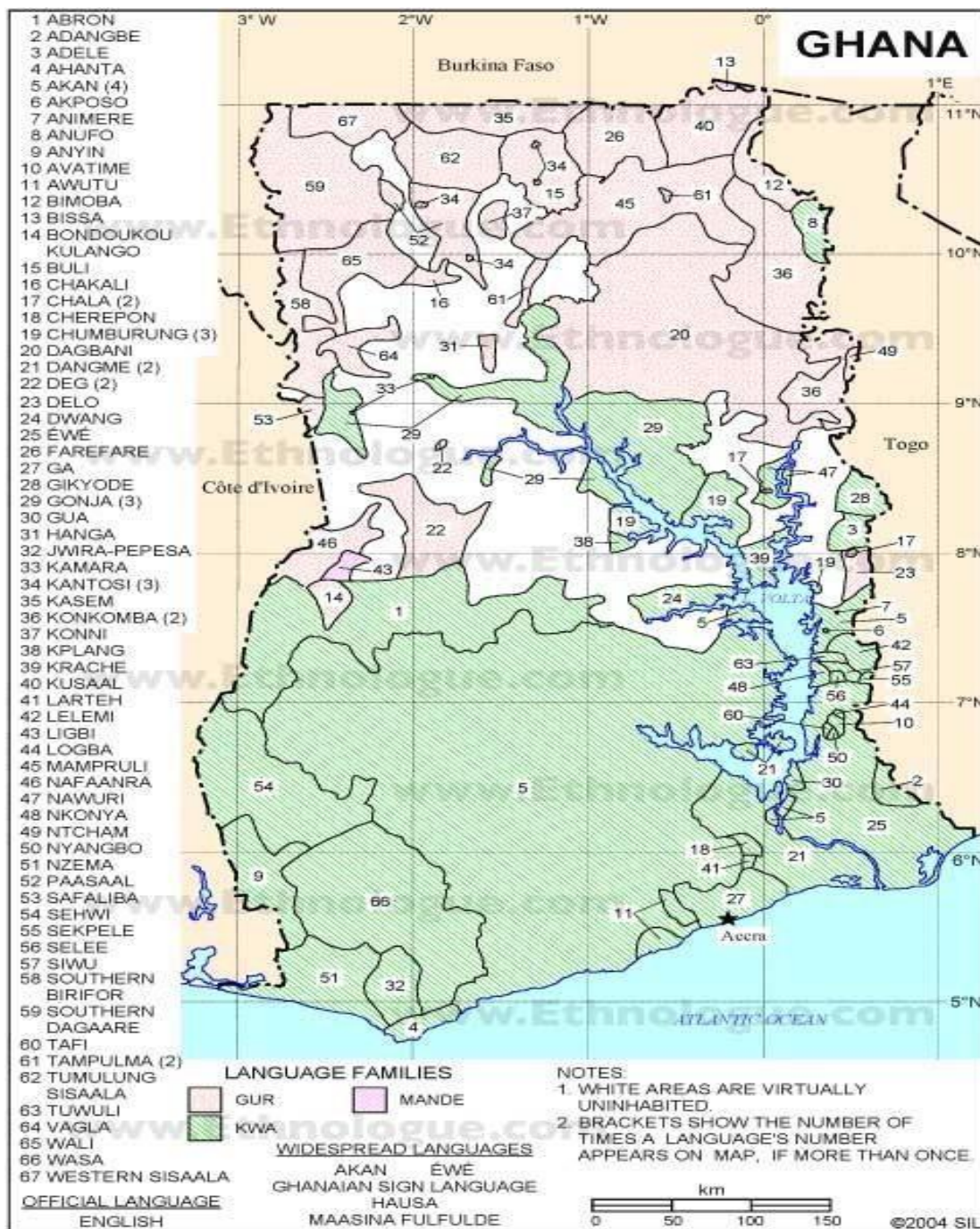


Figure 4.3: Ethnological map of Ghana

Source: Lewis, M. P. (2009)

Sekpele, which is located between latitudes 7°N and 8°N and longitudes 1°E and 0°E, is labelled as language number 55 on the language list of the ethnological map.

Sekpele is part of the 28 Guan speaking languages in Ghana ([HYPERLINK](http://www.graphic.com.gh/) "http://www.graphic.com.gh/"[HYPERLINK](http://www.graphic.com.gh/) "http://www.graphic.com.gh/") (Retrieved from Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia 2013). It

belongs to the geographic group of Ghana-Togo mountain languages traditionally called Togorestsprachen, depicting Togo remnant languages of the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo. The map shows also the language distribution by Gur, Kwa and Mande.

4.4.3 Attractive Features in Likpe

There are physical features, historical and archaeological sites of attraction such as the Alo mountains ancestral caves and *Kuyi kple* in Likpe. The Togo-Attakora mountain range constitutes the eastern boarder of Ghana with the Republic of Togo. In East Likpe, they are referred to as the Alo Mountains. One of the significant climatic effects of the range is that it intercepts the easterly winds and thus, turns Likpe East into a rain shadow. The Wadjakli waterfall is located at Likpe Todome, taking its source from the range and plunging from a height of about 40 meters.

There are ancestral caves in Likpe. These caves are a cluster of six openings at Bakwa Kato within the Togo-Attakora range believed to have been the ancestral home of the people of Bakwa. The caves are believed also to have served as hideouts for the ancestors during the ancient times when wars were rife. The three-kilometre journey from Likpe Bakwa to the cave sites involves hiking over rugged mountainous areas. Dzamboe (2012), describing the caves said:

One of the caves, which is narrow and elongated, served as a meeting point for the elders where they met and took strategic decisions in times of war while a second cave served as a point for spying on enemies, indeed it was a type of watchtower. The third cave was believed to be the emerging point after the people of Likpe-Bakwa comprising Todome and Bakwa-Likpe and Yikpa in Togo were led out of the cave by their leader.

There was a cave which was used as the chief's palace where secret consultations were held with elders on matters affecting the state and another one which served as detention cells for criminals and the last one, a long vertical one which served as watch tower for spying on the enemies. It was also used as a resting place for the ancestors (P. 22).

Kekundo, an ancient settlement, is located at the foothills of the Togo-Attakora range, where the people of Bakwa under the leadership of Nana Djana, are believed to have first settled after descending from the caves.

Kuyi kplɛ is found in Likpe Bakwa. Legend has it that a group of marauding warriors found no one to fight with when they arrived in Likpe Bakwa, because *Kuyi kplɛ* camouflaged all those who rushed to it to seek shelter. The enemies were thus soundly defeated. Attempts to fell the tree failed as both hand and axe used got stuck to the tree until they are removed by the forces of tradition. The over 300-year-old tree is still revered by traditionalists.

4.4.4 Cultural Traditions of the Bakpele

The Bakpele have a “moving tortoise” as their symbol of tradition. The pattern on the shell of the tortoise, which looks like several parts put together, signifies the *Bakpele* unity in coming together into one state, and also their resilience which made them to withstand all migration challenges. The philosophy behind the slow movement of the tortoise, to the Bakpele, is an assurance of arriving at their destination, irrespective of the rate of movement. Similarly, they have the accolade *Bakpele ntɔkɔ kato* (Bakpele are on top of issues), urging one another for hard work.

Bakpele belong individually, to separate clans which are specific to the various townships. *Kale Lukuɔ* clan, for example, of Likpe Kukurantumi hardly has any lineage with

Kale Lukuɔ clan of Likpe Bala. On the other hand, *Bayabi* as a clan in Likpe Kukurantumi is not found in other Likpe towns. Hence, names of clans differ from town to town, except for few instances. The descendants of one ancestor when retrospectively described become the groups of lineage within a clan. Members of one clan are most often found living in the same locality within the township. So far, there is no town in Bakpele in which all the inhabitants belong to the same clan or lineage except singled out cases of farm settlements. Even that due to migration and expansion for reasons of farming and other social activities, those single clan settlements soon grow to become multiple clans ending up into townships.

Bakpele traditions, among other practices, stand unique. There are, however, some practices that are borrowed and patterned after the Akan and Ewe cultures. Some of these are in the areas of titles for their chiefs. Bakpele occasionally use the title “Nana” for their chiefs just as it is used in Akan lands. The actual title the Bakpele use for their chiefs is *Ote* (root), wherefore, the paramount chief is *Otekpɛɛ* (tap root). There are similarities in some key words that are borrowed from Akan and the Ewe languages like names of people, for example, Asamoah, Aniewu, Agyemang and Adesua; others are Dogbey, Mawuse and Akpene. There are names of towns like Kukurantumi, Koforidua, Abrani and Agbozome. Dress codes are also similar to those of the Ewes and the Akans. There are similarities in types of musical instruments and musical tunes most of which were borrowed from the Akans and the Ewes. A dance type of Bakpele called *Awumble*, for example, took gestures from Agbadza of the Anlo migrant settler farmers in the area. *Ebimkpɛɛ* dance is also performed just as *Bɔmaa* among the Akans.

Lekɔyi is the main cooperate festival jointly celebrated by all the towns, communities and settlements of Bakpele. There are, however, other minor festivals such as *kɔlɔ*. This festival is celebrated individually, in all the towns, and in different years, to mark the installation of *ɔlɔ* (a youth development leader) for a particular generation, by members who

identify themselves with the group and their new leader. *Kɔlɔ* festival is celebrated once in every 30 to 40 years according to the up coming generations.

ɔlɔbɔ (the most beautiful) is a type of modern-day beauty contest in which young girls of a particular age group are adorned with traditional cosmetics and flamboyantly displayed amidst music and dance. Although, no winners are declared, the audience in their view, judge for themselves who the supposed most beautiful might be. The *okafɔ* (girls' nubility rites) is a puberty rite performed when girls come of age, and is meant to prepare them for marriage. A more elaborate version of *okafɔ* is *okafɔkpakpa* (traditional wedding festival), celebrated to climax the traditional wedding or marriage rite. This rite involves an elaborate royal treatment for the couple in-the-making.

Other festivals of Bakpele and therefore, musical types worth mentioning are *bɔkpɔ eto koke* (the hunters' dance) and *kɔye eto ɔsɔ* (play songs). All these festivals go with their respective songs to march the various stages of the celebration. A type of music that however, runs through these festivals is *letɔkli* music. *Letɔkli* is music that goes with *awumble* dance. The very year *awumble* festival, with its music – *letɔkli* started was not exactly known due to lack of documentation. According to Sracoo (1989:12), the musical type is believed to have been started by the youth of Bakwa to celebrate the people's victory in a war – the war not known either. *Awumble* is a ceremonial dance of Bakpele and it is performed at the installation of *ɔlɔ* (a youth development leader for a generation). However, out of excitement, mourners at some funerals, these days, sing out some tunes of *letɔkli* to associate with the deceased in terms of age and generation.

4.4.5 Musical Traditions of the Bakpele

ɔku originated from among the people of Bakpele and has been part of their funeral traditions ever since. The music is created and is being used by the Bakpele themselves.

Other attributes of keku as folk music, which agree with www.thefreedictionary.com/folk+music are that it is music that has been performed by custom over a long period of time and by several generations, and is transmitted through the oral traditions of Bakpele. It is music that relates the Bakpele culture, to commemorate their historical and individual events thereby, making it traditional.

Dku are closely bound up with the socio-religious functions of death and funerals, in line with Nketia, (1966), when he explained traditional music:

it is the musical heritage of the contemporary African which is associated with traditional African institutions of the pre-colonial era [...] and which has survived the impact of the forces of western forms of acculturation (P. 11).

Keku is music that is quite distinct in idiom and orientation, free from any form of western acculturation. Composers of keku are not known, neither do the songs have the copyright law binding them, but they are owned by the Bakpele.

4.5 Trend of *Dku* performance

Field question two requested for the trend of *Dku* performance in Bakpele funerals as against other mourning songs. As a result of modernization and dynamism in culture, most especially with a lot of Christian church proliferation currently in our societies, one could argue out the current state of *Dku* in Bakpele funerals. For that matter, I opened up a discussion on the trend of performance of keku in Bakpele in recent times.

Here, I was expecting calls from the focus group discussions for the annulment of *Dku* during funeral celebrations but that was not the case. Instead, there was a groan on the low level of performance of keku in funerals that were celebrated in recent times, thereby, agitating for more vibrant and better performances. Responses from all the focus groups

revealed that the level of keku performance at funerals is on the decline, compared to observations in the previous years. The data I collected during phase one of the fieldwork revealed that *Dku* have been a long-standing tradition by which their actual origin is not as yet known. Different narrations were given by my consultants like this: “We came to meet it [the tradition] and we performed it the way we met it; I cannot tell exactly when it was started; it is the music of old and even though we have many songs added these days, we are missing a lot of the songs that we came to meet”. We can draw from the last response stated here that most of the repertoire of songs have since disappeared due to the passing away of the elderly. What the current sources of repertoire actually are is a matter of conjecture, since we cannot ensure that any of the narrations we have today are the original versions by people who actually started them or saw their first rendition.

One other major issue that came to the fore at the various FGDs is the peculiarity of rendering the songs. According to responses from the discussants, and which were also authenticated by the play-back of recorded songs, there are slight differences in rendering keku among the various clusters of Bakpele. Bala and Kukurantumi townships and their settlements which are classified as one cluster for example, have about the same style of performance, as in melodic contour, diction and dance gestures, which are different from those of Mate, Tumkpa and Bakwa clusters. A listener can easily tell the source of keku performance just by hearing the music.

Due to the slight variations in singing these songs in terms of diction and melodic contour, performances become difficult when performers converge from the four different clusters in the traditional area for a common keku performance. Performances on the other hand, are manageable at funerals within one cluster. This difference in the style of singing notwithstanding, the various five main phases of a funeral are the same all over Bakpele.

Data revealed also that the townships of Bala, Agbozome and Bakwa are the leading dirge performers in the traditional area. In these communities, almost every elderly woman

is also an able soloist and can lead performances in terms of quantity and quality of repertoire. This is, however, not the case in other townships like Kukurantumi and Mate where there are some women who stand out as the leading cantors, without whose presence performances are said to be on the lower side.

It was also realized that *Dku* have no standing groups for their performance. Attendance and therefore, participation at funerals, which are both obligatory and voluntary as well, depend highly on the activeness of the deceased herself, and at other times, on the activeness of the family members (for the sake of male deceased) at such social gatherings. Attendance is always high at funerals of socially active people but low at funerals of inactive ones. Women are very much observant in this case. It is surprising to note that nobody organizes nor announces the level of participation but attendance which is generally spontaneous is either high or low. This confirms the adage that “one good turn deserves another.”

There are, however, no spiritual implications for the non-performance of *Dku* at Bakpele funerals, for reasons of, perhaps, bad weather; except that without these performances, funeral celebrations are described, in the human sense, as incomplete and inadequate to the satisfaction of both the living and the dead.

4.6 Mourning Songs of the Bakpele

There are other musical genres to *keku* which are performed during Bakpele funerals but which do not serve any traditional role. These musical types range from folk music through traditional, art, to contemporary. Performances are vocal, instrumental or a combination of both, performed by organized groups. The music spans a variety of sacred and secular genres like *bɔbɔbɔ*, highlife, brass band, *asafo*, and *ebimkpele* (a type of Bakpele *fontɔnfrɔm* which is similar in instrumentation and performance to the akan *bɔmaa*).

The diversity in the performance of mourning songs of Bakpele corresponds with Nketia, (1980) (in Agordoh, 2005) that:

The outstanding characteristic of traditional music is the diversity of its forms and manner of performances. Ethnic groups show considerable flexibility in their choice of contexts of performance, musical types, musical items, instruments and vocal styles as well as in details of form and structure (P. 83).

Earlier on, Hood, (1963), (in Agordoh 2002:24), viewed the intrinsic values of the various musical types, and gave three inter dependent considerations that guide the ethnomusicologist when looking at African music. The first of these is the contextual aspects of performance. This relates to the function of music as an aspect of human behaviour in his society. The second is the location of the music area. This aspect depicts the musical style found in the location of the performer or consumer which is also viewed in relation to his society. Finally, the music is considered in the content of the musical elements. To understand the significance of the Bakpele funeral songs in relation to their worldview, the intrinsic values of these songs are considered in brief socio-cultural backgrounds of each of these genres, followed by a description of the music and its performance, all within the framework of Bakpele funeral traditions.

4.6.1 Bɔ̀bɔ̀bɔ̀ music

Bɔ̀bɔ̀bɔ̀ is one of the most popular recreational music in the middle zone of the volta region. According to Amlor, (2011:66), it is one of the musical creations that emerged within the period of 1947-1957, and was also known as agbeyeye or akpese. It was acclaimed by many including Agordoh, (2002:125), that in the 1950s, the band and its choreographed

dances were formed as a creative work of an ex-police officer called Kodzo Nuator who hailed from Kpando. *Bɔbɔbɔ* is predominantly a genre for the youth between the ages of twelve and forty. According to Agordoh, (2002:125), the dance type originated from *konkoma*, also a recreational dance that was performed in the Kpando traditional area at that time. Some others felt that it was derived from *tuidzi*, another recreational band for the youth, the latter which, however, disappeared at the emergence of *bɔbɔbɔ*. Whatever the actual source might be, *bɔbɔbɔ* has come to gain much popularity in this part of the region.

Bɔbɔbɔ was in the early days confined to the northern sector of the Ewe-speaking people of the region. As a result of migration and cultural interactions coupled with its captivating appeal to the youth, the performance of *bɔbɔbɔ* of late, has spread to almost all the ethnic groups of the northern Ewe, and also to parts of the non-Ewe speaking areas including Likpe, my study area. According to Agordoh, (2002:126), the dance has spread to areas including Anlo-Tongu, and to the Ewe-speaking people of the Republic of Togo.

The performance of *bɔbɔbɔ* among the Bakpele is not much different from that of the Ewes. Instrumentation for the genre is not fixed but is made up of some basic ensembles found everywhere. These comprise *asivui* (a small drum played with the hand), one *pati*, (a side drum), one *vuvi* (small drum), one or two *vuga* (master drum) and two *kretsiwɔɔ* (castanets), *axatse* (rattles) and a bugle. It has been argued that Nuator himself being an ex-police officer, introduced the use of bugle as one of its musical instruments so as to give the genre a military flare. Some *bɔbɔbɔ* ensembles have in addition, the tambourine and *tamalin*. The basic rhythms played by the two *kretsiwɔɔ* are shown in Corpus 4.

Corpus 4 *Bɔbɔbɔ* timeline.



As a result of the widespread nature of the dance, it is now being featured differently from one society to the other and from group to group, with varied styles of performances. The general dance formations are in circles, semi-circle, two or three rows or rectangular shapes as choreographed by the members themselves.

The dance movements are pre-arranged and each dance style may be identified with a distinct song so that changes in songs are automatically accompanied by changes in dance movements and formations. Dance movements involve mostly the waist and the limbs which are mastered by the dancers at rehearsals. On the other hand, on-the-spot practice while on stage makes other mourners who are not registered members cope up with the band members.

The themes of *bɔ̀bɔ̀* songs comprise amorous or love issues. Nowadays, as a result of changes in reason, mode and place of performance, there are songs of varied texts that are sung to fit the various occasions. Themes of songs on philosophical, psychological, social and religious issues that are featured during funerals reflect on death and pain of the bereaved and the mourners.

With many Christian youths becoming members of the *bɔ̀bɔ̀* bands, performances especially of the songs, have greatly been influenced by western church music. Sacred words, mostly taken from the Bible and Christian hymn books are sometimes used to substitute secular words, so as to enable their performance at Christian funerals including other Christian gatherings. Among the Bakpele, most of the songs are sung in the Ewe language. Due to the geographical contiguity of Likpe to the northern Ewe tradition, it is nevertheless accepted that a majority of the songs sung by the Bakpele have been borrowed from the Ewe-speaking communities among them most especially, are Gbi, Akpini, Anfoe and Ve.

Bɔ̀bɔ̀ is not performed among Bakpele as part of funeral rituals but solely for recreation. The pre-burial stage of the funeral including wake-keeping and also post-burial

stages where mourners gather at the deceased's residence immediately after burial, are the special periods that *bɔ̀bɔ̀* dance performances feature most.

4.6.2 Band stand music

Some funerals also feature live band stands. The bands perform a variety of music including highlife at the social stages of the celebration. They play at the second half of wake keeping between the hours of 1:00 am and 4:00 am when sacred activities are supposed to have lessened. The music is played again as interlude to fill in short breaks within programmes after the burial on Saturday and also on Sunday after the thanks-giving service, in the case of Christian funerals.

4.6.3 Brass band music

Brass band music is another genre that features prominently in Bakpele Christian funerals. The music is used to accompany the celebration at the pre-burial, burial and the post-burial phases respectively. At the pre-burial phase, brass band music accompanies the procession that ushers in the hearse from the mortuary into town on Friday evening for the start of the rites. The same band features at the first half of wake keeping and at the burial service on Saturday, for Christian funerals. The band again accompanies the procession to the cemetery, and then continues its performances after burial at the deceased's residence or any designated place.

On Sunday, the band leads a procession of the bereaved family to the thanksgiving service and continues with further performances at the church service. After the church service, refreshment and recreational activities take place at the deceased's residence with the presence of a brass band to provide the musical interlude. These activities occupy the first part of the day pending *keku bɔ̀kye* (*ɔ̀ku* performances) for the rest of the afternoon.

Writing on the origin and aggregation of brass band music into the traditional set-up in Ghana, Collins, (1985) states that:

Traditional African music is flexible and ever changing from generation to generation. There have been cross-overs and feed backs [with] Western influences on African music and African influences on Western music. Those cross-over influences led to the introduction and use of western musical instruments in the country. While some African musicians started to incorporate new ideas into their music, others began playing in brass bands and writing music for these bands (P. 107).

Songs befitting funeral moods are composed by amateur musicians for brass bands. One very popular song composed by John Ekudi who is popularly known among the Bakpele as Leklembi Kosi, and hailed from Likpe Abrani is shown in Corpus 4.

Corpus 4: Mmi aɛ elo. Music by Leklembi Kosi; Notated by Hesper Adesua

Music by Leklembi Kosi
Notated by: Hesper Adesua

Mmi a lɛ E----- lo Mni a

6 lɛ E----- lo l o ku ukyɔ si mu ye wɔ ku ukyɔ si mu

11 ye wɔ ku ukyɔ si mu yɔ wɔ fɛ l'o ka wɔ ku ukyɔ si mu yɔ wɔ ku ukyɔ si mu

15 yɔ wɔ ku ukyɔ si mu yɔ wɔ fɛ l'o ka wɔ ɔ ɔ

D.C. al Fine

The song is patterned after the “mainline” highlife style also known as “Yaa Amponsah” as follows:



The text for the song in Sɛkpɛle and its literal English translated version follows.

Sɛkpɛle

English Translation

Mmi alɛ elo, mmi alɛ elo.

Hence forth, all has been accomplished.

Ku ukyuɔ ensimbu yɔ wɔ,

He will never be seen,

Fɛ l'oka wɔ.

To be insulted.

This song is either sung as a choral work in Sɛkpɛle or is performed by brass bands of which each band uses its own arrangement. Brass bands owned by the various Christian churches are now located all over Bakpele and its surrounding areas. The ensemble of a typical brass band of the Bakpele is a marching band that comprises three or four trumpets, three trombones, two euphoniums, and on rare occasions, one tuba, combined with cymbals and rattles. There is always a maze who leads the processions, thereby, performing regimental tunes.

4.6.4 Traditional court music

Traditional court music also features at Bakpele non-Christian funerals, most especially, funerals for royals and warriors, also as part of the social and not the religious aspects of the celebration. Two of these musical types, *asafo* and *ebimkpele* are special musical types that are crucial in the political life of the Bakpele. They are court music associated with chieftaincy that are performed on special state occasions including installation of a chief, enstoolment, distoolment, during a catastrophe or at the demise of a

royal or a member of the asafo group. Titon & Reck, (2005) commenting on the Ewe war songs state:

because spirits of ancestors love music and dance, funeral memorial services feature drumming, singing, and dancing. Full of the passion caused by death, funerals have replaced wars as an appropriate occasion for war drumming (P. 79).

Titon's comment is applicable to all modern African societies where war songs and drumming such as *atsiagbekɔ*, *asafo*, *fɔntɔnfrɔm*, *Bɔmaa*, *akpi* are performed as part of funeral celebrations. Besides funerals, the purpose of drumming and dance in community is as diverse and numerous as the cultural institutions. In our societies including Bakpele, there are, for example, state ceremonial dance, religious dance for divination, recreational dance and war dance. Three main war musical traditions found among Bakpele: *asafo*, *akpi* and *ebimkpele* music are discussed next.

4.6.5 Asafo music

Asafo music among Bakpele is based on the Akan traditional asafo musical structure, of which the songs are responsorial in form. In these songs, the texts express this warrior association's method of pre-war psychological preparations. The members sing to psyche themselves up, to boost their morale and to challenge each other to action. Through verbal utterances in call-and-response form and solo and chorus mode of singing, they challenge themselves as well as their opponents or enemies. My consultants explained to me that their predecessors usually performed the dance before combat, as a means to attain the required frame of mind, for a battle. They also performed it after a battle as a means of communicating what had happened on the battle field.

Asafo companies among Bakpele were formed at the instance of the traditional rulers as the highest traditional military group that protects the state and, as well, serve as special body guards to the chief. The word *asafo*, I believe is a borrowed word from Akan into *Sekpele*, which to the former, according to Saighoe, (1999) meant a host of people. Nowadays, among the Bakpele generally, the term is indiscriminately used to mean the ensemble and dance form, and the company.

The *asafoakye* (captain of the host, and war leader), is not the same as the leader or organizer of the dance band. These musical roles are shared by different people. The master drummer is however, highly honoured for his role. This respect shows the importance of drumming in the life of this *asafo* company which has high cultural significance to the state.

Among the Bakpele, *asafo* companies consist of able-bodied young men, or middle-aged men between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, who see themselves as active and strong and are dedicated to the state. Few vacancies are made available for women also.

Membership of the group is made optional though admission is restricted. Children are sometimes initiated to take the place of their ageing parents. To be admitted, one has to apply through a renowned member who guarantees on grounds of good behaviour. That after, a special orientation is given on the dos and don'ts, as well as any other special role to be assigned him the newcomer. Young initiates understudy older members until the initiates become fully grown.

Akpi is one of the most popular warrior dances found in the middle belt of Eweland of the Volta Region and which was initially performed by *asafo* companies. Bakpele might have acquired it from the surrounding Ewe-speaking communities especially the immediate one - the Gbi and other remote ones like the Akpini, Asogli and Awudome.

It is of note, however, that the people of Bakpele do not differentiate between the two genres of *asafo* and *akpi* as used discretely by the Akan and the Ewe communities respectively.

Whereas the name of the dance, and for that matter, the band is Asafo as in Akan, the music and the dance are again collectively known as asafo.

Contextual organization of akpi among the Bakpele is about the same in the Ewe akpi. Akpi music has a combination of musical instruments from the classes of membranophones, idiophones and aerophones to accompany the singing. The ensemble consists of four to five drums, bells and a horn. These instruments have local names, some referring to their characteristic rhythms and others referring to their function or size.

The Bakpele do not have established names for each of these instruments apart from *lelaba* (bell) and *libi* (drum). By this, the adjectives *keke* (small) and *kpele* (big) are used to identify the particular instrument in question. An example, is, *libi keke* (small drum) or, *lelaba kpele* (big bell). On the other hand, in order to avoid the issue of vacillation, they adopt Ewe names for these instruments. These Ewe names are *akoge* (castanets), *gakogui* (bell), *donno* (hourglass drum), *vuvi* (small drum), *asivui* (medium hand drum) *kroboto* (master drum) and *ladzo* (animal horn as a wind instrument). In *akpi* performance, the supporting instruments play basic rhythms without any wide room for variation and improvisation as the master drum does.

To end the singing or a section of it, the cantor raises the tune to the signal song in Corpus 5, to which all the singers respond in chorus.

Corpus 5: Akpivutsotso hagbe (Signal song to end akpi.

Osee yee aye aye

Folk song

Notated by Hesper Adesua

At the same time, the master drummer who is virtually the director of the ensemble signals, and the drummers altogether, end the instrumentals with a common rhythmic pattern illustrated in Corpus 6.

Corpus 6 Akpivutsotso dzezi (Rhythmic pattern to end akpi instrumentals)

4.6.6 Ebimkpelè music

Ebimkpelè is another court music that is performed at the funeral ceremony of royals or warriors among the Bakpele. It is a dance type whose cultural significance is similar to akpi, in that, they are both royals, militaristic and warring. In the performance of *ebimkpelè*, songs are sparingly introduced. The dance does not really go with vigorous singing. When they do, they are those that are meant to caution the public and performers. There are intermittent singings, shouts and appellations only to interpolate and strengthen performers. The shouts include well-known rousing cries as shown in Corpus 7.

Corpus 7: Bofu buyifo (We are capable of doing it)

With Courage
ad libitum

Folk Tune
transcribed by Hesper Adesua

Bo fo buyi fo boan te si kpio Ye ye Bo fo buyi fo boan te si
 kpio ye ye Bo fo buyi fo boan te si kpio ye ye Bo fo buyi
 fo boan te si kpio ye ye

This song was adopted from the Akan versions which have the lyrics shown below:

Chorus: *Wayae, yenim ku o* We know how to war
Yennim dwane o aye. without fleeing.

Chorus: *Yehunu amanε o; yensuro obi o;* We fear no foe in our sufferings;

Chorus: *Wayae, aduseihene o:* Chief of Adusei:

Chorus: *Wayae, maminsihene o:* Permit me passage:

The same song is sung at Kpando Agudzi in the Akpini traditional area using the following words:

Yee! Yenam nam oo Yes! We are on the move.

Yensuro ‘bia oo. We fear no one.

Yenam nam oo. We are on the move.

Yensuro ‘bia oo. We fear no one.

Wo ye wana? Woye Kwasea o. Who are you? You are a fool!

In all these illustrations in Corpus 7, the songs are conveying one single message of courage and encouragement to one another to “fight” on. Most of these songs are

philosophical or psychological carrying with them figurative expressions of motivation, insinuation or authority.

4.6.7 Social organization of *akpi* and *ebimkpɛɛ*

Drumming and dancing by warrior associations is traditionally described as stirring. Nketia, (1963) mentioned it that the stirring effect is not achieved by mere loudness, but by the peculiar timbre of their master drum. Though the master drums in *akpi* and *ebimkpɛɛ* dances are loud enough, they are also attracted by their booming sounds which are so captivating. Many people refer to these types of music as emotional because of the mood and anxiety they create for the artistes: their incitement to destroy or retaliate.

Contextual organization of *akpi* and *ebimkpɛɛ* dances among the Bakpɛɛ is about the same for the Ewes and the Akans respectively. Organization is according to the occasion and purpose of performance. The music is performed at any time of the day and any season of the year. Length of time for performance also depends on the purpose of performance. Costume for the dance originally was a smock made from animal hide. Today, the costume is a modified one, made from fabric that has been dyed brown with the reason of keeping supposed (blood) stains from being noticed easily. It is, however, forbidden to perform when not in the prescribed costume.

A closer look at *akpi* shows that performances are used either to accompany a particular procession or for a gathering of warriors of the state. In a procession, in exception of the master drummer, each instrumentalist carries his own drum, hitched to his side or hung over his shoulders. Due to the weight of the master drum, it is hung over the shoulders of another person towards his back while moving ahead of the drummer. Seating arrangement for stage performance is in horse-shoe formation creating an arena for dance. The instrumentalists sit on a form with the master drummer in the middle, flanked on both sides

by the supporting drums, while the singers stand behind them. These artistes are on the whole, surrounded by the audience.

Dance gestures in *akpi* performance vary from dancer to dancer. The dancers narrate activities of their encounter and experiences as warriors. Activities reminiscent of warfare in olden days are performed such as stalking enemies stealthily. Dancers are self-motivated to dance as individuals and to mimic their art and skills projected on the battle field by dancing with a sword or dagger in their hands. However, on rare occasions such as at the funeral of a member, they are permitted to dance with their booty from the battle field which they always kept and carry each in his pouch hanged over his shoulders. Women's dances are more graceful and their miming more feminized. On the whole, the expression of mood and feeling in performance for the occasion is carried by the dancers. On the other hand, *ebimkpɛɛ* is performed only to be danced to at gatherings or for procession of a chief riding in a palanquine.

African music is often said to be contextual in performance, unlike Western music which is more contemplative. In line with this description, the mourning audience is nonetheless, left out in the performance of these dances. Lately, all over the eveland, *akpi* and *ebimkpɛɛ* (in the case of Bakpɛɛ), both of which used to be restricted royal dance types that were used during inter-tribal warfare, no longer exist as such. These dances have gone through some modifications and have been adapted to support social and religious activities. For example, the song texts have changed from warring to social or sacred, while membership and participation are no longer restricted but opened to all choristers.

Musical instruments of varied kinds are now used. Dance movements have changed from the vigorous display of art to a mild basic hand and foot movements in response to the graceful rhythm. The dances are now performed standing in a choric arrangement, without any special arena created for dance. The mood at performances today has become juxtaposed between a warrior and a worshiper. Irrespective of their traditional values, the common

message underlying these dance types is that one is a warrior to his state, the church, society and ethnic group.

4.6.8 Tempo change in the performance of court music

In the general performance of court music, tempo is generated and maintained by the lilt and drive in the singing and dancing, imparted through the presence of a regulatory pulse which the creative performers internalize and which is often reinforced externally by handclaps. This regulative pulse or time line provides the point of reference for the soloist and the chorus, and it is the main stabilizer of tempo in the performance of *keku*, just as it is with other musical types.

In the performance of both *akpi* and *ebimkpele* among the Bakpele, however, one peculiar technique that was observed is tempo change which, most often, occurs in the middle of performances. Somewhere in the middle of these performances, there is a sturdy increase in the tempo due to these reasons which in some cases, coincide with Aning, (1972). He observed that the interaction of dance and music could alter the tempo of a performance.

He writes:

A particularly good dancer might be noticed: her dexterous movements initiating chain of reactions among spectators, instrumentalists, and singers [are noted]. There is excitement for which hearty approval is expressed in diverse ways. The master drummer and the dancer engage in an animated dialogue while the other musicians continue with their respective parts (P. 43)

He explained further that dancers entering and leaving the arena throughout the performance could incite performances. All about this drama contribute to the rise in tempo.

The change in tempo observed in the course of performing these two dances was as a result of their being royal and militaristic, and vigorous respectively. The changes are not predetermined, but come in as a result of the change in mood of the performers.

Song texts, is another contributing factor to tempo change in these two dance types. While the drama unfolds during performances, the song texts in akpi and also the shouts and cries in ebimkpele arouse emotions and thereby, increasing the intensity of hand claps and shouts. When this happens the tone of the music becomes louder and faster; the dance becomes more animated and the cycle, of cause, with its effect continues. Finally, in many performances among the Bakpele, wine is liberally supplied and consumed. This generates into exiting atmosphere which, in turn, influences the general music performance.

4.6.9 Western sacred art songs

Western sacred art songs feature prominently among Bakpele. Not only are they performed for worship and at social gatherings but also on grounds of funeral celebration as mourning songs. In general, religious songs consist of words which express the religious beliefs of a people. Two types of religious songs from the Bakpele are discussed here: Christian and Traditional worship songs. The difference in these two categories is the mention of the specific deity of each religion in the songs. Christian religious songs are characterized by the mention of God and Jesus Christ while traditional religious songs relate to their ancestors, rivers, traditional gods and other deities which serve as vice gerunds to the Almighty God. Worship songs are sung at Bakpele funerals in addition to *keku*, also not as part of the rituals but to link the mourners to God. They are songs that express sorrow and grief especially, during the time of public mourning. Traditional religious songs are sung to teach morality, truthfulness and obedience to ancestors and the gods. They are used as a social control that regulates the life of the society members. Christian religious songs are

sung to bring hope, deliverance and comfort to the bereaved family. Whatever the religious belief might be, the songs convey moral significance to society.

Songs used for the Bakpele Christian funerals comprise any of these four types: hymn, anthem, Mass or praise and worship. In the past, the Mass was sung entirely in Latin in the style of Chants. However, in recent times, masses, whether high or low, are mainly sung in the local languages of Ewe and *Sekpele*. Requiem Masses in Latin are sung only at funerals that are officiated by Catholic Priests.

In many cases, performances of the requiem mass in the local languages, the hymns, anthems and the praise and worship songs take any of the traditional dance patterns like *agbadza*, *zigi*, *gabada*, or highlife. Hymns are either sung a capella or are given strong rhythmic accompaniment using a combination of a portable organ and drums thereby, changing the genre to what is usually called praises.

Generally, anthems are sung by choirs in a four-part harmony for mixed voices (soprano, alto, tenor and bass). In most cases, the difference in anthems and hymns lies more in the texture, contents and the purposes of performance, and not the musical resources. In terms of music structures, the anthem has bigger dimensions and may, therefore, last longer in performance than the hymn, but they all employ about the same resources.

The songs in Corpora 8a, 8b and 8c are selections of Christian funeral songs that are performed at Bakpele funerals, under their respective categories.

Corpus 8a Category of Hymns

Dɔ alo lɔlɔ

(EPC HB 435)

Do lo lo - lo - to do lo na-dzu-dzo wo wo la de wo ho-la fa ko nu mie

lo wo ve vie Ye-su lo wo wu do gbe do gbe do gbe
Ye-su lo wo wu

Corpus 8b Category of Anthems

Miatɔ si le Dzifo

(Notated by Hesper Adesua)

10 le dzi fo c-ne. wo lo lo nu la mia f'a gbe wo nyc. Xo-xo kple dzi dzo le

14 mee. — Woa dzo woa dzo le xe xe sia me yi xe xea me no no

19 zu do yea ta be woa wo wo lo lo nu l'a nyi gba dzi. Woa wo De la fe —

23 lo lo nu l'a nyi gba lo lo nu l'a nyi gba dzi

Corpus 8c *Dies irae, dies illa.* (The faithful departed).

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED
Dies irae, dies illa. Vatican Plainsong.
(A.G.M.)

Verses 1-2; 7-8; 13-14
1. Di - es i - rae, di - es il - la! Sol - vet sae -

- clum in fa - vil - la, Tes - te Da - vid cum Si - byl - la.

3. Tu - ba mi - rum spar gens so - num Per se - púl -

- chra re - gi - ó - num Co - get om - nes an - te thró - num.

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Following are titles of some praise and worship songs used at Bakpele Christian funerals:

Text in Ewe

English translation

Yesu Kristo nye dzidudu flaga.

Jesus Christ is the banner of victory.

Madzra nye luvɔ do hena Dzifo.

I will preserve my soul-life for heaven.

<i>Agbe, agbe nye nu gaa ade.</i>	Life is great.
<i>Matsɔ nye nuse kata awɔ dɔ na Yesu.</i>	With all my might will I work for Jesus.
<i>Miele afɔ dem abe mɔzɔlawo ene.</i>	We are marching as onto travellers.
<i>Kakla enye nu sesie.</i>	Parting company is difficult.
<i>Wo mɔzɔzɔ la sese nutɔ.</i>	Your journey is a sad one.
<i>Afeyi fɔ menye afɔ vɛe wonye o.</i>	A journey home is not evil.

4.6.10 Agbadza

Agbadza is one of the social dances performed at Bakpele funerals. It is performed by the ewe community from Anlo and Dzodze, who are known among the Bakpele as *Awunafɔ* (people of Anlo origin) and *Sodzefɔ* (people of Dzodze origin) respectively. Agbadza groups are found in the various Bakpele towns and villages as independent dance groups, who sometimes come together from their communities to support their colleagues in one community to perform.

Membership of the group is automatic to citizens of Anlo and Dzodze, who have settled in the Bakpele communities. Vacancies also exist for all community members of Bakpele who wish to join, but who will have to apply through a member.

Stage performance is compulsory for members but optional to other mourners and sympathisers. Performance of Agbadza for purposes of mourning starts at the pre-burial stage thus, at the wake keeping. It resumes after burial, and also in the afternoon of the day after burial.

The group is invited to perform at funerals of members or their relatives and also at the invitation to any other funeral in the Bakpele community. Performance mode follows strictly that of the southern ewe zone style.

4.7 Summary of Chapter

The Bakpele are believed to be a migrant group from the middle regions of West Africa, which settled with their host, Bakwa, presently located in the Hohoe District of the Volta region. History has it that the people of Gbi applied an intentional corruption of name – Likpe to describe them following the stone-sharpening incident.

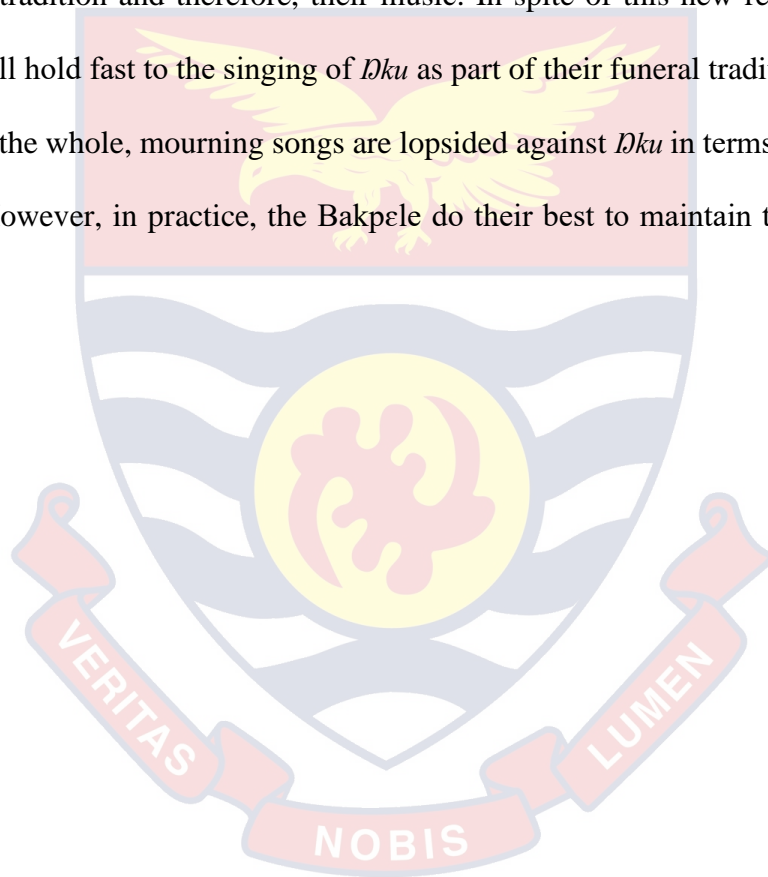
Bakpele could be described as a community in which strong personal bonds unite members. The communities are described as semi-urban in which people have similar background and life experiences. Virtually, everyone knows and shares concern for one another. Social interactions are intimate and familiar, as one might almost find among rural folk. There is a commitment to the larger social group and a sense of togetherness among community members. Bakpele relate to one another in a personal way, where they know much about everyone. People care about how the others feel in time of joy or sorrow; they have the spirit of cooperation and unity of will.

Field reports revealed that one will hardly find people of the agnostics and infidel sects among the Bakpele these days. All people living in Bakpele are found to be associated with Christianity, Islam or Traditional African religion. One will not easily find a religious-free funeral in Bakpele for these years even though the Ghana Population and Housing Census (2002) figures gave 5.3 per cent as people in the Volta Region who have no religious affiliation. With the increasing number of Christians in Bakpele, the larger number of funeral types are also Christian.

Cultural and musical traditions of the Bakpele are those that inculcate the two main religions of Christianity and African traditional religion. By this, there are other categories of funeral songs which are performed at Bakpele funerals, but which do not serve any traditional role. Performances are from a variety of mediums such as vocal, instrumentals and recorded works played from Compact Discs.

Dku have not received any substantial systemization nor documentation; moreover, it was observed that these major factors are affecting its performance: influence of Christianity, impact of western music, impact of rural-urban migration, influence of western education, modernization and western technology, and finally, lack of its documentation. One of the most influential of these factors is Christianity. The intrusion of Christianity as a religion into the Bakpele society has affected their belief, which eventually resulted in converting a lot of the natives. The coming in of a new religion with its new practices drew converts away from their tradition and therefore, their music. In spite of this new religion, however, the Bakpele still hold fast to the singing of *Dku* as part of their funeral traditions.

On the whole, mourning songs are lopsided against *Dku* in terms of usage at Bakpele funerals. However, in practice, the Bakpele do their best to maintain the originality of the tradition.



CHAPTER FIVE
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS PART TWO – THE CORPORA
(MUSICAL AND TEXTUAL ANALYSIS)

5.0 Overview

This chapter begins with discussions on the functions of *Dku* in their funeral contexts, to which a good deal of the Bakpele social worldview are attributed. The chapter also systemized samples of songs collected, on the five phases of a normal Bakpele funeral.

Comments from the fieldwork revealed that variations in the organization of the various funeral types of the Bakpele are not generally, reflected in their dirges. It was therefore, sufficient for the purpose of this study, to consider *Dku* in their general terms, without going into the details of particular funeral traditions relating to normal death, premature death, religious or non-religious funerals. A normal funeral of the Bakpele follows a five-phase ceremony of which each of these phases is a sequel to the other. The phases are pronouncement of death, pre-burial activities, burial activities, post-burial activities and the subsequent mourning. The paragraphs that follow are discussions on the interplay of *Dku* and rituals at the various phases of the celebration.

5.1 Pronouncement of death

Pronouncement of death is the first phase of the funeral celebration. When it is finally realized that the person is panting for breath, few drops of water are passed through his throat, as it is done in most African societies for about the same symbolic reasons. The cultural significance is to relieve the dying person of his stress and also to show that people were present at the time of his death, and for that matter, he did not die in the wilderness but at home. An omission of this last drink renders the death more sorrowful.

When the last breath is drawn, a special announcement of the death is made immediately either by wailing or by sounding appellations on the *Blilo* (signal drum). Each clan of the Bakpɛle has its unique text for appellation, which is understood by all adults of the community. The three clans of Likpe Kukurantumi, for example, have the following texts for summoning or communicating with the community:

Clan	Text	Translation
Besuma clan	<i>Onipa kyiri me</i>	mankind hates me.
Kale Lukuɔ	(1) <i>Twere Abrade</i>	Lean on Abrade (a name).
	(2) <i>Ogya 'tu kurom</i>	Fire has engulfed the town.
Bayabi clan	(1) <i>Kyiri amono, di amono.</i>	Hates the raw but eats the raw.
	(2) <i>Bruku bruku</i>	I (chief) pick them like grains.

Kale Lukuɔ, being the warlords of the town has two texts. Text number one - *Twere Abrade* is that which is used for all gatherings of the clan, while number two- *Ogya 'tu kurom* is used for the town, in times of war or a catastrophe. Similarly, Bayabi clan, being the custodian has text number one - *Kyiri amono*, for the clan's gatherings while text number two - *Bruku bruku* is used by the chief of the town. These texts are played repeatedly for about 3 to 5 times, as the drummer so wishes, for each cycle.

At the sounding of *blilo*, all adults converge at the residence of the head of clan concerned, who eventually breaks the news of the death. A photograph of *blilo* is shown in Figure 5.1 and the playing position is in Figure 5.2 respectively.



Figure 5.1: Blilo (Signal drum) from Bakpɛle



Figure 5.2: Blilo from Bakpɛle in a playing position

Amidst the wailing and weeping, cries of the names of the deceased by which he is known to the various relations and friends are heard. Here, some of the wailers spontaneously burst into the singing of keku to show their disgust for what has happened. The singing at this stage is not in any organized way but by-and-large, other wailers join to make it partial group singing. This is the first pronouncement of keku in a funeral. The song excerpts in Corpora 9, 10, and 11 are three examples of these songs.

Corpus 9 Ayo leba (Homes have become desolate)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

A yo le ba le ba le ba__ A yo le ba le ba le ba__ A yo le
 ba lo yo

Corpus 10 Atɔni kele (Everything including firewoods)



Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo
 Ke le ko le me ke le a to ni am be me

Chorus
 ke le ko le me ke le e

Solo
 an to me be bi kya

Chorus
 ke le ko le me ke le e ke le ko le me ke le e

Solo
 ke le ko le me ke le a to ni

Chorus
 ke le

Corpus 11 Akyeakpoli (The Allied Hornbill)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

The musical score is presented in five systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 6/8. The lyrics are: "A kyea kpo lie----- mia me ne nie wo dzi mia me ne nie ga su so-----". The systems are labeled as follows: the first system is for a Soloist (measures 7-12), the second for a Soloist (measures 13-18), the third for a Chorus (measures 19-24), the fourth for a Soloist (measures 25-30), and the fifth for a Chorus (measures 31-36). The piano accompaniment consists of a simple harmonic accompaniment in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

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In some cases, depending on the status of the deceased in society, the death is not announced immediately. Examples of such cases are that the person is a royal or a head of family, a medicine man or that the person died at a ripe age and whose death did not come as a surprise to the family. In all cases, the cause of death is later revealed by ordeal, diviners and medicine men, or sometimes by the spirit of the deceased himself through a medium. The nature and type of death, as revealed, therefore, determines the type of funeral to be held

for him. A date for the funeral is then decided on and the news of death and funeral spread to those who relate the deceased in one way or the other.

In these days, after the social pronouncement of the death, the family then proceeds with the legal documentation of the death. Ghana's law requires that a burial permit is processed and this is done using the local vital records through the birth and death registration for the issuance of the burial permit.

5.2 Pre-Burial Activities

The second phase of the funeral ceremony then follows with preparations for wake keeping and for the body to be laid in state. *Dku* are sung during wake keeping while the body is confined in a room. In the songs, the circumstances surrounding the death are some of the questions raised by way of spoken words to interpolate the singing. Questions like: "what has been the cause of your death; what is it that happened to you; how far have you gone on your journey?"

The washing, dressing and laying in state of the deceased are mostly the duties of the elderly women in the family. In most cases, this duty is carried out by the nieces of the deceased so as to prevent the disclosure of any disgraceful thing that might be found on the deceased. The hair and finger as well as toe nails are not tempered with at all since it is these parts of the body that are believed to represent the soul of the deceased.

Singing continues throughout the night to the dawn of day ending up with a special type of dirge which I will call "adult laments" to differentiate it from "children laments". The examples of songs that follow in Corpora 12, 13, 14 and 15 are sung to traditionally greet the corpse, and also to presumably seek for permission from the deceased to wash its body respectively.

Corpus 12 Akukɔ di kɛnyɛ (The rooster has crowed)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo

A ku ko di ke nye li ya — o li ya ma o e A ku ko di ke nyeo a yo

Corpus 13 kɛnyɛ kamɔ̄ diala ni (Our vows which we vowed)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo

Ke ye ka me dia la ni — a ka mo bo so

4
yee — ke ye ka me dia la ni — a ka mo bo so

8
yee — a ka mo bo so yee —

Corpus 14 Bekyese mɛ (Send me [wealth])

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Le bi ye e ti kio bekye se me Be kye se me se ke se keo Beti di Bekyese me keo

7
Be kye se me se keo Be kye se meo Le bi ye e ti ko Bekyese meo Be kye se meo

7

Corpus 15 Bekyi aya kankankwa (They go naked)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Be kyi a ya kon ko ni ko Ukyue bu te bu te u ku se le te ke nye ka le lam

4 kpa Be kyi a ya kon ko ni ko o

7 The scale construct

The image shows three staves of musical notation. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of lyrics. The second staff starts with a measure rest (marked '4') followed by the melody for the second line of lyrics. The third staff is a scale construct, starting with a measure rest (marked '7') followed by a sequence of notes.

Three of these songs were sung at Likpe Bala at one of the funerals that I covered. I became obsessed with how the women were able to convey sadness and a state of melancholy through these three pieces. The idea behind these laments is far different in context from the Akan *adasuom* where basically, *nnwonkrɔ*, *kete* or *fɔntɔnfrɔm* are performed at the dawn of wake keeping to create awareness and to also announce the death to those who might not as yet heard of it. Bakpele adult laments always go with religious connotations.

The public is not allowed to see the women do the washing of the body because these are considered sacred rites. After washing the body, the corpse is dressed in rich shrouds or cloth, and native beads or jewellery, and then laid in state in a well decorated room or under a canopy in the open, for mourning and public viewing. The laying in state takes place either at the deceased's own residence, that of his father's, or at the family house. While the body is lying in state, relatives, friends and other sympathizers come to mourn with the bereaved family and to pay their last respect to the deceased.

The arrival of mourners to the funeral ground is mostly accompanied by weeping. Usually, elderly women who are close relatives volunteer to sit by the bed side to receive sympathizers. So also, nieces and grandchildren, if any, are selected and assigned to fan the body to drive away supposed flies. At this stage, women surround the bed or gather not too

far away from the bedside to perform keku. Keku of varied texts are sung to convey different messages to the other mourners. Songs that follow in Corpora 16, 17, and 18 are examples of those sung at this stage.

Corpus 16 *Ntasini mbe* (I would have opened to have a glimpse)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

The musical score is written in 6/8 time and consists of six systems of music. Each system includes a Solo part and a Chorus part. The lyrics are as follows:

System 1:
 Solo: Na ta si nim be Na ta si nim be Na ta si nim be
 Chorus: (rest)

System 2:
 Solo: Na ta si nim be Na ta si nim be fe ne lo Na ta si nim be Na ta
 Chorus: (rest)

System 3:
 Solo: si nim be Na ta si nim be Na ta si nim be Na ta
 Chorus: (rest)

System 4:
 Solo: si nim be fe le lo
 Chorus: (rest)

Ntasini mbe literally meaning “I would have opened (the coffin) to have a glimpse of it (the body)”, is one of the gravely slow songs, one about rekindling lost love.

Corpus 17 Kpɔm duu (Stir at me)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Kpɔm mu du me vie me ɔi nawo, Kpɔ mu duu me vie me ɔi nawo Kpɔ mu
 duu me vie me ɔi lo ne Kpɔ mu duu me vie me ɔi nawo Kpɔ mu
 duu me vie me ɔi nawo, Kpɔ mu duu me vie me ɔi nawo Kpɔ mu duu me vie me
 ɔi lo ne kpɔm mu duu me vie me ɔi nawo

Corpus 18 Akpa maye ntu mɔ (Do I catch them up on foot)?

Notated by Hesper Adesua

A kpa ma yen tu me___ A kpa ma yen tu me___ u
 du o___ o to lo___ a kpa ma ye ntu me___

Prayers are said and libation made for various reasons. This section of mourning starts in the morning and continues through to the time of burial at close to midday, when all expected close relatives, who for one reason or the other could not arrive the previous evening for the wake keeping, should have arrived, to also view the body. In the case of

women, the body is then conveyed from her matrimonial home and handed over to her biological home for the rest of the rites.

5.3 Burial Activities

Burial is the third phase of Bakpele funerals. This phase is the most dramatic and most sorrowful period of the celebration. Towards the end of public mourning, the widow or widower is called upon to say his/her final farewell message to the spirit of the deceased.

Close family relations like the spouse, children and grandchildren, and the selected next-of-kin are made to present items of clothing, mat and pillow to the dead for his burial.

Before the corpse is put into the coffin, the head of the clan is officially invited to make libation to physically separate the deceased from the family, friends and the community. After that the rich and expensive dresses and jewellery that are used to adorn the body in state are removed and replaced with much simpler shrouds, one described as *Mzɔwu* (dress for the journey) - a word conveniently borrowed from the Ewe language. At the time of closing the coffin, there is much weeping, wailing and singing of more dirges that carry goodwill messages. Circumstances of farewell are reflected in the dirges.

The mode of singing at this time is not in any organized form because of the weeping and wailing that over shadow all the other events. The coffin containing the corpse is then sealed and lifted shoulder high ready for the procession to the burial ground. On the other hand, if the funeral is being organized in the name of a Christian denomination, the body is conveyed to the chapel or, the said Christian group is made to take over with the burial service at the open where the body was laid in state.

The procession to the cemetery is accompanied by the singing of keku this time, by both men and women with intermittent singing of secular songs by the youth to break the boredom of sadness and also to gather momentum to convey the coffin. There is also the

singing of sacred songs in the case of Christian funerals. The excerpts in Corpora 19, 20, 21 and 22 are samples of keku that are sung during procession to the burial ground.

Corpus 19 Bikyô mē afanto (Leave me a sign of leaves)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo

Le be yon kwan ta bi kye mea fan to

Corpus 20 Lə esu buəsiəsə mə (Extend our greetings to them).

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Le su bue sie se me le su bue sie se me Le

Su bue sie se me le su bue sie se me lo

Corpus 21 Udu, weinsi əmbə bubə. (He / she is gone not to come again).

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo

U du o wein siem ba bu bao u do o wein siem

ba bu bao u du o wein siem ba bu ba u du o wein siem

ba bu bao u du o wein siem ba bu bao

The text of this song, however, negates the traditional concept of reincarnation among the Bakpele.

Corpus 22 Nyemenya ku kae wui o. (I don't know the cause of his death)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo

Nyeme nya ku ka e wuio a da tsi la ge Nyeme nya ku ka e

5
wuio a da tsi la ge ne dzi me le fowo na gbu gbo

Corpus 23 Edu vo edzo (He /she has consumed everything and is gone)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Wo du vo wo dzo
(E) (E)

The journey back from the cemetery is always without any singing.

Oyokɔ is most often buried at night in a grave hewed in a room. At a certain stage of the *oyokɔ* burial, when the coffin has been lowered into the grave, young nephews numbering about six are organized for one of the complex rites which is called *sitɔ bumu* (*Covering with soil*). In this rite, the nephews mould clay from the soil of the grave, and walk backwards in a straight line around the grave, accompanied by an adult lament sung by fairly elderly women who sit at one side of the room to direct affairs. At a point in time of the singing, these nephews, all together, bounce their balls of clay on the coffin which is already lowered into the grave. This rite is repeated for about three times after which the burial rites continue to the next stage. The excerpt in Corpus 24 is sung to accompany this rite.

Corpus 24 Bimu wə site (Cover him with soil)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Bi mu we si teo bu be we si le bu mu nee Bi mu we si

6
teo bu bewe si te bu mu nee e..

5.4 Post-Burial Activities

Soon after burial, the performance of keku becomes highly reduced for that day. At the deceased's residence and other family houses, social dance groups gather to perform different types of music. Some of the music is played from compact discs, and others sung by church choirs, depending on the choice of the family. These performing groups are invited to perform in order to console and mourn with the bereaved families and also to entertain other mourners. At this same time, relatives of the deceased attend to their guests, providing them with heavy meals like rice, banku or fufu as well as locally brewed drinks. Funeral donations are made to the bereaved family and individuals in the form of assorted meals and local drinks. Sympathizers who could not prepare meals donate in cash instead. These donations are not as high as it is done in the Akan funerals. Individual donations are not announced either.

The Bakpele hold their funerals on any day of the week, with the exception of the traditional sacred day (*Lebɔɔ*) which falls on every other fifth day of the previous sacred day. Private burials are not common except for royals. Today, most of their funerals are held at weekends over a 3-day period. The body is brought home on Fridays and buried on Saturdays. The day of the week notwithstanding, celebrations follow immediately after burial

except for those of chiefs and other royals. In contrast, most Akan funerals are held on Saturdays, and occasionally, on Thursdays where mourners gather sitting in a circular form to receive sympathizers through customary greetings, in shaking of hands. After the customary greetings, the circumstances of the death are narrated to visitors who could not attend the wake keeping and burial ceremonies. The visitors are then invited to a home nearby to be served with drinks, after which they also return to the funeral ground to give their donations in return.

Sarpong, (1974:30), narrating the Akan type of funerals noted that the most important aspect of the funeral is the presentation of gifts in the form of money known in Akan as *Nsawa* to the bereaved family. How much to be given depends upon the type and quantity of drinks given to the sympathizers. Announcements are made to mention the donor and how much was donated.

Bakpele, unlike the Akans, do not celebrate elaborate funerals though they equally hold complex religious rites before, during and after the burial. The rites comprise making of libation and singing of *keku*, as the most important part of the celebration for both men and women respectively. All these are aimed at properly seeing the deceased off into the spiritual world. These rites go on side-by-side proper feeding of mourners and visitors.

The Bakpele, do not attach too much importance to the monetary aspect of a funeral but just that the mourner's presence was enough. At best, a bowl of meal or some locally brewed wine is presented to the family to be used in serving visitors. Few people add some amount of money to the meals. On the other hand, mourners from outside the town who, because of inconveniences, could not prepare meals present some drinks and money as their support to the family.

The afternoon of the first day after burial is highly marked with the performance of *keku*. Mourners wail and sing funeral songs in memory of the deceased. Women all over the community come together at the deceased's residence and periodically, they move to and

fro, parading the streets performing keku in a very well-organized way (*Mmomomme in Akan*).

This stage of the celebration is noted to be the peak of keku performance in Bakpele funerals. A variety of keku spanning occasional, recreational and incidental are performed to mourn and to console one another. The afternoon's programme starts with songs of consolation and ends with recreational songs.

Activities of the afternoon also include spontaneous enactment of mannerisms of the deceased while alive. The songs are those that depict the social, philosophical and psychological realms of humankind. Figures 5.3 and 5.4 show sections of women performing keku and also enacting plays for recreation respectively.



Figure 5.3: Women performing keku



Figure 5.4: Women enacting plays during keku performance

At this stage of the ceremony, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, if any, also parade the streets holding walking sticks as they sing their type of lament, which I will call for the purpose of this study “children’s laments” to differentiate it from “adult laments.” Corpus 25 so far, is the only known song for children’s lament. Figure 5.5 shows a section of grandchildren parading the streets, while singing their type of lament in Corpus 25.



Figure 5.5: Children performing laments

Corpus 25 Owe likpɔ o? Ewu likpɔ o. (But who is dead? Grandma is dead).

Notated by Hesper Adesua

O woe li kpeo Ewu li kpeo? O woe li kpeo? Ewu li U kpe tsya woem

kpe to se ken te saa yo wee U kpe tsya woem kpe to se ken

te saa yoo we se kea te *D.S. al Fine*

These two performances thus, adult keku and Children's laments occupy the whole afternoon until the tired women (and children, where applicable) retire one after the other just as they trickled in. In a normal funeral, Bakpele mourn their deceased persons for three days for which the funeral is considered to have temporarily ended pending the subsequent mourning. Deceased persons are remembered also on the eighth day, the ninetieth day and finally, a year after burial. Under special circumstances however, where the deceased is branded a witch or wizard, the three months, or ninetieth days' rites are all compressed to three days.

5.5 Subsequent Mourning

The fifth and final phase of Bakpele funeral is that of the third months' rite where the elderly in the community join the family to re-visit, disband and bequeath the property of the

deceased that have been kept in confinement over this period. For, it is believed that this is the time that the ghost of the deceased finally departs this world to the underworld. This belief, however, is in contrast to the Christian view where the ghost is believed to finally depart the earth on the fortieth day of death (Holy Bible, 2003:336).

In the performance of the ninetieth day rites, keku in the form of adult laments, are sung only for female adult deceases and not for the males. Three examples of the songs are illustrated in Corpora 26, 27 and 28 respectively.\

Corpus 26 *Befia wô diyo (Bequeath her property)*

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo
Bu be di yo bo fia ne Bo fia we di yo

Chorus

5
Bu be di yo bo fia ne Ba fia we di yo

5

Corpus 27 *Owan ntɔ (Cooked a meal of ashes)*

Notated by Hesper Adesua

U biam be le wan η tɔ ba di dio, ba di

5
dio e U biam be le wan η tɔ a yoo.

Corpus 28 *Minni okpa; bala me* (I am not a dog to be driven away)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Minn nio kpao... Ba la me sa sa sa sa sa ne...

minn nio kpa o... Ba la me e... min nio

kpao... ba la me... ba la me sa sa sa sa sa sa

For some families, this stage of phase five ends the funeral celebration. Few families, according to their capability, gather to briefly celebrate the first anniversary of their dead relative. At this stage of the celebration, keku is not sung at all. It is all joy and merry-making because it is believed that their deceased person has been cleared of any witchcraft branding and so has been counted among the state’s ancestors, if he died at a ripe age.

5.6 Organization and Performance Practice

Dku in the Bakpele funeral tradition are organized as an adult female institution. Nketia, (1966:24) writes: “the most common basis of musical organization is age and sex.” According to him, in many African societies, a majority of musical types are performed by adults and these may also be sub-divided by sex.

Membership of keku performance is not restricted but opened to all female adults irrespective of their ability to sing well or not. There is no standing group identified as keku performers, apart from the cantors who are generally accepted to be present at all performances because of their role as experts in leading the songs. One can conveniently classify keku as an acephalous group that is organized at the instance of time, as the women come together, on their own accord, to make music needed for the occasion. There are no special applications put in as permission to perform. This is how Nketia, (1974) puts it:

Participation in music in Africa may be spontaneous and voluntary; or, it may be an obligation imposed by one's membership of a social group. It could be a responsibility attached to one's position in society or it could be an economic necessity (P.39).

There are principles underlying the organization and performance of *Dku* as occasional music. Performance place, day, time, and repertoire depend largely on the phase of the funeral celebration. However, no special costume is needed for its performance, apart from a few of the women who may appear in the usual funeral cloth of black, red or white colours. Songs are not selected ahead of performance. Tunes are raised spontaneously according to the emotions of the time.

Bakpele eto *Dku* have marked correlations in matters of form and content, with the details of funerary rites. This is to say, there are special songs prescribed for the particular stages within the ceremony. This tradition from Bakpele is similar to that of Benin but in contrast to that of the Akan people of Ghana, according to Herskovits, (in Nketia, 1955:6).

The Bakpele have, for example, songs to traditionally greet the corpse, songs to traditionally seek for permission from the corpse to wash its body, and songs to narrate the type of life the deceased led while on earth. There are also songs that are sung at the breaking of the hearth at the 90th day rites of adult women. There are special songs incorporated into enactment of plays, for, at some stages, the recreational music which the deceased person

enjoyed while on earth are sung and enacted by those who came to touch with him. In this way, *Dku* perform religious, consolatory and recreational roles. We can say then that *Dku* satisfy the three types of music making in the African society thus: occasional, recreational, and incidental.

5.6.1 Instrumentation in *Dku*

Bakpele eto keku has the voice as its principal and most important instrument. By reason of its links to African traditional music, hand clapping has been an integral part of its instrumentation. Hand claps are done together with the stamping of the feet to provide percussive effect and also maintain a rhythmic pulse for singing and dancing.

5.6.2 Singing and Dancing in *Dku*

Bakpele eto *Dku* are performed under two categories: pieces solely meant for divination and those meant to be danced to. Dance is part of *Dku* performances. Dance in *Dku* are about the same in all Bakpele towns and settlements. Dance by way of body movements accompanies the singing to express the mourners' attitudes and reactions to the event of death and the loss of a relative. The few exceptions to this generalization among the Bakpele are the isolated cases of *Dku* that are associated with ceremonies of divination where some of the songs are more contextual than dance-prompting.

In singing, clean attacks at the entry points do not matter much. Some singers start the chorus earlier, while others stagger the entries but making sure that they converge towards the middle of the song, while ending at about the same time. What is needed of the singers most is knowledge of when the solo ends and when to enter as the chorus. Soon as the chorus recedes, the solo takes over for yet another cycle.

There are variations each time the same music is performed, which is typical of African music. These variations may be textual, inflections in the melody or both, but not in the structure. The chorus is a more stable section, with few variations introduced by the individual singers. In contrast, the solo portion which is often varied to some extent gives the singer the opportunity for extemporization or adaption of the song to fit into different situations; she could bring in specific situations in respect of the deceased's family life for example, to reflect that the deceased was the bread winner. This variation enables the same song to be repeated over and over to end a cycle, or, till another leader is ready to start a new song.

In performing the dance, all the dancers move rhythmically, with each performer demarcating a stage for herself but occasionally crossing the imaginary markings as they get carried away. The tempo between the link of the solo and the chorus sections, together with the dance is well regulated and synchronized. The dances are most often moderately fast, but full of variations according to the changes in the tempo of the songs. The dancers stagger their entry points to create a varying on-beat and off-beat rhythmic movements to correspond with the song which dictates the pace.

The dance comes in different formations like serpentine, spiral, zigzag, lineal (forward and backwards) and also circular, all aimed at creating the beauty of the performance. The dancers employ the three movement levels in their dance thus, high and middle and low levels. They are at certain times upright and other times bent to the middle level or even stoop, according to their emotions and will. Dancers use the basic dance movements in the form of steps which involves normal walking, jumps, hops (taking off on one foot and landing on the same foot continuously with the other leg hanging), and also leaps (taking off from one foot into the air and landing on the other foot by a step away).

At the end of the second section of singing a song, all the performers halt their dance at the last note of the song. At that rest position, and in a relaxed manner, they offer a single

clap, while throwing their hands away from their bodies and jerking out their necks as a sign of disgust for what has happened. Here, the dancers' message through the body language is effectively put across. This ends one cycle of performance, as all the

performers pause for the start of another cycle with either the same cantor or another and with a repeat of the song or a change to a different one.

5.7 Changing Roles

The performance of *Dku* is experiencing changes just as the society it serves is changing. This downward trend in the level of performance resulted in changing roles and structures so as to keep tradition going on. There are many mourning songs that are adopted and adapted as substitutes and complements to *Dku*. At some funerals in recent times, *keku* was not performed at the expected phases. For example, the adult laments were replaced by the singing of sacred art songs. Congregational singing ranging from devotional songs, through hymns to anthems dominate some of these funerals. Songs are thematically selected to console or otherwise, to play the specific roles needed at the various phases of the funeral ceremony. On the other hand, varied types of contemporary songs recorded on compact discs are played. Similarly, traditional dance groups, prominent among them being *bɔbɔbɔ*, have been used as substitutes to *Dku*.

One may ask for causes of the changing roles in the level of performance and of repertory in the Bakpele communities. In answer to this question, six major contributing factors were identified from the focus group discussion sessions. These are stated below:

- Influence of Christianity;
- Impact of western music;
- Impact of rural-urban migration;

- Influence of western education;
- Modernization and western technology; and finally,
- Lack of documentation of keku.

5.8 Musical Analyses

5.8.1 Elements in keku

In systemizing the musical elements, I dealt with the attributes of sound under the elements of pitch, tuning and scale system, timber, dynamics, and rhythm as suggested by Kamien, (1994:2-6), looking at only the melodic analysis of the songs.

5.8.2 Notation

For purposes of systemizing keku, I notated the samples of songs that I selected into scores. This is in consonance with Arom, (1994) that:

Written support is indispensable for any academic study, and, music is no exception to this rule; for, it would seem extremely difficult to analyse [the music] in-depth unless it is first reduced to the form of a written score (P. 7794).

Although some of the pitch level of my scores do not correspond exactly to those of equal temperament, they are near enough to make use of the staff for illustration. The treble staff notation which I used here for illustrations is the same as the western orthodox type of five lines and four spaces. I notated the songs in only two keys - the “C” natural key and “F” major, irrespective of the actual key in which they were sung. This is to minimize the inconveniences of key fluctuations. The end point pitches of scoops, inflections and slides

as notated, are not exact but a matter of exaggeration. Similarly, the hand claps are marked as indefinite pitches.

5.8.3 The scale system

Dku in general, are of varied narrow and wide range tones depending on the stage of the rituals. When I reduced the songs that I collected into constructs, I realized that these songs were sung in different tonalities. There are songs of pentatonic and tritonic scales. Most of the songs that I classified as "dirges in general" are based on the pentatonic tonality comprising the following notes: *d, r, m, s, l*. An examination of the adult laments and their scale construct indicates that chromatic changes affect second and third degrees of the scale creating microtones thereby, suggesting modal keys. These second and third degree notes appear as accidentals in the melody, as illustrated in Corpus 21.

Corpus 15 Bekyi aya (They go naked)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Be kyi a ya kon ko ni ko U kyue bu te bu te u ku se le te ke nye ka le lam
kpa Be kyi a ya kon ko ni ko o_____

The scale constructs

Notated by Hesper Adesua

The Bakpele are not Ewe-speaking even though they are located in the northern part of the region. For that matter, this finding on the scale system does not agree with Agordoh (2002:94) that among the northern Ewe, the heptatonic (seven-tone) scale is used, while the Anlo-Tongu people use any of these pentatonic scales: *d, r, m, s, l* (five notes); or *d, r, m, l, t* (five notes).

The choice of any of these tonal centres hinges so much on the mood of the performers in relation to the activity of the ritual that is being performed and the type of song that is needed to accompany that ritual. At the start of some of the songs, the voices seem to vacillate to the key above or below thereby, changing the tonal centre, until they come to settle at one pitch of convenience. The choice of pitch does not depend only on the range of the song itself but also on the compass of the singers, most especially, the lead singer. One strong feature of keku is that it is music with sliding end notes. A lot of the songs have sliding end notes.

5.8 4 Tempo

In its combined function as the metronome and a percussive instrument, the beats of the hand-clap sometimes coincide with melodic accents, while in other cases, the clap falls in between the stressed voice tones, creating an off-beat effect. I observed that generally, the songs that I sampled out have a common rhythmic pattern of anacrusic beginning. The songs begin on different degrees of the last beat of the bar. The off-beat beginning is illustrated in Corpus 17.

Corpus 17 Anacrusic beginning

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Claps

Kpo mu duu me vie me dina wo kpo mu duu me vie me di nawo kpo mu

The adult laments have melodies which are in a steady slow free time with conjunct movements and having many inflections. The tempo is slow with lots of syncopation. The women sing while staggering the entry points. The mood is melancholic, meant to convey a message to the deceased (presuming that they hear, as one of my consultants reported that they do).

Apart from the adult lament which are sung at the speed of Andante that is about 72 crotchet beats in a minute, most of the pieces are performed at the tempo of normal speed or at a speed of not more than 120 crotchet beats in a minute. In addition to that, most of the songs are performed in a legato style to match the syncopation.

5.8.5 Rhythm

In the same way, the durational values of notes correspond to the durational value of syllables in the text resulting in the melodic rhythm matching speech rhythm while melodic contour moves as the speech contour. These two movements put the music into strict time with the language. An illustration of this rhythmic structure is demonstrated in Corpus 17.

There are, however, in some other examples of music that I recorded, where both the solo and its response moved in a free rhythmic style. Nketia, (1974) wrote the following:

West African music is noted for different interlocking patterns that create complex polyrhythm. This complexity is usually held together by a steady time line, which is played on a bell or stick clappers or by the clap of hands (P. 168).

Nketia, (1974) continued that:

African songs embody two types of rhythms: free rhythm and rhythm in strict time. In the former, there is no feeling of a regular basic pulse, no hand clapping or any suggestion of a metronomic background. Movements done to such music are based on the performers' subjective choice of pulse rather than on a pulse derived from the music itself. Songs in strict time, on the other hand, are designed over a regular basic pulse (P. 168).

Nketia, (in Agordoh, 2005) wrote:

Traditional [...] music may have a linear organization in free or strict time, and in the latter case the metre is either predominantly duple or based on a combination of duple and triple motifs. An important element in the organization of rhythm is the ordering of patterns into phrases and the control of lengths and phrases (P. 85).

Keku performed in free rhythmic style is illustrated in Corpus 28 - *Minni okpa*. (I am not a dog).

5.8.6 Tonality

The Bakpele sing their dirges in unison even though they use the heptatonic scale. This tonality of singing is at variance with Agordoh, (2005:85) that: "most societies which have pentatonic traditions sing in unison, and those which have heptatonic (7-note scale)

tradition sing in patrietal 3rds throughout as in Akan tradition, or end in unison at a final cadence.” For the fact that the Bakpele sing their dirge in unison, I limited the analyses of musical tonality for this study to melodic.

5.8.7 The melody

The melodic contour for keku in general varies from simple to multiple, using different forms of idioms like repetitions, sequences, imitations and passing notes in the phrases. In taking one unit of a song as a section, the melodies are made up of one or two line phrases (units) which are sung repeatedly over a four-line musical section in a sequential order. In this way, the melody can be described as a ditty. That is to say it follows an African style of setting short texts or short poems to music.

The instrumental parts (hand claps) and song melodies of keku are organized by cycles. There are repeating patterns that usually last for 4, 8, or 16, beats. These cycles are usually syncopated patterns that repeat throughout the piece.

5.8.8 Vocal style

The Bakpele sing with open voices. This same observation has been generalized by Agordoh, (2005:85) that “the Ghanaian vocal style is varied, some societies, for example, the Akans and Ga use an open vocal quality, while the Frafra and the Kusasi use a tensor quality.”

Dynamics in keku vary from activity to activity. Songs for the adult laments are calm and cool while those for the other activities are comparatively brighter and vigorous in order to add the spirit of dance to the singing. The voice of the leader is usually screechy and loud, staying at a relatively high intensity. This voice submissively combined with her timbre,

slides downwards at the end of the solo call to give her a slightly innocent call-for-rescue sound which is dramatically answered by the chorus.

The adult laments are sung in a soft and mellowed mood. Both the solo and the chorus are sung undertone creating a dejected environment catchy on everyone present. On the contrary, the dance tunes are pitched high making the song sound a little brighter than laments though, still in the same melancholic mood. While the solo calls are loud enough to match the size of her audience, the chorus responses are audible and clear. They have a repeated dynamic pattern of being moderately soft at the entering of the choruses, rising to build up tension to arouse sorrowful emotions. The voices return to a gradual diminuendo to end the cycle in a downward scoop. Falling release at phrase terminals is the style of singing. The children lament, on the other hand, is bright and cheerful. Dynamics vary from performance to performance and also from performer to performer.

5.8.9 Text setting in keku

The melodic contour together with the elements of musical structure in terms of their relations to the text, shows that text-setting keku is syllabic. Each syllable of the text is assigned to separate notes. This made the text in each song to stand out clearly. The tonal pattern of the language (Sɛkpɛle) puts some constrains on the melodic patterns of the songs. This confirms Schmidt-Jones' (2002) assertion that many African languages are tonal, leading to a close connection between them and their music. He continued that in singing, the tonal pattern of the text moderates the melodic patterns. A native speaker of the language can, therefore, often perceive the texts in a song easier than an outsider will do. My knowledge of Sɛkpɛle, thus, made it very easy for me to translate the music contextually.

5.9 Analysis of Keku Structure

This part of my work explains the way musical sections and units combine to create the form for keku. I analysed the musical structures of keku diachronically, looking at the content of the songs through the five stages of a normal funeral. In doing this, I related the musical content to the context Nketia, (1969) observes this of structural analyses:

Contextual analysis, which relates the sound, structure, song texts, musical items and musical types to the context of society or the general context of culture which is viewed synchronically or diachronically is extremely important in African music (P. 19).

5.9.1 Form in keku

The basic structure for keku is the call-and-response form which Nketia (1969:16) calls linear structure and which is so typical of African songs. Keku songs are structured into two sections of “A” and “B”. Section “A” is the solo call by the lead singer who sings through the entire song. While she sings, the other performers accompany her with claps to mark the pulse. They do this with a gentle and graceful rocking of the body, as they stamp their feet rhythmically to mark the time, and at the same time express their feelings for the song by swaying from side to side. This is the only section in keku performance where there is an instrumental accompaniment, to the singing. The accompaniment, however, stops with the soloist at the end of the call section. Immediately the solo ends, the chorus joins in unison, accompanied with the dance. Section “B” is marked by the chorus in unison accompanied with the dance. Nketia, (1973) identifies two types of call-and–response in these words:

There are two main forms: songs in which the solo and chorus portions are different and together they form the basic unit of the song.... and those in

which the solo and the chorus portions are similar and in which the chorus merely repeats or simulates what the cantor has sung (P. 7).

In keku, the solo and the chorus sections are the same with regard to the melody. The chorus merely repeats what the cantor sings. The melody for a song basically splits up into “A” and “B” sections; “A” section being the call and “B” whose melody is the same as “A” coming in as the response. There is generally a lead singer who calls out the first section and which is chorused in unison in the second section, but making the chorus more danceable, even though, without any instrumental accompaniment.

5.10 Summary of Chapter

A proper and up-to-date way of celebrating funerals is of vital importance to the Bakpele because of the fear and anxiety that surround death. In this sense, in order to maintain the standard, systemization and documentation of literature about keku are much of a necessity to them. This understanding notwithstanding, much about this institution will perish with the passing away of the aged.

In much the same way, in a rapidly changing society such as Ghana, where everyone (ethnic group) is reaching out for new forms of expression in social and cultural life, as well as in music literature and the art, the study and the documentation of African heritage of folk music is of particular importance, for, as Nketia (1973:1) notes, “it is in this idiom that African musical values that were developed over the ages are enshrined.” Preservation and proper presentation of this tradition is highly needed to save the loss of this tradition.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSIONS

6.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the presentations according to the field questions. The chapter begins with thematic discussions on the non-musical data to answer field questions one, two and three. Here, non-musical aspects like values, social styles, performance and change are discussed in relation to the worldview of the people of Bakpele. The chapter continues by analysing the musical resources in the songs to answer field question four. Finally, the chapter discusses *Dku* in general, to answer field question five which addresses the views to improving funeral practice.

Before embarking on my fieldwork, I had some personal expectations for the field. To begin with, I expected to find persons knowledgeable in funeral celebrations to volunteer information on my topic in the areas of its history and values, and also be able to sing some *keku* and demonstrate the dances that accompany these songs. To this end, I found my expectations fulfilled. My consultants volunteered information willingly. Figures 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 respectively, display me with some of my consultants.



Figure 6.1: Researcher with consultant



Figure 6.2: Researcher with female consultants



Figure 6.3: researcher at a FGD session

6.1 Field Question 1

Field question one is thematically designed to investigate who the Bakpele are. For, as Nketia (1955:5) noted, “a deeper understanding of a people’s social life is of much importance for, it is from this that their meaning of the world is ultimately derived.”

Different narrations on the origin of the Bakpele were given by Fishman (2007), Aboagye, (2010), and Ampene (2010) respectively. Ampene’s account classified

Bakpele's status as Guans who arrived in the region from three sources before the arrival of the Ewes. Ampene (2010) did not mention the source of either the name Likpe or the linguistic evidence of Sekpele. This account is different from those of others.

Narrations from Aboagye, (2010) claimed that the name Bakpele was derived from *bakple* meaning "in their numbers", and that they were nicknamed Likpe by the spies who saw them chipping stones in preparation for war against the people of Gbi. These two narrations, again, together conflict with Fishman (2007) in which the Likpe are described as one of the minority immigrant groups from Notsie, who supposedly arrived together with their names Likpe and Bakpele.

The name Bakpele was a derogative name used by the people of Bakwa to describe the large population of their guests; for, *kpεε* in *Sεkpεε* means large. **Bakpεε** means they are "in their numbers." Bakpele as a tribal name therefore, was derived from Bakpεε (Large) a numerical description. In the same way, Likpe is a derisive and derogatory name acquired from the neighbouring Gbi group, and referring to the Bakwa and the Bakpele jointly, following the stone chipping incident.

The link between Fishman (2007), Aboagye, (2010), and Ampene (2010) however, shows Bakwa as the original occupants of the present Bakpele lands before the arrival of the other three Bakpele groups. Today, this name – Bakpele engulfs the people of Bakwa as well. I can deduce from these four sources of data, therefore, that until the unification of the migrants with Bakwa, their hosts, Bakwa was not part of Bakpele but stood and were known as Bakwa tribe.

My field reports revealed that one will hardly find people of the agnostics and infidel sects among the Bakpele these days. All people living in Bakpele are found to be associated with Christian religion, Islam or Traditional African religion. One will not easily find a religious-free funeral in Bakpele for these years even though the 2002 National Census figures gave 5.3 per cent as people in the Volta Region who have no

religious affiliation. With the increasing number of Christians in Bakpele, the larger number of funeral types are also Christian. In all these funerals, *Dku* play very important traditional roles.

6.2 Field Question 2

6.2.1 Bakpele's perception of death

The question sought to find out the Bakpele worldview on funeral celebrations and the trend and context of *Dku* performances. To understand Bakpele's response to death and its accompanying rituals, it is necessary to examine their worldview about these events. To an *ɔkpele* (singular for Bakpele), illness and death come with deep significance – of which conditions are not simply common occurrences.

When someone falls seriously ill and is about to die, relatives are invited to sit by his bedside. They sit to console the dying person, whom they believe is struggling through a transitional period of life and death. It is also believed that the dying person might reveal some secrets of his life. Bakpele, therefore, cherish these last words, especially, of the elderly so much. They call these last words *wɔ etiki fefe* (his last words) as in Akan *nsamansie*.

Bakpele, like the Akans and most African societies, have their perception about the universe, and in particular, a belief in an after-life by passing through death as a channel. Their belief in the role of *banamɔ* (ancestors) as mediators and protectors expresses the notion that death is not a final state of existence but a transition to another world. The Bakpele like other ethnic groups use preventive measures to prolong life, but when death comes, they are comforted in their solace in the spirit world.

Among African societies, death is seen as a mysterious aspect of reality, and the Bakpele mythology sought to explain their natural order of things and the origin of death. As the giver of all things, *Onanto* (God) is the source of life and death. To them, it is *Onanto*

who brought death into being in order to take away the one whose work in this world has been accomplished. There is therefore, the firm belief that it is only the aged in society who should die.

Death is, as well, seen as coming from other sources like accident, childbirth, personal conflict with society, capital punishment like excommunication, and punishment meted out on culprits by ancestral spirits or retribution by malevolent forces for breaking a taboo. Bakpele differentiate between natural and accidental deaths. The natural death is associated with the death of an aged person or death that has occurred through biological body disorders.

On the other hand, accidental deaths refer to death attributed to some supernatural forces such as witchcraft, magic, sorcery or a powerful curse. This is also referred to as premature death, which usually involves the death of a young person. Death by such non-natural causes is not a part of Bakpele conceptualization. Any other death caused for example, by breaking taboos, violating the laws that protect the society, not heeding to the warnings of ancestral spirits or breaking an oath is considered pre-mature or bad omen on that individual or the society.

Death is regarded by the Bakpele as one of the crises of life, therefore, there are some religious rites associated with it. Among these rites is the celebration of funerals as an important socio-religious event carrying with it certain expectations in the behaviour of the individual. Like many societies, euphemistic expressions are used to describe the death of a person. These are categorized by the status of the deceased while alive, or by the type of death the person passed through. Some of these expressions relating to the various deaths among the Bakpele are: *kuyi kple etu* (a great tree has fallen), said to express a deceased with high status. *kasɔ ɔywuɔnko wɔ* (the cold ground has touched him), meaning death through snake bite. These euphemistic expressions are not reflected in the text of the songs but are used to narrate the death. They also have proverbs and myths which illustrate the origin and

purpose of death. The idioms, in whatever way they are expressed, are used to indicate the dead person's departure from the physical to the spiritual world.

The concepts of reincarnation and ancestorship are not strange to Bakpele. To them, any human being who is believed not to have completed his period of life's duration on earth might come back to complete it. In other words, ancestors are reborn into this world to accomplish their tasks, signifying that each person's work on earth is highly assessed, and that there is a life after death.

In recent times, however, the Christian concept of judgement after death has come to be accepted side by side the traditional concept of reincarnation. The practice of veneration of ancestral spirits confided in *akpome* (sacred stools) and *banamə* (ancestors), and the act of making libation to strengthen bonds between the living and the dead among the Bakpele are similar to the Christian veneration of their saints. The ancestors that are venerated are those who died at a ripe age and whose lives are worthy of emulation. They are believed to be the mediums through which *Onanto* (Almighty God) is supplicated.

The Bakpele believe that life manifests itself as a convergence of body and soul. Death comes in to separate the two, returning the body to the earth and sending the soul to the metaphysical world. During a person's lifetime, the body works in synergy with the soul, and that which affects one affects the other. Hence, death may result from ailments affecting the body, the soul, or both. They believe that everyone has a soul that always survives death, and that all souls go to an ancestral world, awaiting the day of reckoning to the Almighty God. The soul of a dead person goes with him into the grave from which it has the faculty emerging at will as a ghost, in either luminous or terrifying form. To them, it is only those who disciplined their lives according to *Onanto*'s law that enjoy eternal peace. The souls of witches and wizards suffer eternal torment.

Traditions have varied beliefs about where the soul of a dead person goes. Some believe that the dead make a journey to the spiritual world called STYX (Owusu-Ansah 2007:20), while still, some others believe that souls go to God soon after death. They also have different answers to where this world is located. Some believe that the land of ancestors is located underground, (Amponsah 1988:55). This resting place, the Bakpele worldview explains, is located around the deceased's hometown, where they live in settlements by towns and villages similar to that of the physical world. Because of this belief, they bring the bodies of their dead relatives home for burial. If for some reasons the body cannot be brought home for burial, some human parts of the deceased such as the hair, the finger and toe nails, which are believed to be the dwelling place of the soul of a person, are brought home for burial. The reasons for bringing the soul of a person home for burial are to ensure spiritual contact with the ancestors who are believed to reside near home and also to make way for the full and up-to-date performance of the rites. For this contact with ancestors to be fully accomplished, certain rituals are considered expedient, and among these is the performance of *keku*.

Among the Bakpele tradition, and as it is in other traditions, funeral rites vary from place to place, and from person to person according to one's status in society; for example, a royal by descent or a traditional priest by profession is given a special funeral type to distinguish each of them from any other ordinary funeral. These differences notwithstanding in Bakpele, *keku* is about the same for all deaths. The Bakpele have their own way of celebrating funerals, which is not too distinct from other Akan and Ewe types, but which also presupposes a life after death. Celebrations are held for the departed based mostly on the religious belief of the deceased while alive. Three main funeral types are identified among Bakpele. These are *usukuuyiɛn* (Christian funerals), *otokoliyiɛn* (Muslim funerals) and *omamuyiɛn* (funerals for the traditionalists). *omamuyiɛn* is sub divided into *ɔsinkɔ* where the deceased was believed to have been a traditional worshipper and perceived to have practised

witchcraft or wizardry, and *oyokɔ* where the deceased was not identified with any form of witchcraft or wizardry.

The Bakpele attach much importance to funerals, and because of that the celebrants do their best to comply by the tenets of the tradition as they came to meet it. There are usually, five major phases to an ordinary funeral: the pronouncement of death, the pre-burial mourning, (including wake keeping), the burial (including interment), after-burial mourning, and subsequent periodic mourning. Each of the phases, right from the pronouncement of the death, through the burial, to the final funeral rites, has specific serial days (not specifically days of the week) on which the various rituals are performed.

The family of the deceased is a disgrace if they are not able to hold a proper funeral for their deceased relative. With this idea in mind, certain activities of the funeral are compulsory and are given much attention. These activities are proper interment (the quality of the coffin), proper reception for mourners who attend the funeral (enough food and drinks) and finally, well-organized post-burial activities. I have considered the roles of *keku* in Bakpele funerals under the five main phases of the celebration.

Bakpele have other categories of funerals which are dictated by sex, age and status in society. For instance, the funeral rites performed for children are different from those performed for adults. In the former, the intensity of the rites is limited to few dirges and less weeping. Accidental deaths are not given the usual flamboyant celebration but are given special treatments, for, as it is believed, such treatment of the dead body curtails future occurrences of pre-mature deaths. Funerals of chiefs and queenmothers are always celebrated as *oyokɔ* irrespective of their Christian or wizardry status.

Bakpele have different reasons for performing funerals. They are performed to enable the deceased to make his journey to the ancestral world. Funerals are also performed to honour and pay their last respect to the departed. Funerals are performed by the Bakpele to bid farewell and to prepare the spirit of the deceased for *ukpɔ kama* (life beyond), for, they

presupposed a life after death. Funerals at the same time, prepare the deceased for either transmigration (passing of the soul after death into another body) or reincarnation. Funerals are also believed to be the preparation of the deceased to present itself before the Supreme Being to give an account of its earthly life.

6.2.2 Gender issues

According to Nketia, (1966:24), in many African societies, the majority of musical types are performed by adults and these may be subdivided by sex. This calls on us to give a closer look at the role of the Bakpele woman in the creation of music and how this role is viewed by the Bakpele society. My discussion on the role of the woman is seen from the perspective of the Feminist theory (in Stone, 2008:8) which views inequity in gender as central to all organizations and their operations in today's world.

From the focus group discussion, it was realized that un-like the operations of the feminist theory, where the woman is relegated, the Bakpele woman is said to have possessed about the same power to match with her male counterpart in the music-making context. That power, however, did not place her above or put her at par with the socio-political authority that the man has in society. Among the Bakpele, traditional music making by the woman is welcoming news. Bakpele music is either male dominated, female dominated or meant for both sexes.

Some of the Bakpele women will always want to perform just because of socialization. According to Assimeng, (2006:10) "man is a gregarious animal". Occasionally, one gets one or two women who, because of quirk behaviour, would prefer staying away from a gathering. However, on the whole, there is an innate tendency for the women to be together and to work together much more to perform *keku* and mourn together.

To deprive a native woman of performing her *keku*, therefore, meant a complete deprivation from her rituals.

A large number of the Bakpɛle are found among the neighbouring Ewe communities due to migration, where they are influenced by these new communities. To briefly compare the two traditions of *ebibindwom* and *Dku* which are performed from two different contexts but in the same epoch, we can deduce that unlike *ebibindwom*, which were derived from already existing dances, *Dku* were started and existed as such, as an individual musical type, since it was known.

Occasions for performance also differ one from the other. While *ebibindwom* were used for Christian sacred purposes and so uses sacred texts, *Dku* were used for traditional purposes thereby, using philosophical, social and secular texts. The texture also differs one from the other. *ebibindwom* are well harmonized in chords of thirds, typical of Akan songs, with light instrumental accompaniments, but which is not the style of *Dku*. These differences aside, the two elements that create the similarity between these two musical types are that they are both patterned after the call and response form.

In comparing *Dku* with *avihawo*, I can say that these two traditions are very similar in content. The musical form and structure are about the same. The three samples of work in Corpora 1, 2 and 3 are structured in the form of call-and-response, just as *Dku*, however, while the responses in Corpora 1, 2 and 3 are harmonized the responses for *Dku* are in unison. Contextually, however, while *Dku* are performed as rituals at specific stages of a funeral celebration, *avihawo* are performed generally, as mourning songs.

6.2.3 Current state of *keku*

As a result of modernization and dynamism in culture, most especially with the lot of Christian church proliferation currently in our societies, one could argue out the current

state of *Dku* in Bakpele funerals. For that matter, I opened up a discussion on the trend of performance of *Dku* in Bakpele. Here, I was expecting from the focus group discussions a call for the annulment of *Dku* during funeral celebrations but that was not the picture. Responses from all the focus groups revealed that the level of *Dku* performance at funerals is on the decline, compared to experiences of the previous years, wherefore, the women agitated for better and more vibrant performances that will feature a wider repertory.

Performance is crucial in the life of a music community. To discuss performance in music, I built on Allan, (1996:3), who, commenting on language said “just as words do not constitute a language unless they are shared by members of a speech community,” so also do I say, music becomes music, only and only when it is performed and shared among members of the music community.

Generally, African music is said to be music of the dance and so, the treatment of music and dance as separate art forms is not the common practice in Africa. By this is meant that each musical piece is a synthesis of many fabrics, and that some of these fabrics call for dance steps or body movements. *Keku* dance songs serve as a vehicle for artistic expressions. Those pieces of music associated with dance have elements of musical texture which can be articulated in body movements or which can incite inherent dance tendencies. The affective responses to such musical stimuli include the unrehearsed dance urges which may take the form of gentle and graceful rocking of the body.

6.2.4 Change in society

Anthropologists have contended that change in a phenomenon is sometimes influenced by the changes in the environment, and at other times influenced by forces from within and outside the culture, as a result of culture mingling. *Keku* in Bakpele was influenced by its contact with cultures and practices from both within and without. This

system of cross-cultural contact might not, however, be the only cause of culture change. But we will agree that these changes in the performance of *Bakpele eto Dku*, resulted from the six attributes identified at the FGD.

Change is inevitable where there is life and growth. It is said that society has life and so it grows and changes. Similarly, culture is dynamic; it grows and changes. The observed change in each case is either skewed to the positive or the negative side of the normal. If an existing system is subjected to change, then that means there are weak lanes in it. An assumption underlying change was made by Garry, (2001) who, writing about invention and innovations remarked that:

In a very real sense, any ethnographic description of a specific group of people is like a snapshot at one particular time. If the ethnographer conducts a restudy of the same group five years later, it is likely that a number of cultural features will have changed (P. 349).

It is clear by this assumption that principles and philosophies change with time, and that people differ in their ideologies or opinions from time to time. The end result of these periodic differences is change in society.

Every traditional music is subject to ethnic transformation because traditions change to satisfy societal needs of the time. In this way, music changes accordingly, in order to satisfy new social needs. This also suggests that a society develops its music in accordance with the character of its social system. Music is performed together with other activities, in any given community, working together and strengthening their communal ties in order to make ethnicity more palpable. Nketia, (2005), writing on the role of traditional music in the past decades said:

Traditional music was generally organized as a social event meant for enjoyment of freedom and get-together occasions, [meant] for performance

of traditional rites, festivals, ceremonial gatherings, building bridges, clearing paths and basically any form of collective activities.

Looking at the trend today, one can say that some of these motives, especially, the use of music for communal activities have transgressed as man developed new ways of doing things in all spheres of life. These new ways of doing things have thereby, resulted to societal change.

The theory of Structural-Functionalism propounded by Constantin Brailoiu in the mid of the 1950s, (in Stone 2008:37) answers the question of innovation in society. The Romanian musicologist recognized the importance of innovation in social life. He implies that innovation should be part and parcel of everybody, both rural and urban, within a given society. Relating this idea to music analyses, he noted that “analysis of musical forms, for example, though still necessary, would become secondary and would retain only the importance of one means among others.” Innovation in the social life of the Bakpele with regard to *keku* is necessary, much as it addresses the required social issues of the time.

One assumption for this study as observed by Nettle (1992) (in Nettle, B., Capwell, C., Bohlman, P. V. Wong, I. K. F. & Turino, T., (1992:5) is that music is a system. This is so in the sense that changes in one of its components cause changes in other components. This same idea was reiterated by Chaves, (1994) (in Allan, 1996:22), who commenting on change said that a change in one area affects other areas also. Allan, (1996:22) writes: “Change in one area of culture will cause change in other areas, often unforeseen, because beliefs, traditions, and other activities are integrated into one system.”

By this assumption, changes in some specific aspects of the funeral celebration of the Bakpele will automatically call for changes in some other activities including *keku* performance. We can analyse this corresponding action from the functionalists’ point of view that in urban and semi-urban societies, not only do we expect only one particular custom to serve a special social purpose but often different institutions overlap in their functions, so

that with a change in any, there is likely to be a corresponding transformation in all other practices.

For the fact that innovation is an important attribute of a system, the ideas of the system are also subject to periodic change in the interest of that society. The crucial point here is whether we can afford to sacrifice content for interest. Any innovative approach to music will be successful only if it does the job of communication, at least, as well as some other expected modes. In making the music relevant to contemporary societies, we should, however, not be too hasty to substitute expedience for quality.

6.2.5 Societal change and musical change

Societal change also means a corresponding change in music to meet societal requirements. If the social meanings, we derive from the rites are correct, and which are, then, we should also expect changes in these rites to correspond with society. Several reasons can be given for a society adapting to change. Obviously, our fore fathers had good reasons to initiate societal norms and practices at the time they did. However, it can be said today that some of these reasons do not hold the argument for the continued observance of such customs. Some proponents describe some of these customs as dehumanizing, disgraceful, and economically wasteful. These proponents say also that most of these practices are unethical. Chaves (1994), (in Allan, (1996:22) commenting on change and technology writes: “Modern technological societies may not really hold a positive promise for the future; not for its own people or for those others who seek to imitate it.”

One of the changes brought by technology is what I will conveniently call “cultural inertia”. The physical scientist will contest that with computer-aided autopsy now in place, there is no need to find the cause of someone’s death, for example, by making somebody carry fire in a pot or, carry a bowl of shrubs on his head. Neither is it needful to sit over a

dead body for a whole night in what they call wake-keeping when the body can be kept at the mortuary and collected for burial the same day.

Societies often have varied values, and because of that inter-cultural communications are at times difficult to apprehend. Based on the variations in values that exist in society, one other assumption is an observation made by Nettle (1992) (in Nettle, B., Capwell, C., Bohlman, P. V. Wong, I. K. F. & Turino, T., (1992:5) that “music is most often seen relatively as the view of society and that each society has a musical system that suits its culture.” This means that each society evaluates works of music by its own criteria. This assumption is fundamental to *keku*.

In relation to this assumption, Turino (1992), (in Nettle et al, 1992:239), also observed from studying the music of different societies that radically, there are different conceptions about music, and that these conceptions form a coherent part of the different modes of social, political, economic and religious life of these societies. The use of music to construct and express social identity is almost a universal phenomenon. Seen from this point of view, the importance and influence of *keku* could be understood along religious modes, however, they have a heightened collective orientation to social life.

Attitudes dictate how we react to situations in society. Societies and individuals differ in their attitudes toward their tastes and, therefore, musical varieties. To some music consumers, it is important, for example, that a song remains permanently stable and unchanged, while to others, the individual artistes should be encouraged to have periodic modification of versions, creating a variety of views on societal music. This variation in attitudes, resulting in the changes in the performance of *keku*, is an issue of contemplation between the Bakpele resident at home and those residing outside home.

6.3. Field Question 3

6.3.1 The Bakpɛle worldview on keku

Field question three sought for the various *Dku* that are used at the five phases of a funeral celebration in relation to the Bakpɛle worldview. In dealing with *Dku*, we are dealing, in the main, with traditional expressions stored up in the minds of individuals and which are re-produced by them in appropriate contexts by way of singing which come in to explain the purpose of man on this earth. This is the essence of the referentialists and expressionists' theories of music which deal with the importance of the message carried by a particular song. This means that in one way or the other, lyrics add colour, beauty and meaning to songs.

Dku performers are concerned not only with “what” is communicated but “how” it is communicated. How the singers communicate the inner feelings of a song is so vital to them. Among the Bakpɛle, *Dku* is an expressive language, for, it communicates feelings and thoughts. It generates aesthetic responses; responses that are either culture-specific as of the Bakpɛle themselves (non-universal), or may universally transcend cultural boundaries. *Dku* are able to move the mind and heart to generate such feelings as joy, sorrow, pain and love so as to stimulate body movement.

Every human being is responsive to music of some sort, and can find some inner satisfaction in it. Music as an aesthetic object can be likened to man's actual life experiences out of which he can easily find inner meaning and feeling, leading to an inner satisfaction. Music for example, as life, has rhythm and melody, has a beginning and an end. Music has ups and downs, tension and releases, discords and concords, all in a bid to create emotions and feelings just as we have in life. Kamien, (1994:35) writes: “A melody begins, moves, and ends; it has direction, shape, and continuity. The up-and-down movement of its pitches conveys tension and release, expectation and arrival.” The lyrics of *Dku* help the women

participants to particularize the nature of the sentiments being expressed by the group in the songs. In the songs for example, the women sing praises, advise or cast insinuations on issues.

Rejecting the extremes of absolutism and referentialism, Reimer, (2003) suggested an alternative which is the synergism of what he calls deliration and the inherent, simply put as Expressionism. This view holds that the experience of an art work is related to the experience of one's life. Thus, the insight of music may be shared not only by using non aesthetic referents outside the music, but also going deeper into the aesthetic qualities contained in the art work itself. To the expressionist, music has a message to give, but the message is personal to the one perceiving the music.

Keku is best appreciated when the perceiver combines the absolutists' and the referentialists' views as put forward by Reimer, (2003). The perceiver goes beyond the music to combine attitudes, emotions, ideas and events of the music maker with what he sees and hears on stage. That is, singing and dancing combine with the mood to give a better understanding of *keku*. The performer or perceiver of *keku* who applies both the absolutists' observation and the referentialists' way of understanding issues, to the occasion aesthetically, will have the quest for body movement. This tells us that *Dku* have unique aesthetic values in addition to their traditional and social roles.

The emotional values that are expressed in and through *Dku* lyrics are guided by the stage of the celebration and the nature and type of activity. It must be noted, however, that motivation for *keku* singing may not always be limited to this. While Bakpele funerals are sad occasions where one may naturally expect to find expressions of grief, it may also be an occasion for expressing group solidarity for honouring the memory of the dead. That is why the women artistes enact plays on such occasions.

6.4 Field Question 4

Field question four requested for the textual, and the musical resources of the songs. In discussing these items, I systemized samples of the songs using Nketia, (1969:17) analytical model which relates musical elements like sound, structure, lyrics, and musical types to the context of culture. Nketia, (1969) justifies the use of this model:

it is on this level that we seek to understand the body of traditions in terms of which music is practiced and perpetuated. It is here that we look at the complex of values associated with the music and the cultural and historical dimensions including text discourse, which are needed for the understanding of these traditions and values (P. 17).

6.4.1 Linguistic Aspects in *Dku*

The impact of *Dku* on the Bakpele was carefully discussed at the focus group discussion sessions and it was realized that the lyrics of *Dku* play significant roles in impacting the entire Bakpele society. It is imperative that the words we speak and those we listen to manifest our thoughts and intents to be either constructive or destructive. Hence, life lies in the power of the tongue. This claim is not only spiritually sound, but is also evidently convincing.

Looking through the lens of the Bible in Genesis 1:3 from the Christian point of view, we can appreciate the fact that God created all things solely through His spoken word: “Then God said, ‘let there be light; and there was light’” (Holy Bible 2003:12). In this excerpt, God spoke a few words and created the world. Similarly, from the Christian scriptures, we read in Proverbs 18:21 that “Death and life are in the power of the tongue” (Holy Bible 2003:1203). Addo, (2012:42) writes: “Our words are the most valuable commodity we have as human beings as they define our worldview, character and even our future.” The power in

a word cannot be underestimated. Traditionally, to the majority of societies today, subscription to this principle extends to the context of music. We cannot afford to be casual with our attitude towards music and musical content because it is an instrument of great influence on the masses. The words in *Dku* command the power to destroy and to build. Each society has its own principal music which members of that society know and respond to, with a kind of common understanding just as they communicate through language.

Music is not like a literary language which has specific messages to send. The kind of music for example, which will remind one person of a death situation will remind another else of a birth. That is to say works of art including music evoke special inner feelings which Titon & Reck, (2005:23) call “the affect”, and these feelings are personal and private to the individuals concerned. The “affect” in *keku* lyrics evokes special effect to the individual at the different stages of the celebration.

6.4.2 Logical foundations of *keku*

Music is often used to convey messages and ideas; it is used to record and recount historical events. Consequently, the meaning of the lyrics and their relation to music are exclusively important. Musical thought and aesthetic values in Bakpele and their *Dku* are closely linked to their worldview. Their thinking determined, to some extent, the lyrics of *keku*, and therefore, the message to put across. For this discussion, the sub-topics discussed under song texts include themes of *keku*, content of song lyrics, linguistic sources of song lyrics, illusions in the songs, and psycho-social meanings of the songs. These sub-topics are followed by discussions on the performance and change as observed in the performance of *Dku*.

6.4.3 Thematic reflections in keku

Considering the dirge as an expressive element on funeral celebrations, Nketia (1955:19) grouped Akan dirges into subject matter. He addressed four main thematic areas as follows: references to the ancestor, references to the deceased, the domicile of the ancestor and that of the deceased and family, and finally, references to reflections and messages. Making reference to Nketia, (1955:19), I have also conveniently put *Dku* into two main thematic areas as follows: References to the deceased and his ancestors and references to reflections and messages. The significance of each of these areas is discussed subsequent

In *Dku* rendition, references to the deceased's clan is not reflected in the song texts because unlike the Akan where everyone belongs to one of their seven or eight principal clans, the Bakpele belong to separate clans that are specific to the various townships. At funeral celebrations and in *Dku* performances, the selection of songs to be sung is not predetermined by the clan or lineage to which the deceased once belonged. *Keku* is not content to express kinship or clan relations.

As mentioned earlier, clan and lineage segmentations are not points of reference in the texts of the songs however, at the end of each round of singing, mention is made of the names of descendants of different lineage segments so as to associate the immediate deceased person with his ancestors. The deceased is identified with as many ancestors as the individual mourners can recall. These names are not mentioned within the songs but as a coda, after halting the singing and dancing. Each singer mentions a name of the deceased person, or the name of any ancestor, or even mere wailing to show a sign of disgust for death.

The second important thematic component of *Dku* is one that makes references to reflections and messages. As already pointed out in the activities of funerals, death is regarded as an occasion when a deceased person sets out on a journey to the underworld to join his or her ancestors. It is therefore appropriate, as tradition demands, to wish the

deceased a good journey, more so, to convey messages of varied contents to the forebears. On such occasions, one might hear in the song text statements like *Lə esu buəsiəəə mə* (if you go we greet them) as demonstrated in Corpus 20. There are some expressions which are mere pouring out of one's heart in sympathy with the deceased, but which are not applicable in the real sense. Examples are “if you go, I will go with you; wake up and say your last words; and come and take me along.”

One way of keeping in touch with relations in our traditional set up is to exchange greetings or mutual gifts. This attitude is also reflected in the message of the songs which are supposedly carried by the deceased. The adult lament in Corpus 14 *Bekyese mə* (send me a gift [if you find someone coming down]), which is sung at the stage of customarily greeting the corpse is one typical example of a wish to exchange gifts or to request for one.

I conclude this session on themes that one of the major concerns of *Dku* is the building up of association between the present and the past by means of thematic references of the songs. Considering any culture in the world, we would accept the fact that music is not just an instrument of entertainment; it is also a lifestyle. Each culture has its own distinct language and music that they pride themselves in; this holds true for even the most indigenous cultures. That said, it would make sense to claim that the language we speak and the music we make – among other factors of course, define our culture.

6.4.4 Sources of *Dku* lyrics

Bakpele *eto Dku* stand unique as music from a unit area, however, traces of foreign elements by way of song lyrics, language and dance have found their way through borrowing into this tradition. My study communities and those around them coincidentally share meaningfully on matters of culture.

As mentioned earlier in Chapter Two, Sekpele has traces of words from other languages because of its contiguity with these societies. Precisely, it is surrounded by different languages. To the north, it has Lelemi and Akan; to the east, beyond the Togo-Attakora Mountains is Ahlor. To the west, it has Siwu (Mawu) and finally to the south, is the Ewe language. A lot of words, therefore, have been borrowed into Sekpele from these languages. Some of the song texts of Bakpele *eto keku* are bilingually scanned. The songs either have a complete set of words from any of these neighbouring languages or they have few words taken from these languages incorporated into one song. Here are a few examples of such linguistic sources of lyrics based on this code:

Sekpele	=	S
Siwu	=	W
Lelemi	=	L
Ewe	=	E

	Song Text	Linguistic Source
Corpus 12	<i>Akukɔ di kenye o, di kenye o</i>	[W]
Corpus 17	<i>Kpɔm duu; meevie medi na wo?</i>	[E]
Corpus 25	<i>Owoe likpɔ o? Ewu likpɔ o.</i>	[S]
Corpus 29	<i>Eyɔme menye tsadife o</i>	[E]
Corpus 30	<i>Boakya le asiame.</i>	[SE]
Corpus 31	<i>Ɔhɔ loo, minkɔ yoo lo.</i>	[SESE]

In whatever language(s) the words of the songs are found, the message(s) of the songs is/are fully carried across.

6.4.5 Philosophical meanings in keku lyrics

Music and society are said to be inseparable in any way, just as society and philosophy are not, from one another. All societies, whether advanced or not, attempt to find underlying facts about life around them. What the society believes in and why it believes in them are all based on its philosophy. Music, in this sense song lyrics in *keku*, are also

philosophically perceived. The list that follows is an example of songs with philosophical connotations.

Text	Literal Meaning
Corpus 29 <i>Eyɔme menye tsadife o,</i> <i>Ke amewo fe ame[wo] bla kɔla</i> <i>yi yɔ me.</i>	The grave is not a tourist site, yet great men in their suits throng the grave.
Corpus 17 <i>Kpɔm duu, meevie medi na wo?</i>	[As you] gaze at me, whose child do I resemble [to you]?
Corpus 14 <i>Lɔ biyɔn, bekyese me.</i>	If you come by [wealth], send me some.

The philosophy behind these three examples of songs collectively, is that the Bakpɛle believe that there is an under-world somewhere that hosts the departed souls for a continuation of life.

The philosophy underlying the ninetieth day rituals is that the soul of the deceased finally departs the earth to join its predecessors in the underworld. Rituals for male deceases are without any dirge unlike their female counterparts. At the third month ceremony for the female deceases, one of the first songs that is sung is shown in Corpus 26 - *Bubɔ wɔ diyo bofia* (we have gathered to disband and bequeath her property. At this time of the singing, all items to be disbanded are displayed in the open by the nieces, assisted by the children of the deceased. They bring out as many items as possible because the more items they display the pride of both the deceased and the family. The philosophy behind this is that the soul of the deceased comes around with her deceased friends and relatives to help her convey the items she had acquired while on earth.

Following this stage is the motherly role that the soul of the deceased is assumed to have played. It is believed that the deceased has prepared a meal of ashes ready for her children to come and eat. At this stage, the women narrate the scene by singing the song in Corpus 27 *Owan ntɔ* (cooked a meal of ashes). In order to sever the deceased from the reality

of any such a care, the women physically break the hearth that the deceased was using while alive. At this stage, it is believed that the soul of the deceased was obliged to agree to be severed from activities of the living. The women then sing the song in Corpus 28 *Minni okpa; bala me* (I am not a dog to be driven away) on behalf of the deceased complaining that she is not a dog but was driven away from her home.

That after, the property of the deceased is shared among relatives, and, at times among all others present to witness the celebration. The context of these three songs in Corpora 26, 27 and 28 climax the 90th day rituals. The content of the songs – the lyrics, the mode and the melody all together create a sad mood which touches on all mourners present. In singing *keku*, each performer, and also the audience understand the philosophic views of the songs as their personal experiences in society.

6.4.6 Psycho-social meanings in *Dku* lyrics

All individuals have different attitudes to perceiving music, depending on their cultural background and listening levels. Music does not only affect our mood but also changes our perception of the world around us. *Keku* has psychological effects on the Bakpele society just as philosophical allusions affect their philosophy. *Keku* affects and changes their feelings, attitudes and improves their self-esteem. It provides joy for self-expression leading to social interactions during funerals.

Psychologists argue that it is difficult to tell the mental processes of an individual until the person behaves outwardly. They continue that there are different types of human behaviours and, therefore, different mental processes and approaches in responding to issues. From the humanistic theory approach Lefrancois, (1975:161), holds that every individual is free to choose, and to determine his actions, it maintains, and is obvious that each person is also responsible for his actions and cannot blame the environment, his parents or

circumstances for what he does. This thought is, however, at variance with Bakpele psychology. For, in the Bakpele communities, each member cares for the other psychologically, materially and physically. This way of caring for one another is reflected in the lyrics of *keku*. Few examples of such lyrics depicting psycho-social meanings follow with the corpus.

Text	Literal Meaning
Corpus 32 <i>Ani yeso wɔ̄; wotala fe kɔ̄sɔ̄</i>	He was fed up and that is why he dived like a monkey.
Corpus 33 <i>Miva kpem; azɔ̄li mele ɔ̄nye o.</i>	Come to my aid, I cannot walk.
Corpus 34 <i>Abui de megbɔ̄ o; ekae nagbɔ̄ a?</i>	The needle went and could not return; how much less the thread?
Corpus 35 <i>Miɔ̄kɔ̄ yoo lo; miɔ̄kɔ̄ hmm.</i>	I sighed only in acceptance.
Corpus 36 <i>Ameku le fome dom;</i>	The dead are keeping family relations;
<i>Amegbagbewo le fome kam.</i>	The living is incompatible.
Corpus 37 <i>Leyɔ̄ mkpe; ɔ̄te mfo mofe</i>	It is cold; which way do I go?
Corpus 38 <i>Ketu amkpi ku aba kele;</i>	The river does not dry up with its stones;
<i>Mɔ̄ kale lekpi ku aba kele.</i>	Mine has dried up with its stones.
Corpus 39 <i>Uyi ato usɔ̄nto le kenye;</i>	A thistle has pierced the cantor's mouth;
<i>Beyɛbe usɔ̄nto bamba bitsyɔ̄.</i>	Look for another cantor.
Corpus 40 <i>Biyifo bitɔ̄ mɛ linsɔ̄ mi ani.</i>	Do it for me, I will acknowledge you.
Corpus 41 <i>Menye egbe enye egblɔ̄gbe o;</i>	This is not the day of reckoning;
<i>Egblɔ̄gbe li gbɔ̄na.</i>	That day is yet to come.

Psycho-social effects make these songs act as secondary re-enforcers which focus on eliminating undesired behaviours from society. Even though, the songs are meant for the deceased, they carry messages to shape survivors as well. Some psychological needs such as

those outlined by Lefrancois, (1975:161) are addressed. Among these are that the needs which are manifested in people's efforts to maintain social order and therefore, nonthreatening environments. The need for love and belongingness, the need to develop relationships involving reciprocal affection, the need for cultivating and maintaining a high opinion of oneself, and finally, the need for self-actualization are respectively, put across in the song texts at the various phases of the funeral.

6.4.7 Illusion and Insinuation in *keku*

Dku serve as motivative tools that dictate the pace of Bakpele society and also shape societal members according to the meanings carried by the song lyrics. When the performers are carried away emotionally, a repertoire is appropriately selected, in the cause of the performance, based on issues of the deceased that needed to be addressed. Some of these issues are the type of death the deceased passed through or the type of life he led while alive.

Death unifies performers and mourners alike, irrespective of their status in society. The lyrics in *keku* serve as a vehicle for expressing sentiments and emotional intensity which function to reduce deceased persons to a common ground. For example, royals and subjects, literates or non-literates are given about the same *keku* performance at death. There are no variations in the song texts to reflect the personal or individual status of the deceased while alive, but reflections are on emotions of society.

In some instances, performances are meant to console the bereaved in society. They are at other times meant to motivate or meant for mere socialization. The text selections coincide with Merriam, (1963:163) to explain human behaviour that "one of the most obvious sources for understanding human behaviour in connection with music is song texts."

There are many theories on motivation, and for this stage of my discussion, I relate to the instinct theory which was advanced by Fleming, (1998). Explaining the theory, Fleming said society has an inherited tendency common to all members of a species, compelling each individual to perceive and pay attention to certain objects and situations. The perceiver, most often, becomes pleasurable or unpleasurably excited about those objects and situations and thereupon acts in a way to preserve that individual. Fleming, (1998) in effect, implies that although all persons are controlled by their innate tendencies, a little motivation can alter their behaviours to make them conform to the moral standards set by society.

Similarly, by this same theory, the question of why man behaves the way he does addresses the fact that changes in behaviour among people are the expression of experiences through which they are subjected; that no differences exist initially. An example of *keku* to this effect is in Corpus 32 *Ani yeso wɔ; wotala fe kɔsɔ* literally translated as he was fed up that is why he dived like a monkey.

Some lyrics in *Dku* lead to change and development in society. There is the social growth of survivors which results in an orderly behaviour which, in turn, gives rise to attitudinal formation, and character moulding, ending the individual up conducting himself in accordance with praise-worthy activities. This view follows the precept that emotional development helps to maintain behaviours that are acceptable to society, and this is possible when the person enjoys satisfactory experiences from the society through proper motivation.

Dku lyrics carry also sociological messages to motivate society. For example, they control moral and immoral behaviours to shape Bakpele society. What the society considers right or wrong becomes the core of conscience leading to guilt and shame to a deceased or his family. In the songs, the living is made aware of the rights and wrongs of the Bakpele society from the ethical point of view. In cases where one is not bold enough to speak out, *keku* tunes of insinuations are raised, just as Tracey, (1954:237) (in Titon & Reck, 2005) put

it: “You can say publicly in songs what you cannot say to a man’s face, and so this is one of the ways an African society takes to maintain a spiritually healthy community.” Insinuations are cast in some of the songs to convey special messages to the bereaved family and society as a whole. The corpuses that follow illustrate this.

Text	Literal Meaning
Corpus 42 <i>Biensi kpo wɔ̄ diye l’obia.</i>	Never mention his name at gatherings again.
Corpus 43 <i>Bese ukedu kaɔ̄ leka kpa.</i>	Now that he is gone, the way is clear.
Corpus 44 <i>Mmi kama o, etiki alo o.</i>	Henceforth, every case is ended.
Corpus 45 <i>Oyosate lɔ̄mbɔ̄ diyo;</i> <i>Owoe lɔ̄ tɔ̄ amanie?</i>	The landlord is out of the house; Who is there to ask of our mission?
Corpus 46 <i>ɔ̄sɔ̄mi lɛbɛle siku;</i> <i>ofati nde simɔ̄.</i>	The door is drenched; The wall is laughing.

Dku contribute much to the maintenance of social structures of the Bakpele. Music generally, a multifaceted institution, links all parts of socio-cultural systems, thereby making society holistic. The socio-cultural process of the linkage involves the complexities of inter-dependent parts of the social system. *Keku* links the political, religious, kinship and all the other institutions of the Bakpele. In the system, religion, for example, is reflected and intertwined in *keku* and these are all bonded through the rituals.

In *Dku*, useful synchronic information about Bakpele are obtained from the song texts. Continuous performance of it passes this information on from one generation to another. To the African, music is a collection of sounds expressed in words; but in order to make meaning of these sounds and words, the music must be understood inter-culturally. To understand the music inter-culturally, we must understand the societal events in which the music plays a

part. The blend of musical elements, resulting in the expression of emotions, is what *keku* is all about. This is how Malinowski, (1926) (in Okpewho, 1990) puts it:

Text, of course is extremely important, but without the context, it remains lifeless [...] the whole nature of the performance, the voice, and [...] the stimulus and the response of the audience means much to the native (just) as the text (P 1).

Music is infused into all the activities of the African from cradle to the grave. Whatever the occasion might be, music is a part not only as an embellishment, but also as a functional part of the activity. Music is understood to be the constant factor which permeates the very fibre of the African personal and social life.

This is the way I end this section. Song text is extremely important but without the context, it remains lifeless. The entire components of performance – the voice, and the stimulus and response of the audience all mean much to the Bakpele so as to explain the text.

6.5 Field Question 5

Field question five is a run-on to the first–four questions. At the FGD sessions, the main points that were emphasized were the need to improve performances, and the need for preservation and survival of this tradition. Question five demands ways of systemizing *Dku* with the view to improving performance.

6.5.1 Systemization for improvement

Traditional ritual songs stand out distinct from Christian ritual songs because of their deity point of reference. Even though they both have similar roles, they have different virtues.

There are, for example, songs for the various stages of funeral celebrations in our societies prior to the arrival of Christianity which brought a change in the style of worship among Ghanaians. One of the most popular explanations for understanding the universality of religion, according to Gary, (2001:308) is that “it performs a number of functions for the overall well-being of the society, of which it is also a part.” Among such functions are social control, conflict resolution and group solidarity.

Gary, (2001:308) continues that “in addition to serving the well-being of society, religion functions psychologically [in the areas of] cognitive and emotions for the benefit of the individual” (p 309). The emotional function of religion is to help individuals cope with the anxieties that often accompany situations such as illness, accidents, deaths and other misfortunes. Because human beings never have complete control over the circumstances of their lives, they often turn to religious rituals in an attempt to maximize control through supernatural means. In effect, man by his nature, is always attracted to alternate means, leading to change, when his needs are not met.

One reason for calling for the modernization or change in society is the paradigm shift in our religious beliefs. In recent times, religion has been one of the core pillars of our culture. In the remote past, most African societies, including some in Ghana, adhered to polytheistic kind of religion. Now, with the proliferation of western religion, of which all believe in one supreme God, polytheism is gradually giving way to monotheism. It is this shift which has exposed and continues to expose the oddity, in fact, the unwholesomeness of many of our customary practices therefore, calling for a change.

Sociologists refer to modernization as a model of progressive transition of people from a pre-modern, or traditional, to a modern society; that is when a country or region has its population migrating from rural to urban areas. Modernization theory maintains that traditional societies will develop as they adopt more modern practices. The theory according to its proponent’s claim that modern states are wealthier and more powerful, and that their

citizens are enticed to change from rural to urban standards of living.

Steven Cornelius in *Africa* (accessed January, 2011) argues that “the social force affecting urbanization, westernization, and modernization will continue to have significant impact on traditional music throughout the world.” Based on this argument, it is not surprising that such a model of progression has spread to the remote of societies including the Bakpele, my study area, to affect their dirge as a tradition. In *Dku*, performances have shifted, if not changed. In general, the essence of music-making in our societies has virtually changed from contextual to contemplative where music from any source is introduced at the expense of the traditional performer, just to keep the tradition going on.

Looking at the population growth rate in Ghana as at year 2014, urban areas were growing at the rate of 3.6 % as against 1.0 % in the rural areas. (www.tradingeconomy.com/ghana/urban-population-growth-annual-percent-wb-data.html) (Retrieved 16/1/2017). By this rate of urbanization, it is highly envisaged that in the next 20 years, about 70% of African traditional music will lose its identity to urbanization leaving only about 30% to the rural areas. The anticipated result is that African traditional practices will also be confined to the rural areas while western traditions will spread to the urban communities. There is, therefore, the need to bridge this performance gap as observed by Constantin Brailoiu, (in Stone, 2008:37), by giving a balanced attention to both areas.

In giving a balanced attention to the African traditional practices, there are, however, numerous challenges anybody attempting to deliberately modernize, change or shift these customary practices would encounter. The first of these is what I would call conservatism. There are some die-hard practitioners who would not want any aspect changed or modified, because to them “it is what we came to meet and this is how our forefathers did it. No change” (a consultant 2013) .

There are others who have the fear of reprisal from the gods, the forefathers, or, of ghost haunting. Some of the customs involve rites during which the gods are fed with drink

and food or special music performed to invoke the spirits. If one deprives them of this food and, therefore, starves them, it is taken that they will not respond to calls, if not even impose punishments. Or, if one denies them of the type of music needed at a particular stage of a ceremony, they will again not respond to calls. Specifically, it is believed also that the ghost of the deceased will haunt, if the required music is omitted at a stage of the ceremony. This fear deters intentional changes in the practices. Instead, these changes come voluntarily.

Identity, preservation and survival are concepts that are value-laden when thinking about the future of Bakpele *eto Dku*. They provide the ways that Bakpele can define their cultural core and also articulate those values that they want to survive. Identity is one important value that was observed in this research, which inevitably becomes the banner of the Bakpele ethnicity. Identity tells that *Dku*, among other dirges, stands unique and significant. Even though, it functions in a way that is relatively meaningless in other contexts, it assumes a soloist position along its boundaries, separating the Bakpele from other ethnic groups. Bakpele stood unique from within the larger non-Ewe speaking groups because of its linguistic markings.

Preservation allows the best of the past to survive; it establishes links between generations and again isolates the differences between one group and another. Preservation as a system of values symbolizes and embodies tradition, making music and tradition inseparable. Music preserves tradition and so does tradition to music because of the link between the two, and the two relating to issues of the past.

The importance of songs depends on the idea of maintaining cultural values, in the form of oral tradition across generations. Oral tradition itself is regarded as vital because it establishes the contact between generations. *Keku* is passed from generation to generation not only because it establishes a claim for the tenacity of oral tradition but also because it reflects the integrity of society.

6.5.2 Documentation of Keku

Findings revealed that *Dku* have not been adequately documented for preservation and easy retrieval. The only known means of storage is by oral tradition. Oral tradition has been the basis for composing, for the usage, for documenting, and for retrieval of the music. By these findings, there was the high agitation on the need to systemize this tradition. The fact remains that *Dku* have not been documented because there is no relevant information or evidence that is kept in any of the known documentation formats.

According to <https://en.wikipedia/wiki/Documentation>, documentation is a set of documents provided on paper, or online, or on digital or analog media such as audio tape or Compact Discs that are distributed via websites, software products, and other on-line applications for accessibility and application. Wikipedia remarks, however, that it is becoming less common to see hard copy (paper) documentation. This remark on paperless type of documentation is evidenced in Titon & Reck, (1992) which contained musical examples transcribed on staff notation, as against the same Titon & Reck, (2005:xiii) which, this time, contains musical examples recorded in sound on accompanying set of CD ROMs to replace the transcriptions in musical notations.

In Ghana, in the past four decades, the literacy level to keep musical information was limited. More so, the media of musical storage was not as advanced as we have them today. This has been a set-back, to *Dku* documentation as well.

The coming in of new technologies has virtually changed the global strands of music. For example, storage device media technology evolved from vinyl through audio-cassettes to Compact Discs and mini-discs. Similarly, replay devices evolved from gramophones through large in-house stereo systems to compact and portable audio devices. Appendix “G” is a collection of musical scores that I used by way of documentation.

Amlor (2011:60) observed that “societies that lack written records of their own, the

origins of musical types are said to be shrouded in myths and legends.” The origins of the Bakpele eto *Dku* are still not known, possibly, due to lack of written records. A continuous lack of *Dku* documentation, however, means a future loss of values, loss of authenticity and originality in *keku*, resulting in the fading away of information needed to facilitate and communicate in this institution.

Furthermore, a lack of documentation on *Dku* will lead to the inability of the upcoming generations to follow these traditions to the latter, thereby having an adverse effect on this Bakpele tradition. *Dku*, by their role as a traditional genre are used to sustain the history of other traditional institutions like traditional politics and chieftaincy, military and warrior associations, religious and social rites like birth, nubility, marriage, and death. There are others like traditional festivals, occupational and recreational activities. The texts in *Dku* reflect on all these institutions and traditions, so that the living would guard against their abuse.

Preservation and survival are crucial factors in the lives of unwritten texts like *keku*. It is, undoubtedly, true that a considerable proportion of accumulated knowledge is locked up in this tradition. Such vital and rich information is not reached let alone documented anywhere but only stored up in the minds or thoughts of some of the artistes who often died with them. With this concept that society changes with time, it is plausible to argue that changes for the better or for the worse may occur in funeral styles and therefore, in the performance of *Dku*. This is the more reason why documentation is important so as to retain the original as against the modified.

We need to actively understand ourselves on the need for documentation from the civic and nationalistic points of view. National policies play vital roles in deciding the cultural status of a nation. In Ghana for example, the National Commission on Culture (2004) emphasizes the documentation, preservation and conservation, and also recognition, and transmission of the nation’s culture. These policies are stated in the quotes that follow:

One of the main objectives of Ghana's Cultural Policy is to document and promote Ghana's traditional cultural values such as those enshrined in concepts of human dignity [...] and specifically to create awareness of the traditional values and generate pride and respect for the nation's heritage (p.4).

The quotes continue that:

The Cultural Policy was designed to be implemented in six broad dimensions. Among these is the preservation and conservation of culture [...] through research, documentation and exhibitions (p.10).

And finally, the document states that:

the state shall recognize festivals as significant events in the life of a community for the transmission of culture. It shall also recognize them as significant events in the cultural life of the nation as a whole. The Commission on Culture shall, therefore, encourage the study, documentation and interpretation of festivals through the universities and other research and educational institutions (p.36).

Similarly, Article 39 of the Fourth Republican Constitution of Ghana (1992:40) recognizes culture as a tool for national integration and development and, as the directive principle of state policy, Article 39 clause 2, declares: "The State shall take steps to encourage the integration of appropriate customary values into the fabric of national life through formal and informal education."

These quotes jointly give us an understanding that the Government of Ghana desires the preservation of the National cultural heritage through research and documentation among other things. Much recognition is to be given to national and traditional festivals, including funeral celebrations. By this governmental desire through the policies, my research is a

contribution to the fulfilment to these national needs. It goes in line with the constitutional requirements of using formal education through research and also informal education through cultural performances to document and preserve the nation's culture.

The significance of systemization of traditional music, the documentation of information, and information retrieval, as a necessary aspect of academic work in Ghana is an area of much concern to ethnomusicologists. Unfortunately, little attention has been paid, so far, on these very important aspects to *keku* of the Bakpele tradition. The reasons may be attributed to the extraordinary linguistic diversity as a major stumbling block for researchers, or due to ignorance or even lack of interest in this very art, on the part of academia. The adverse effect of this lack of documentation is the paucity of documented literary materials available to the ethnographer.

The progress of a society, we can say, depends broadly on access to recorded and properly documented information. There is the crucial need to locate, identify and utilize effectively, as well as efficiently, every available documented and undocumented material for the protection, preservation, enhancement and promotion of *Dku* performances in Bakpele. Documenting *keku* will guide people and researchers on the frontiers of knowledge it possesses, preserves and contains with regard to the Bakpele tradition.

6.5.3 The Future of Keku in Bakpele

The future of *keku* in Bakpele is nonetheless crucial to the Bakpele themselves and even more, to ethnomusicologists. In the light that cultures everywhere have unique attributes, Bakpele *eto keku*, as folk music, has maintained the unique Bakpele cultural identity. As folk music, it passes on important information to generations, while simultaneously, helping to lighten the many social burdens of life. *Keku* retains an important

place in the lives of the Bakpele, particularly, when classifying the latter as a rural and semi-rural area, where popular music thrives less.

The originality of *keku* performance is, however, at stake at the expense of modernity, if it is not documented. In every sphere of life, access to information becomes easier when the said information is well stored and well preserved. In much the same way, information becomes useful when people are well directed to the appropriate information, the source of the information, and its retrieval with the least effort

One of the main focal points of music, as pointed out by Titon, (2005:a), is the performer; for this study, the principal performers of *keku* are the women singers. The fact that *keku* widened its scope in the previous performances, as it was mentioned at the focus group discussions, is due to the skills of those who were engaged in its performance.

Accusations are most often levelled against the youth of today by the elderly women for their inability to render these dirges accurately. Adversely, there appears to be an imbalance in the system whereby, the youth of Bakpele are said to be lackadaisical to *keku* performance. The youth on the other hand, complained of being side-lined and not exposed to the tradition. They turn to blame the elderly in the Bakpele society for their inefficiency in transmitting these songs to them. They say “They don’t teach us (a youth consultant 2013).”

The youth, in this case, are those who fall victim to urban migration who travel back home only during holidays or upon retirement from active service. This relocation of the youth to the urban areas reduces their level of interest in traditional songs because of much exposure to western music. Here lies the need to bring on board all stakeholders for the sake of sustenance and continuity of *keku*.

Keku at the moment exists in the oral-aural tradition; that is, it is passed down by word of mouth and learned by hearing or viewing live performances. It is often assumed that

this mode of transmission inevitably causes songs to change their components in one way or the other. Each person who teaches or learns develops his or her own variant, lacking the control of notation. In aural traditions, music cannot, perhaps, go beyond a certain degree of complexity, because limits of memory and coordination of simultaneous performers will function in the end as inhibitions. One can conclude here that the nature of musical tradition is affected greatly by the way it is transmitted and by the way its content is taught and learned.

The school can be an avenue of resolution to the transmission process. The curriculum of Christian education is usually, built around the beliefs of the Bible which to them is the inspiration and infallible written word of God. To them, that is the absolute standard of truth needed by every person, for which school lessons are taught from that perspective. This curricular approach notwithstanding, schools can still meet the requirement of transmitting traditions of society to the up-and-coming generations. In the 1986 school programme, an aspect of education aimed at enriching the school curriculum with the nation's culture was emphasized. In this programme, all school goers were to be given the opportunity to "be proud of their country, appreciate and value their culture, feel the need to serve others and contribute towards the improvement of their Environment" (CRDD, 1986:1).

Under the Curriculum Enrichment Programme (CEP) introduced into Ghanaian schools in 1996 (CRDD, 1996:1), African music was emphasized as a course of study under the Cultural Studies programme. Pupils were made to realize the riches embedded in their musical heritage. They were made to value and appreciate it. This was manifested in areas like singing, drumming and dancing, the use of talking drums, drama and folklore to depict social systems. Similarly, in 1998, the government of Ghana introduced a Music and Dance Programme into Basic Schools in fulfilment of the policy of equipping all citizens with the skills that will make them beneficiaries of socio-cultural environments in which they may

find themselves. These policies are in line with Nketia, (1974) who outlines the importance of folk music in educating the African child in these words:

No program of Music Education ... can ignore various areas of music activities that are entrenched in the life of a society and are recognized as culturally valid. There is a lot to be studied in school from all selected folk music. Some folk songs of Africa involve narrations of historical events and people. Some deal with the various traditions while others make reference to the environment (P. 174).

In his recommendation, Adesua, (2004:148) said the disappearance of the third rated subjects – Music and Physical Education from the examination time tables of Basic Schools, making them summatively non-examinable subjects by the West African Examination Council, should not be a hindrance to the teaching and learning of dirges in schools. This is because this aspect of the curriculum has fully been catered for in the outside-classroom-curricular activities such as Inter School Cultural Festivals and local funeral celebrations, where school children could be taken out on field trips.

6.5.4 Performance and change

Theories that have been formulated in terms of performance have, and will continue to manifest in our societies. A model framework may be of use in appraising the reports from the focus group discussions. In doing this, I drew on the Performance Theory advanced by Bauman Richard. Explaining the theory, Bauman (1975:293) emphasized performance as being a “display of communicative competence.” The theory as explained is a framework for analysing oral performances. The theory asserts that performance enhances experience, bringing a great intensity of communication between performer and audience.

Performance theory has been used in yet a slightly different way by the anthropologist

Singer, (1955:23), (in Stone (2008:136)). Singer identifies cultural performance as the unit of analysis in large-scale societies. In these performances, he captured not only concerts and plays but also rituals and festivals. “Cultural performances are important.” Singer observed that it is here “people exhibit their culture in large-scale societies to themselves as well as to visitors.” Singer’s observation thus, draws our attention to the importance of traditional festivals with their accompanying music. Funerals and their accompanying music, seen as festivals, serve as a direct reflection of the society where it is located. On such occasions, the natives showcase their tradition to the numerous mourners who visit. Bakpele could showcase reflections in *keku* during funerals as an aspect of their traditional festival.

The term performance theory, according to Stone, (2008:136) points to a range of meanings, for example, interpreting scores that are passed down in the performing culture, in contrast to details of notation. There are other meanings drawn on sociolinguistics and anthropological points. Drawing on Bauman, (1975:295) to distinguish ethnomusicological performances from other kinds of behaviours, Stone, (2008:136) opines that special codes are reserved for and, to diagnose performances.

Among the codes, a native performer has the right to disclaim any performance that deviates from the original. In order to satisfy these demands, Stone, (2008:136) continues that there are special stylistic devices and formulae that signal to discriminate performances. The performance of *keku* is uniquely structured, satisfying the ethnological approach to performance. Bakpele could base on this theory to disclaim any performance that deviates from the original. But we also need to understand ourselves in view of societal change.

The desire for community solidarity, reciprocity, and egalitarian relations constitute core values for approaching and ordering the Bakpele society. Their way of thinking about music and their approach to performance emerged from these same principles. With regard to community solidarity, *keku* is generally performed as community ensemble. Individual performance of *keku* is very rare, except at the instance of the pronouncement of a death

when one sings out a few phrases of a tune to reflect the pronouncement. This type of singing creates room for individual expression of self-pity.

During funerals, in order to reciprocate previous performances, any female member of the community was welcomed to join in the performance of *keku* regardless of her musical knowledge or ability. More so, *keku* performers do not usually comment on, or correct other performers while on stage. Instead, much effort is made, for example, to pick a tune correctly if one finds that it was wrongly raised or wrongly pitched.

Time changes and so do societies accordingly. Knowledge of existing materials is, therefore, of immense help in viewing society both synchronically and diachronically. Although the rate of change may vary from culture to culture, no cultures remain unchanged. Garry, (2001:269) carries two principal ways that cultures change. These are internally, through the process of invention and innovation and externally, through the process of diffusion.

The change in *keku* performance in Bakpele is the result of a global issue. Music changes globally because of improved technology. There are new and refined instruments and other sound producing resources. There are new ways of creating music, even with new “musical languages.” Artistes and audience developed the innate to grow and to advance in knowledge and understanding, and to reach out for new and high possibilities in performance skills. It, most likely, has been these reasons for the shift in performance of *keku*. Looking at the rate and extent of global change that has differed throughout history and among various cultures and subcultures, we can arrive at a basic fact that there are such changes because people’s needs and tastes change periodically. Performances of *keku* at Bakpele funerals are no exception of this change. However, for the purpose of this study, we can conveniently use the word shift to describe the type of change, which is more of performance, as I found in the field.

There is a shift in the performance of *keku* as a result of cultural diffusion through acculturation. Acculturation forced Bakpele to borrow under conditions of external pressure. This borrowing accounted for the shift experienced in the level of stage performance of *keku* at Bakpele funerals. Acculturation has affected *keku* performance because of Bakpele's coercion from western traditions whose influence is incompatible with the Bakpele. But the Bakpele could be said to have maintained their cultural boundaries through the exclusive use of Sekpele for communication and singing, as in *keku*.

Commenting on the cultural context of African music, Lock, (in Titon & Reck, (2005:73) said the "music is never pure because music-cultures are always changing and are being shaped by many outside influences." This is what Allan (1996:22) calls secularization which he noted has been common in industrial societies. Subsequently among Bakpele, there are changes such as these on their dirge performances. Bakpele, though a semi-urban settlement according to the 2002 Population and Housing Census report, is gradually becoming industrialized due to the high rate of rural-urban mingling and also the expansion of social amenities.

According to Chaves, (1994) (in Allan, (1996:22), secularization as a social process about supernatural beliefs and practices affects not only religious ideas but also the structures of religious institutions and also their relationship with society. In this study, beliefs about death and its observances which reportedly are taking a different turn among Bakpele in the face of competing religions are the contentious structures of secularization.

Assimeng, (2006) observed that:

In every real functioning society, a most pervasive feature is the fact that the resources and esteemed properties of the society are distributed unequally. Positions in society are evaluated differently. Salaries, wages, modes of respect, deference, honour, food quality, health status, etc., are shared unequally (P. 62).

In explaining this hierarchy further, he said there are males and females. Then there are age groups: infants, children, adolescents, adults and the aged. Generally, males are usually ranked higher than females, and the aged higher than the young.

For this study, we are interested in women as a status group. Sociologists will tell us that the existence of this type of social hierarchy and stratification in terms of social class and social mobility, access to power and material resources as found among a simple traditional society like the Bakpele, and for that matter, other groups is a common condition of all human societies.

Looking at the egalitarian position in the performance of Bakpele *eto keku*, there is no fixed authority or power. This is in contrast, for example, to Western Symphony orchestra which is directed by a conductor or at the lead of a concert master. It is neither like other performing groups which require a hierarchy of control by which a leader or director has the authority to limit participation to competent musicians and also direct their participation. This, in turn, is made possible by the hierarchical specialized nature of Bakpele society as a whole. While the western approach is logical, given a European orientation, and to our ears might result in a more pleasing musical performance, this modus operandi is rejected among the Bakpele, for whom such control and limitation on participation would be highly an indictment. Among Bakpele, the limited and controlled music, even though, might sound good, is considered incomplete and offensive - not beautiful - for, it is without the homogeneous sound orchestrated by community participation.

Being an egalitarian collective society, the act of singing harmoniously and creating a thick, well-blended sound is paramount. Such a collective participation in musical performances during funerals is the vital way to represent and maintain social unity in the community, just as the blending of voices in unison embodies an important aesthetic value. In the performance of *keku*, individuals do not generally want to stand out or be singled out because the collective is granted the greater importance than the individual identity and also,

perhaps, for the fear of arousing jealousy. Ultimately, among the Bakpele, equal access to musical experience and the maintenance of amicable communal relations are granted more importance than attempts to strictly control the quality of an ensemble's musical performance.

6.5.5 Understanding ourselves for societal change

At almost all the FGD sessions, it was unanimously agreed and understood that neither a total retention of the dirge at funerals nor its complete eradication was needed. Instead, a modification and intensification of performances were recommended. In the interim, some form of modification has already started at Likpe Abrani, one of the Likpe communities. This modification is not on the content of the songs but in the organization of the funeral.

In this township, the community has decided to gather at an open place on the afternoon of the first day after burial, to receive sympathizers and donations in an organized way, as it is being done in the Akan communities. This public gathering takes place at the expense of the existing afternoon programme, when women were supposed to be parading the streets in dirges.

The advantages of this latter approach over the initial Bakpele type of funeral where dirges occupy the afternoon of the first day of burial are that more money is generated by way of donations and a lot of visitors to the funeral are spotted out. On the other hand, the disadvantages are that the tradition of singing dirges at this same time is forgone, more so, their guests are not properly attended to as it used to be because all mourners including the bereaved family and their sympathizers rush to be seated at the supposed funeral ground.

The challenge here is the choice between the real versus the ideal. Traditional music is needed by every society because it stands as the bedrock that reflects the society's culture.

In much the same way, change is also needed in every sphere of our lives for the advancement of society. How then can culture thrive in a changing society, if one may ask? For this to be possible, there will be the need for us to understand ourselves from different perspectives of life with regard to societal change.

There is no doubt that in the African perspective, one is much cautious to see to it that the traditional ceremonies due ancestors are comprehensively performed. For, those who neglect these will not only fear that misfortune could come their way as a revenge of the slightest neglect, but would also feel that they had been instrumental in cutting the departed off from the “life” and “soul” of their family, their clan, tribe, or village.

In recent times, however, people have been less observant of the traditional worship in honour of their ancestors. This is because even a little knowledge of scientific historical criticism is enough to make people realize that there is no reason to suppose that their ancestors were better (especially more moral in the widest sense of the term) than are the people of today. Therefore, the fact that the ancestors - or some of them were singled out for such remarkable honours begins to appear to be less and less rational. Better education, especially technological education, has caused people to have less fear of revengeful ancestral-spirits, should the respect that tradition offers to them be neglected. Even basic education gives an individual the idea that nature and destiny are as such in the individual's own hands as also in the hands of the dead. We need to understand ourselves that ancestral worship should, these days therefore, be seen as a unifying force in the family, clan, tribe or village, rather than as actual worship of the deceased. So that it will have important social aspects, even if its religious ones are no longer so apparent.

We need to understand ourselves from both the cultural and social points of view that education and information are needed by all in making well informed decisions. Education and information are also crucial to development and change, just as people and communities need these two elements to take decisions. Here, I am not talking exclusively of formal

education; informal education is also very important. Behaviour can be changed through education and communication. If good decisions and policies cannot be disseminated or explained in such a way that people understand what the issues are and what choices and options exist, then they cannot be expected to adopt behaviours that would promote the good of society.

In this proverbial global village, the central task of this age, then, is the creation of a new model of co-existence among the various cultures, peoples, and races within a single inter-connected civilization. It is what Lovelock, (1982) (in Kofie, (1999:5) referred to as the “Gaia hypothesis.” This idea is not new. Collins (2005:632) explains the Gaia theory that the earth and everything on it constitute a single self-regulating living system. This is one of the means of exposing all of us to other cultures, from where there will be cultural exchanges in order to build bridges between cultures. But once these bridges have been built, they should be followed by real contacts. It should therefore be possible to exchange personnel of cultural institutions, educational institutions, and journalists as a means of exposing people to a more profound contact and subsequently, understanding ourselves from the viewpoint of different cultures. Tourism is another way of exposing people to other cultures. In the said village, one would gain the opportunity to view the traditional settings, taste traditional dishes, and feel a real-life situation.

It is tempting to evaluate the practices of other cultures on the bases of our own perspective. Many everyday statements reflect our attitudes to the impression that our culture is best. We are thus, tempted to use terms such as underdeveloped, backward, and primitive to refer to other societies. One will, for example, hear people say “Our music is superior to other peoples.” or, “Our language is more polished than theirs.” Such ethnocentric persons see their own groups as the centre or defining point of culture, and views all other cultures as deviations from what is normal.

Two schools are showing up here. While conflict theorists point out that ethnocentric

value judgments serve to devalue groups and to deny equal opportunities, functionalists, on the other hand, see it as serving to maintain a sense of solidarity by promoting group pride. This type of social stability as indicated in the latter view is established at the expense of other people's. It is for us then, to understand that culture, irrespective of the society where it is being practiced, still retains its attributes as the way of life ideal to those people.

In much the same way, while ethnocentrism evaluates foreign cultures using the familiar culture of the observer as a standard of correct behaviour, cultural relativism views peoples' behaviour from the perspective of their own culture. Relativism places much premium on understanding other cultures, rather than dismissing them as strange or exotic. Cultural relativism stresses that different social contexts give rise to different norms and values. We need to understand ourselves such as to examine our music and cultural practices within the particular context of the cultures in which they are found.

Culture is said to be an age long concept and way of life of a people of a given society. This implies that every member of that community or society, irrespective of the generation, is part of that culture and so is part of the advocacy team. We can, however, identify key players and careers of culture, who are responsible for a change or any diversification. These include all adults in society: educationists like school teachers and custodians of culture, traditional rulers like chiefs and elders, and artistes' transition through the aesthetics. This is where we need to understand ourselves from the social point of view, to allow culture to adjust itself to tradition and national policies.

6.5.6 Adjusting ourselves to societal change

Titon & Reck, (2005:13) posit that possible situation could be created in the experiences of any listener or viewer to adjust himself to either accept or reject a performance. It is worth noting here that it is society that trains the composer/performer, who

invariably, operates within and, for that society. Each of them - society or the composer is therefore, expected to accommodate the other through wholesome adjustments.

The performer/composer could adjust himself to match society, just as society can also adjust to accept the composer/performer.

Under normal circumstances, when we listen to a piece of music for the first time, we are likely moved to attach one of two types of perceptions to it. The music is both embraced and accepted, or, it is rejected outright as not appealing. In the case of the former, where the music is embraced, we are most often curious and will want to find out more about it. Our next impulse might be to let our bodies move to the music. In the case of the latter, persistent and constant listening will naturally cause us to internalize the various elements of the music, to our admiration.

In both cases, we move further to ask ourselves questions about the music. Questions like: what is the tradition or ethnic origin of the music? In which context is it performed? What is the instrumentation made up of? These questions among others, when answered audibly or internally would have definitely called for multiple listening of the piece to our admiration. We can conclude in this way that no music is too good or too bad to appreciate and neither is it distinct to adjust ourselves to.

Titon & Reck, (2005:13) illustrate this adjustment in a model presented in a diagram of concentric circles as shown in Figure 6.4. This is a systematic outline or a model within the music-culture which tells us what each person's position in society might be in relation to the other.

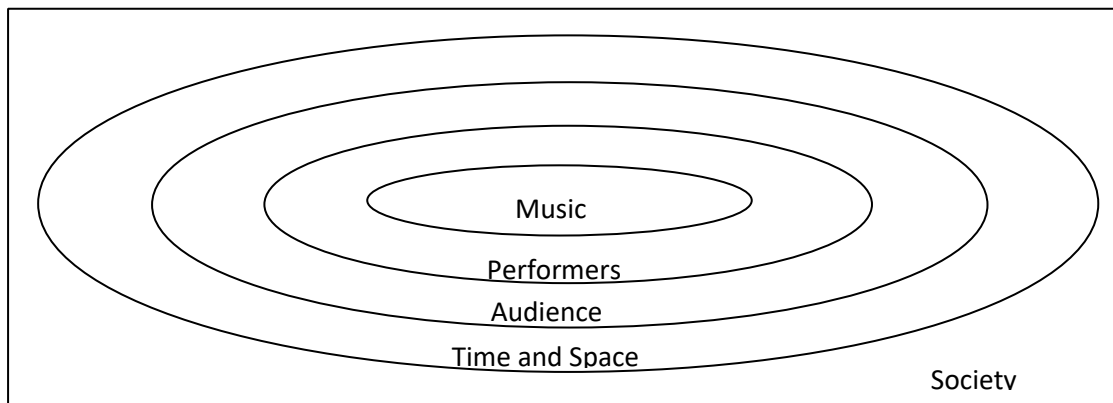


Figure 6.4: Concentric circles of performance

Source: Titon & Reck, (2005:13)

At the centre of the circles is the music. This is closely shrouded by the event in one's experience of the music which is represented as the performer. The performer is surrounded by his audience, and the whole event taking place in its setting within time and space. The whole of these activities take place within society where we have the music, the performer, and the audience in time and space. For this adjustment to be possible, one will have to admire his role and position within society, as well as those of others.

We can understand and adjust ourselves by relating *Bakpele eto keku* to the illustration given by Titon & Reck, (2005:13). The dirge is within the society, performed by society and for society. Any part of the circle that is incompatible with the other parts experiences some sort of adjustment in order to make the system complete. The most important thing to understand about performance according to Titon & Reck, (2005:14) is that it moves along on the basis of agreed-on rules and procedures. These rules enable the *Bakpele* women to sing together and make sense to each other and to the audience. Rules or accepted procedures govern both the audience and the performer, all within time and space within the *Bakpele eto Dku* tradition.

African traditional music is said to be of the participative performance. There is a perpetual give-and-take between the main performer and the public whereby, the public is fully part of the performance. Tradition and culture are there to help each participant to know his response to a particular music. People in African societies, even though, not full

musicians, have music as one of the requirements to fulfil their social responsibilities. A denial of such responsibility automatically leaves the individual to some form of dissatisfaction.

African musicians are said to be in three categories: the non-professional, the semi-professional, and the professional. The African feels proud performing as one of these categories for the mere reason that African music is highly contextual and not contemplative. The Bakpele woman is never happy for not being part of a musical performance that she should have been; even when she is not a full professional. Here, one would have to understand societal music as being an aspect of its culture, and to recognize that each culture creates the kind of music it needs to serve its purposes and to reflect its principal values.

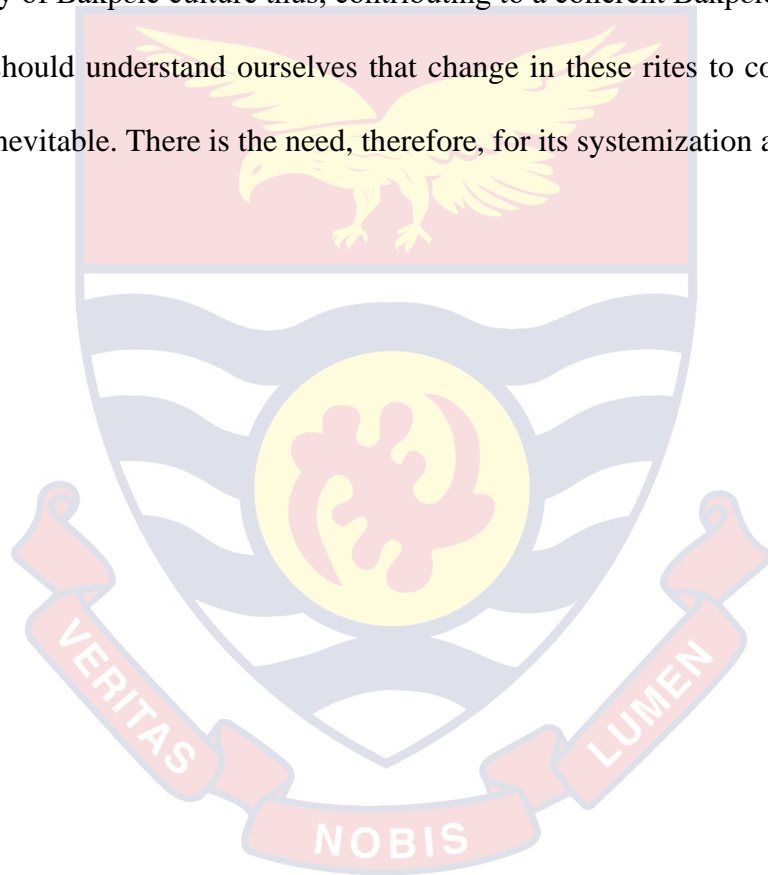
Titon & Reck, (2002:28) argue that music-cultures are dynamic rather than static. They constantly change in response to the pressure from within or without. Music is a fluid and dynamic element of culture which changes to correspond with the expressive and emotional desires of humankind. Music is peculiarly a human adaptation to life on this earth. By this understanding, the people of Bakpele could adjust themselves to the level of dirge performance within space and time, for the sake of continuity and change.

6.6 Summary of Chapter

Among African societies, death is seen as a mysterious aspect of the reality, and Bakpele mythology, seeking to explain their natural order of things and the origin of death, posit that *Onanto* (God) is the source of life and death. To them, it is God who brought death into being in order to take away the one whose work in this world has been accomplished. Death is regarded by the Bakpele as one of the crises of life, and therefore, have associated some religious rites with it. Among these rites is the celebration of funerals of which *Dku* play a prominent part. *Dku* define the purpose of funeral celebrations and for that matter, the context of funerals. The actual origin of *Dku* is not as yet known, but this tradition has been

in existence with the Bakpele in building up association between the present and the past by means of thematic references. The lyrics of the songs play significant roles impacting society philosophically, psychologically and socially. From the sociological perspective, we can see that religion is more than a personal experience; it is profoundly a social phenomenon that affects not only individuals, but also the societies in which they exist. Religion can, for example, be a force for change as well as a force for maintaining the status quo.

I am concluding my study on field question 5 that *Dku* contribute to the continuity and stability of Bakpele culture thus, contributing to a coherent Bakpele society. Besides all these, we should understand ourselves that change in these rites to correspond to societal change is inevitable. There is the need, therefore, for its systemization and documentation.



CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.0 Overview

This chapter presents a summary of my study, conclusions drawn and recommendations made that may be of help to other ethnographic researchers in similar fields of study.

7.1 Summary of the Study

The people of Likpe, traditionally known and called the Bakpele belong to the Guan Language group, and a member of the Ghana-Togo Mountain Languages (GTML) of the Volta sub-family of Kwa languages. Their ancestors were known to have migrated alongside other Guans from the ancient Ghana Empire between AD 1050 and 1076. They arrived in the present-day Ghana in the early parts of the 12th century and moved south-eastward along the Volta valley. Legend had it that they moved along and established several settlements; the best remembered were in the region in and around present-day Atebubu in Brong Ahafo. Their ancestors were believed to have abandoned these settlements because of the hostility of neighbouring tribes. The group moved further south and settled in a place known as Likpeto, where they were warmly received by their hosts the Bakwas.

Narrations from Aboagye (2010) and Dzamboe (2012) claimed that the name Bakpele was derived from *bakple* meaning “in their numbers,” which was given to them by their hosts, the Bakwa, to describe the size of their guests; and that they were nicknamed Likpe by the people of Gbi based on the report given by their spies who saw them sharpening stones in preparation for war against them. The dialect spoken by the people of Likpe is called *Sekpele*.

The Bakpele have a “moving tortoise” as their symbol of tradition, signifying an assurance of arriving at their destination, irrespective of the rate of movement. Similarly, they have the accolade *Bakpele ntɔkɔ kato* (Bakpele are on top of issues), urging one another for hard work. *Lekɔyi* is the main cooperate festival celebrated by all the towns, communities and settlements of Bakpele. They have other minor festivals like *kɔlɔ* which is celebrated in the various towns.

7.1.1 Overview of the problem

Bakpele women are socially permitted access to certain rites including their rite to traditional music-making, specifically, *keku* (dirge) as music for celebrating the dead. After some initial research, I realized that there have been some researchers who worked at different places in the Region and on different topic areas. Out of these, apart from Asamoah (1967) who extended his study of the Northern Eweland to include part of Bakpele, and Sracoo (1989), who studied *Letorkli*, a traditional dance type of the Bakpele, there was no other such study specific to the Bakpele dirge.

Analysing how under-researched my study area is, I could assert that there was not much ethnographic study done on dirges of the Bakpele. The problem for this study, therefore, is that there are no adequate ethnographic materials on *keku*, as a musical type of the Bakpele.

7.1.2 Purpose statement and field questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate aspects of Bakpele worldview that have influenced both the content and context of *keku* making. In the study, I looked at who the Bakpele are, the trend of *keku* performance amidst other mourning songs as part of their funeral celebrations. I conducted some musical and textual analyses of the collected songs

that are used at the five phases of their funerals, in relation to their worldview on funerals. Finally, in the study, I explored ways of systemizing the genre with the view to improving funeral practice.

7.1.3 Review of the Methodology

This case study followed after two types of paradigms as its philosophical stance. These are Epistemology and Ethnology while using the qualitative strategy. My study targeted the entire Bakpele population made up of the four clusters of the Bakpele according to their settlements as follows: Bakwa cluster, Bala cluster, Mate cluster and Avedzeme cluster. The total population of the study area, according to the report of Ghana Statistical Service (2002) is 13,292. By simple purposive sampling, I selected two clusters of the four- Bala and Bakwa clusters for my fieldwork.

The presumed knowledgeable in *keku* and the artistes for recording of songs were both selected from Bala cluster, while the third phase of data collection – the focus group discussions covered both Bala and Bakwa Clusters, Avedzeme cluster was used for the pilot study because of its contiguity with the other clusters.

The main instrument that I used is interviews. I used three interview types in accordance with Patton (2002) who recommends the use of multiple sources of data collection in a research to complement one another. These interviews are interviews using a guide containing semi-structured items, participant observation and also focus group discussion.

My research plan was patterned after the five-stage model suggested by Gary (2001:83) as follows: selecting a research problem, formulating a research design, collecting the data, analysing the data, and interpreting the data. Figure 7.1 shows these steps.

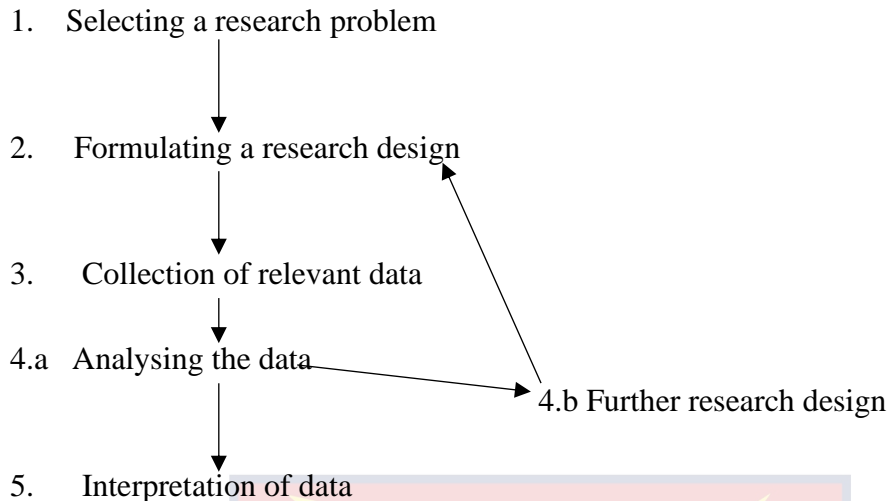


Figure 7.1: Outline of qualitative research approach
Source: Gary (2001:83)

My fieldwork interviewed three elderly women who were purposively sampled out, and tagged as the “knowledgeable” in Bakpele funeral traditions. Using a portable audio-visual recorder, and following the technique of bi-musicality, I recorded, iteratively, samples of songs which I analysed. For the third phase of my data collection, I held twelve different focus group discussion sessions in two different clusters.

I discussed results from the interviews namely: the “knowledgeable”, the focus group discussions and the various musical demonstrations using the following different qualitative analytical techniques taken from Yin, (2008) concurrently: case description, explanation building, time series and logic model. I also systemized samples of the songs using Nketia’s (1969:17) analytical model which relates musical elements to the context of culture.

7.1.4 Major Findings

The major findings of the study were that *keku* has not received any substantial research, therefore, there are limited ethnographic materials on it. Other findings of the study are that:

1. One will hardly find a religious-free funeral in Bakpele for these years because there are no people of the agnostics and infidel sects among them. All people living in Bakpele are found to be associated with Christian religion, Islam or Traditional African religion, with the larger number of funeral types being Christian.

2. Bakpele tradition revealed that out of the four major stages of man's passage on earth namely: birth, initiation, marriage and death, it is the rites that mark death that are the largest celebrated. Occasionally, *okafɔkpakpa* (traditional marriage) closely equates it. A five-phased ritual is observed to mark the key junctures in the deceased's journey into the world of ancestors. At all these phases, *Dku* of different types are performed.

3. There are other types of funeral songs which are performed at Bakpele funerals, but which do not serve any traditional role. Variations in the performance of the various funeral types of Bakpele are not generally, reflected in their dirges. *Keku* is considered in general terms for all funerals, without going into the details of particular funeral traditions relating to normal death, pre-mature death, religious or non-religious funerals.

4. The Bakpele worldview provides psychological comfort through the positive belief that life continues at the spiritual world. The rituals and ceremonies, including dirges, surrounding death serve as an important purpose in society in making this bewildering phenomenon understandable. This aside, the emotions of pain, grief, and agony associated with death, which strongly drive the psychological impact on the people, would remain unexplained, resulting in traumatic dis-illusiveness and a breakdown of communal order.

5. There are songs to traditionally greet the corpse (adult laments), songs sung to publicly mourn while the body is lying in state, those sung on the way to the cemetery; the others

sung at the grave side of *oyokɔ*, those sung on the second day of burial (including grandchildren lament), and finally those sung during the 90th day rituals for female adult diseased (adult laments).

6. On the whole, mourning songs are lopsided against *keku* in terms of usage at Bakpele funerals. However, in practice, the Bakpele do their best to maintain the originality of the phases of the rites.

7. The structural characteristic of *keku* is that they are tunes that have short melodies, often with repeating sections, usually sung over a number of times. The melody can be described as a ditty, taking one unit of a song as a section. Text-setting in *keku* is syllabic. This made the text in each song to stand out clearly.

8. *Keku* has the voice as its principal and most important instrument, with hand claps as its integral part. Instrumental accompaniment is modest and without much embellishment. It was generally observed that almost all the songs sampled out have a common rhythmic pattern of anacrusis, beginning on different degrees of the last beat of the bar. The songs have a strong feature of sliding end-notes.

9. The six major factors identified at the FGD sessions that have negatively impacted the performance of *keku* are the influence of Christian religion, impact of western music, impact of rural-urban migration, influence of western education, modernization due to western technology and lack of documentation of *Dku*. One of the most influential of these factors is Christian religion. See Table 7.1 for the originality and modernity of musical elements in the **Bakpele** funeral traditions.

Table 7.1: Summary of Originality and Modernity of Musical Elements in the Bakpele funeral traditions.

Phase of rite	Musical element	Original	Modified
Phase 1 Pronouncement of Death	Use of <i>blilo</i> (signal drum), weeping and wailing to announce death.	<i>Blilo</i> (signal drum) is sounded to gather the community around the family head for the official announcement of the death. This is done alongside wailing and weeping.	The originality is maintained. An additional medium of announcement is the tolling of church bells, not to summon church members but to create awareness.
Phase 2 Pre-Burial	The types of funeral songs sung; extent of performance and documentation.	<i>Dku</i> are sung at wake-keepings as the sole genre; performance is open to all adult women, as the sole performers of <i>Dku</i> . Occasionally, traditional dances like <i>Asafo (Akpi)</i> , <i>Atrikpui</i> and <i>Adevu</i> (Hunter's dance) are also performed concurrently, by their male counterparts.	Only laments are performed for the rituals, <i>Dku</i> are rare; instead, Christian songs and secular songs dominate. Participation, as usual, is open to all mourners. The social aspects of the activities are documented but not the songs.
Phase 3 Burial	Documentation of funeral songs; extent of performance. Types of songs.	There is nothing in the form of documentation of songs. <i>Dku</i> and social songs are used for all processions. <i>Dku</i> are used for interment, especially at funerals for <i>oyokɔ</i> .	There is occasional documentation of mourners present and the burial ceremony but not of the songs. Christian and social songs are widely used for procession and interment. <i>Dku</i> are completely not sung while documentation of social events are in the DVD medium.
Phase 4 Post-Burial	Types of funeral songs sung; extent of performance.	Massive performance of <i>Dku</i> on the afternoon of the day following burial. Subsequent weeping and singing of laments at dawn for a period of one week. No documentation of the process nor the songs.	Performance of <i>Dku</i> on the afternoon of the day after burial did not change, except that the level of performance has experienced a downward trend. Singing of <i>Dku</i> at dawn is no longer observed. Documentation of social events are in the medium of DVD.

Phase 5 Subsequent Mourning	Types of funeral songs; extent of performance and documentation	Laments are sung at the 90 th day rites for women but not for men. <i>Dku</i> generally are not sung at this stage of the performance. No documentation of proceedings nor songs.	Women adhered strictly to the performance of laments at the various stages of the 90 th day rites for women; no swapping of the songs or change in the text; no change or modification in the originality.
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7.2 Discussions

My study compared to Asamoah (1967) exhibits some methodological differences. In the first place, *Adzoha* is not exclusively a mourning song but a warrior song that is performed at such celebrations as the funeral of a chief, a royal, or a statesman. It is also performed to celebrate the installation, enstoolment or distoolment of a chief, to celebrate a great haunt, or to grace the celebration of a traditional festival. In my argument, *Adzoha* is not one of the Likpe dances. It is not academic and scientific either, to analyse the music of different institutions, sampled from different cultures together under the same study objective, if it is not a comparative study.

Secondly, Ho Ahoe which is located within the Asogli State is not part of Northern Eweland. More so, Logba Alakpeti and the Likpe towns are all located outside the Ewe speaking communities. Asamoah, (1967) justifying members of his sample said these areas do things in common because of their nearness to each other. Here also, these communities do not share common boundaries, neither are they close to one another. These are the reasons he gave for extending his study to include parts of Likpe (Bakpele) as his sample for a study on Northern Eweland, which is subject to debate.

Again, Asamoah, (1967) studied this music under the sub topics of organization and performance, form and analyses, and also song texts. For the purpose of review in relation to my study, I limited the literature on Asamoah (1967) to Likpe *Kpetavi*. *Kpetavi*, he said is

a word in *Sekpele* (Likpe language) meaning mourning songs, which also is subject to further research.

Asamoah (1967:5, 8, 40) concluded his findings that all the songs he recorded from the five communities - Ho Ahoe, Logba Alakpeti, Likpe Agbozome, Likpe Mate and Likpe Bala have experienced some similarities and differences. The songs are similar in terms of structure, linguistic aspects context and performance. The only difference is that Ho-Bankoe is Ewe- speaking, while Likpe and Logba are Guan-Speaking. By this conclusion, I observed that he made a generalization of musical genre and musical elements in his five study communities, meaning he did not delve much into the music of *Bakpele eto keku* (dirges of Bakpele) either. There is therefore, some research gap between Asamoah, (1967) and my work. I do not fully agree with Asamoah's work. In contrast to Asamoah (1967), I limited the scope of my study to *Bakpele eto Dku* while giving them in-depth analyses.

The philosophic significance of death in Akpafu, according to Agawu is two-fold. First, it marks the completion of the earthly cycle of existence thus, birth, puberty (circumcision and nubilehood), marriage, and death. Second, it opens the door to a higher spiritual realm in which the deceased, as an ancestor, takes his place alongside the lesser gods and the Supreme Being in the higher reaches of existence. This philosophical view is also the view of Bakpele who also see death to be a transitional stage of the human being. Agawu, (1988) describing Akpafu funeral songs with particular reference to the dirge elaborated two models; those of a Christian and those for a non-Christian, using the latter as the main framework. My study is similar to that of Agawu (1988). I described *Dku* as funeral songs, not of Akpafu but of the Bakpele, while, using the Christian and the non-Christian believers as the framework.

The novelty of this study is found in my contextual use of the word systemization. <https://www.thefreedictionary.com>, (Retrieved 22/3/2014) provides a series of synonyms for the word systemization, as order, arrange, marshal, organize and methodize, each going with

its definition. For this study, I will go in for the definition of the last word which says methodize suggests imposing an orderly procedure rather than a fixed scheme. By this, systemization of experience is a method aimed at improving practice based on critical reflections according to a system.

The finding that is new about my study is a reflection from findings of field question number five thus: *In what ways can Bakpele eto Dku be systemized with the view to improving funeral practices?* My study suggests ways of combining the two main activities of the afternoon of the day after burial. When this suggestion is carried out, the novelty of my study would also be met.

Findings revealed that the Bakpele worldview provides psychological comfort in time of death through the positive notion that life continues at the spiritual world. This is a common worldview of the Bakpele which goes in accordance with Schutz, (in Stone 2008:165) that “a common worldview depends on the belief of the members of a community that shares common views,” The rituals and ceremonies, including dirges, surrounding death serve as an important purpose among the Bakpele in making this bewildering phenomenon understandable to explain traumatic dis-illusiveness and to relieve them from emotions of pain, grief, and agony associated with death. This finding goes to confirm the assertion made by Asante, (2007:11) that “worldview is a perception of reality on the basis of which people organize their lives.” In much the same way, Redfield, (1968) observes that worldview is subjective to the perceiver. *Dku* performance is subjective to the Bakpele according to their worldview.

Findings revealed that the details of *keku* performance and its interpretation is highly subjective. From the findings, *Dku* performance is a result of social experiences of the individual mourners, which collectively created the shared contextual meanings of the songs. These findings are in consonance with the main theoretical orientation of this research, according to Schutz, (in Stone, 2008:165). The meaning in a phenomenon arises in the

context of social interaction by which all human experiences are the ground of these experiences. Meaning in *Dku* is created in highly shared meaningful experiences within the Bakpele.

All over Africa, women's role as custodians of tradition including music show their importance in society. The sustenance of traditional musical types and other such institutions is paramount and for this, the elderly woman is credited.

Dku have survived the test of change among the Bakpele. Texts of these songs have not lend themselves to modern linguistic changes, and therefore, rendering the messages, buried in a lot of idiomatic, philosophical, psychological and socio-cultural expressions. It is evident also that the music and performance of *keku* have not suffered any external influence. These findings among the Bakpele coincide with Opondo's (1991) observation of the *dodo* songs of Kenya among the Oruma women's group that despite the influence of Christianity, traditional practices were not completely barred because aspects of traditional marriage coexisted with those Christians.

In spite of this new religion, however, the Bakpele still hold fast to the performance of *Dku* as part of their funeral rites. Membership of *Dku* performers remains exclusively a woman tradition, that performs to the memory of the departed, just as Nketia, (1955:8) reported that among the Akans of Ghana, wailing does not become a man, and the singing of the funeral dirge is the function of women." He mentioned *nwonkorɔ* and said are sung not only for the living but also to the memory of the departed.

Six major influential factors identified at the FGD sessions that have negatively impacted *keku* performance are: influence of Christian religion, impact of western music; impact of rural-urban migration, influence of western education, modernization due to western technology and finally, lack of documentation of *keku*. These factors are similar to Monts' (1989) findings on the role of Vai women in music making. He identified three main factors that have influenced female musical participation as follows: the decline in man's

secrete society, the acceptance of Islam and the migration of the men from rural to urban areas.

7.2.1 The corpora

The Bakpele are not Ewe-speaking even though they are located in the northern ewe part of the region. For that matter, the finding on the scale system does not agree with Agordoh (2002:94) that among the northern Ewe, the heptatonic (seven-tone) scale is used, while the Anlo-Tongu people use any of these pentatonic scales: *d, r, m, s, l* (five notes); or *d, r, m, l, t* (five notes). The Bakpele use pentatonic scale in keku.

The performance of *Dku* is experiencing changes just as the society it serves changes. The downward trend in the level of performance resulted in changing roles and structures so as to keep tradition going on. There are many mourning songs that are adopted and adapted as substitutes and complements to *Dku*. At some funerals in recent times, *Dku* were not performed at the expected phases. For example, the adult laments were replaced by the singing of western sacred art songs.

The basic structure for *Dku* is the call-and-response form which Nketia (1969:16) calls linear structure and which is so typical of African songs. *Dku* are structured into two sections of “A” and “B”. Section “A” is the solo call by the lead singer who sings through the entire song. While she sings, the other performers accompany her with claps to mark the pulse. The songs are based on both tonal and atonal systems of tuning while the melody type is ditty. The melodic rhythm matches speech rhythm, while melodic contour moves as the speech contour.

7.2.2 The Bakpele worldview

Every society in the world, notwithstanding its system of socio-cultural organization or level of administrative development, grapples with the problem of controlling the behaviour of its members. Each society, therefore, builds into its socio-cultural fibre arrangements of social control systems that enforce norms of behaviour. Among the Bakpele, one such arrangement is the performance of dirges that befit the type of life lived by a deceased. The social lives of the Bakpele are closely linked to the social structures of their songs, especially, funeral songs, and so also are their songs linked up to their social lives. For example, the texts of their funeral songs are a reflection on their social life, so also do their religious beliefs determine a set of practices in creating a distinct musical style and repertoires in the form of *Dku*.

A major intriguing paradox about *Dku* is that even though the women are performing to mourn with the bereaved, and to console them, performances are used to address some ill-practices of society. They use idiomatic expressions like imagery, symbolism and allusions in their songs to communicate social themes. *Dku* have marked correlations in matters of form and content, with the details of funerary rites. This is to say there are special songs prescribed for particular occasions or specific situations within the ceremony. This tradition from the Bakpele is similar to that of Benin according to Herskovits, (1967), (in Nketia 1955:5), but in contrast to that of the Akan people of Ghana.

The Bakpele have, for example, songs to traditionally greet the corpse, songs to traditionally seek for permission from the corpse to wash its body, and songs to narrate the type of life the deceased led while on earth. There are also songs that are sung at the breaking of the hearth at the 90th day rites of adult women. There are special songs incorporated into enactment of plays.

7.2.3 Systemization

One major issue that was discussed at the FGD sessions was finding a way to inculcate the practice of gathering at a common place to receive visitors and mourners and also the practice of general singing of dirges to parade the streets. It was noted that the two programmes take place at the same time, on the afternoon of day after burial. At the various sessions, it was realized that the three activities form important parts of the funeral celebration. There was the need to keep tradition going by singing dirges, money is needed for the funeral, and, visitors to the funeral are to be attended to.

Different suggestions came up, and out of the lot, it was agreed on that these three activities run concurrently. The community will gather at a common place where they will be seated in a circular form creating an arena for *Dku* performance. The gathering will include both sexes but the performance of *Dku* will retain its tradition of being a female institution.

By following this seating plan, visitors and mourners to the funeral will be spotted and attended to, so also will their donations reach the appropriate persons. During times when music will be needed to grace the occasion, the women will be called upon to perform *Dku*, and this will be the only musical type for the afternoon just as they were doing on the day after burial.

A few advantages of these combined activities are that the Bakpele will satisfy their cultural obligations and at the same time showcase their tradition according to Singer, (1955:23). Singer, (in Stone 2008:136) observed that cultural performance captures not only concerts and plays but also rituals and festivals.

7.3 Conclusions

The research revealed that very little literally materials on my topic area are available for academia. The persistence of this shortfall will deprive many people of having access to this knowledge. It is this realization at the FGD sessions that called for the need to academically systemize and document this tradition.

Culture is one of the most treasured collective possessions of a people like the Bakpele. Care must, therefore, be taken to ensure its observance through the proper performance of the many rites and rituals that go into it, and also to curb its excesses. It is, therefore, not out of place to refer to the women of Bakpele as the deciders for the future of *Dku* since by custom, they are the immediate custodians of this female tradition. But since these women cannot single-handedly monitor and supervise culture in the traditional area, the onus rests on all bereaved families of the time to team up with stakeholders of *Dku*, in the performance of this aspect of culture for its sustenance and continuity.

Society is changing and accelerating with the turn of every decade, for which tradition must keep up with these changes. Today, a large population of the Bakpele, most especially the youth, have little knowledge about the details of the music that used to be performed at funerals of *oyokɔ*, even though, the majority of the natives are aware of the type of death that is categorized as *oyokɔ*. Only rarely does one come across a native or a traditionalist who is well informed on the rites of *oyokɔ* and its accompanying music. It is imperative to play on the few existing oral literature for full recording, systemization and documentation of this art for its sustenance. This observation does not suggest a return or conversion to the traditional way of worship, but suggests the documentation to preserve this art.

Our society is changing and there is the need for cultural modification to march the change. Music and social structure are interwoven to complement one another into one

system. Social structures determine certain aspects of musical structures and so also do musical aspects determine certain socio-ethnic aspects.

Religion for example, plays a major role in creating distinctive musical structures and repertoires. It is clear that religion is a strong societal event among Bakpele, and for that matter, other ethnic groups. For the fact that preservation and survival are necessary, and for the fact also that music accompanies the performance of funerals, Bakpele will continue to wed their music, religion and social structure into a meta-language which they will not only share but will also perform. Christian religion, though strong and powerful, cannot wipe out the tradition within which it is located. Religion could reinforce ethnicity while becoming itself the beneficiary of a particular genre of music.

7.4 Recommendations

Bakpele eto Dku have existed aural-orally for decades. It is against this backdrop that these recommendations are made. It is worthy to note that in spite of some of the customary practices having been modernized, with some getting lost themselves in the process, the five core phases of the funeral celebration among Bakpele, with their accompanying dirges, have well been retained and maintained, which is highly recommendable.

So long as death continues to be inevitable in society, and so long as the Bakpele still have and believe in the tradition of seeing their dead off into the supposed spiritual world where the deceased is believed to be heading towards, amidst singing of dirges, dirges would also continue to exist in the lives of the Bakpele.

The approach of linking music to tradition is, nonetheless, found among the Bakpele, and is highly recommended. However, as Adesua, (in Berchie, Kwame, Bediako, Dzedzorm, & Asafo, (2016:324-341) recommends in his conclusion on sustenance of neo-traditional worship songs, the physical production of the musical sounds must always be linked up with the intended message.

There is the need to intensify the performance and participation in traditional activities in both the urban and rural areas, for, as Nketia, (1969:18) noted, the “best way of preserving the arts of Ghana is not only by studying them in a scholarly fashion and writing about them but also by keeping them alive in performance programmes.” Bereaved families and Christians are entreated to incorporate the performance of *Dku* into their funeral programmes. Parents and for that matter, the elderly are to encourage the youth living both at home and outside not to shy away from performances but to open up for tutelage. More so, resource persons could be engaged to talk to the youth including school children about this tradition.

As scholars, we need to be much concerned about the survival of indigenous practices of people, not only because they form the subject matter of our societies, but also because their disappearance raises some basic human rights issues. Cultural survival guarantees the land and resource rights of the tribal peoples. In the future of a musical type like Bakpele dirge, Gary, (2001:345) remarks that “present-day Balinese are making deliberate efforts to preserve their traditional arts.” There is the need for ethnomusicologists to deliberately systemize and document folk songs of all indigenous cultures, most especially, among traditions that are close to my study topic.

7.4.1 The study’s contribution to knowledge

My study has contributed to knowledge by focusing on a tradition that has hitherto been least explored ethnographically, and, has also claimed an art which could die out through time. The study has also contributed to knowledge by supplementing the inadequate academic institutional teaching and learning materials. The Bakpele will benefit from the research findings since it systemized and documented the content of *Dku* in its cultural context so as to preserve its performance for posterity. The study will meaningfully espouse

to people in other cultures, things that could be learned about the culture of the Bakpele, and to make it possible for as many people as possible to have access to this knowledge through documentation. Finally, findings of this study will be beneficial to researchers in other fields like ethnomusicology, art music composition, education or History.

7.4.2 Problem with the study

I encountered some challenges in course of the study. One of these is the absence of a natural setting to collect data on *oyokɔ*. Being a case study, I expected to elicit information for all my selected cases within the natural setting. Unfortunately for the study, there was no such funeral observance in the years of the study. There was nothing I could do as a researcher, however, in the absence of this setting, I drew on information provided by my consultants. My long period of waiting, expecting such a setting, extended the period of my fieldwork by twelve months.

7.4.3 Limitation of the study

One other challenge I encountered was in transcribing the songs from audio to staff notation. All the song samples were recorded audio-visually after which I did a manual transcription and notation of these song oral-aurally. I am suggesting here, to researchers in similar field of study to resort to transcription mechanisms like Sibelius for their transcription and notations.

7.4.4 Concluding remarks

At the close of this study, research goals achieved are a systemization of *Dku* as a musical tradition of the Bakpele. This is in accordance with Nketia, (1973) that:

in a rapidly changing society such as Ghana, where everyone [ethnic group] is reaching out for new forms of expression in social and cultural life, as well as in music literature and the art, the study and the documentation of African heritage of folk music is of particular importance, for, it is in this idiom that African musical values that were developed over the ages are enshrined (P.1).

Preservation and proper presentation of this tradition is highly needed to save the loss of these traditions.

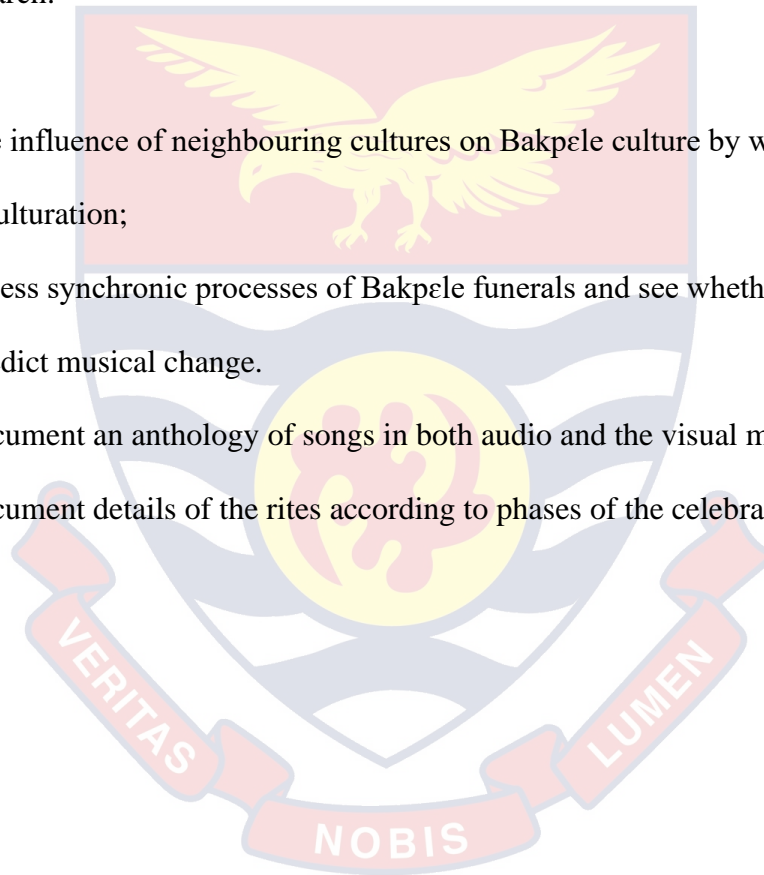
To finally conclude findings on this research, I want to emphasise once more the importance of cultural particularity and cultural specificity and the significance of these aspects as viewed by the Bakpele. My personal conviction is that every culture participates, in one way or another, in the universal culture of humanity. The existence of *Dku* among the Bakpele for these centuries has proven that tradition, in whatever form it exists, is nonetheless needed by that society and so must not be left to extinct. While the circumstances that surrounded this work are unique to the Bakpele, other ethnic groups are not precluded.

7.5 Suggestions for Future Research

I have done much to cover important aspects of the topic, however, there are still more areas to explore. For instance, it has been my wish to widen the data collection area to include other clusters of the Bakpele but few constraints militated against this wish. More so, my study concentrated only on songs of the rituals but not on the details of performance practice of the five stages of the ceremony.

In general, Ethnomusicologists are always interested in the processes through which music changes, or remains stable, grows or disappears. They have this interest for culture as a whole, in the individual song, and in the life of an individual or a group. Understanding music requires an understanding of some of these processes and, the use of the concept of history very broadly. My study did not cover these variables. The topic, therefore, could be subjected to further research. Furthermore, following further changes or shifts that might occur in the performance of *Dku*, I suggest that the following topic areas be looked into in future research:

- a. The influence of neighbouring cultures on Bakpele culture by way of acculturation;
- b. Assess synchronic processes of Bakpele funerals and see whether they can predict musical change.
- c. Document an anthology of songs in both audio and the visual media.
- d. Document details of the rites according to phases of the celebration.



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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Template for Question Guide for the Knowledgeable

Date.....

Event number.....

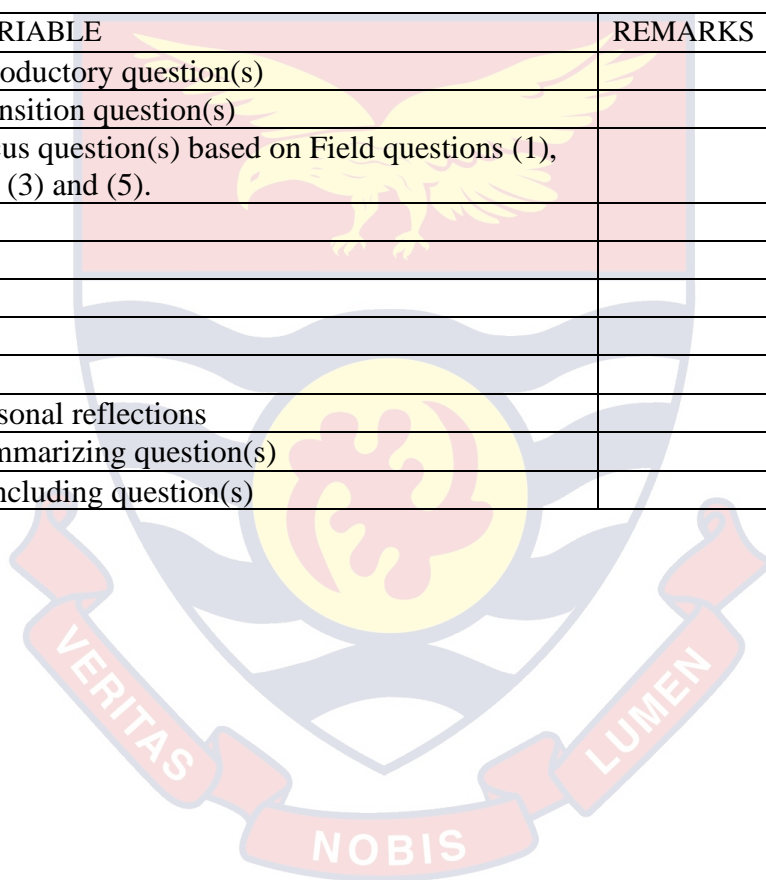
Cluster.....

Place of meeting.....

Description of setting.....

Total observation time.....

S.N.	VARIABLE	REMARKS
1	Introductory question(s)	
2	Transition question(s)	
3.0	Focus question(s) based on Field questions (1), (2), (3) and (5).	
3.1		
3.2		
3.3		
3.4		
3.5		
4	Personal reflections	
5	Summarizing question(s)	
6	Concluding question(s)	



Appendix B

Template for Notes-taking for the Knowledgeable

Date.....

Event number.....

Cluster.....

Place of meeting.....

Description of setting.....

Total observation time.....

S.N	VARIABLE	RESPONSE / DESCRIPTION
1	Introductory question(s)	
2	Transition question(s)	
3.0	Focus question(s) based on Field questions (1), (2), (3) and (5).	
3.1	Field Question 1	
3.2	Field Question 2	
3.3	Field Question 3	
3.4	Field Question 5	
3.5	Personal reflections Summarizing Questions	
4	Concluding questions	
5	Personal Reflections	
6	Concluding Remarks	

Appendix C

Template Guide for Song Recording

Date.....

Event number.....

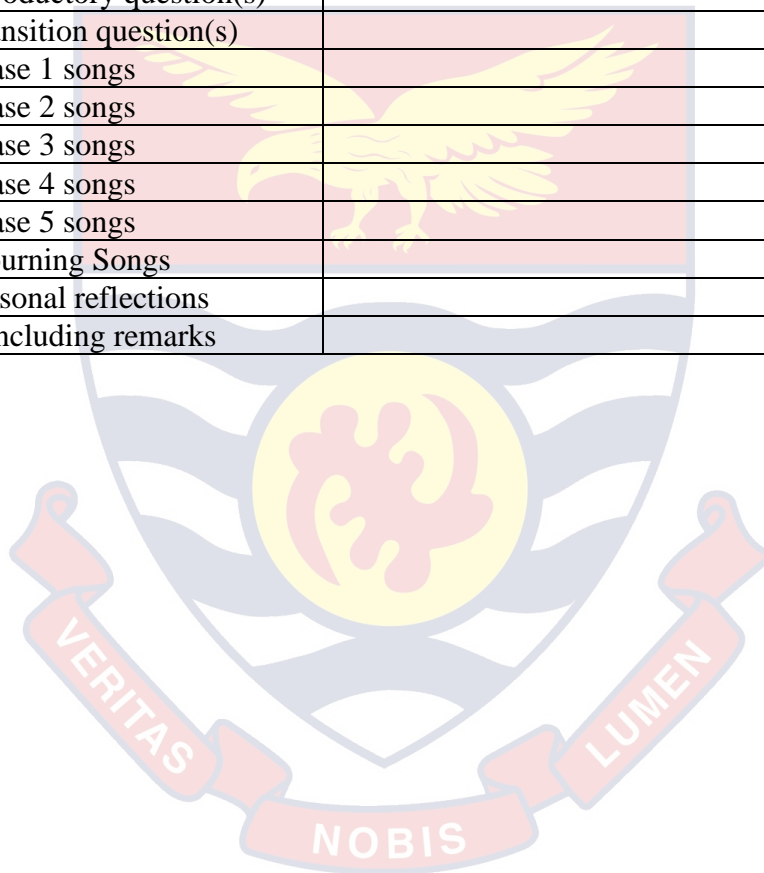
Cluster.....

Place of meeting.....

Description of setting.....

Total recording time.....

S.N.	SONG RECORDINGS	NARRATIONS TO THE SONGS
1	Introductory question(s)	
2.	Transition question(s)	
3.1	Phase 1 songs	
3.2	Phase 2 songs	
3.3	Phase 3 songs	
3.4	Phase 4 songs	
3.5	Phase 5 songs	
3.6	Mourning Songs	
4	Personal reflections	
5	Concluding remarks	



Appendix “D”

Template Guide for Focus Group Discussion

Date.....

Event number.....

Cluster.....

Place of meeting.....

Start Time.....

End Time.....

Description of setting.....

Facilitator.....

Participants.....

Moderator.....

Observer.....

S.N	VARIABLE	SAMPLE QUESTION
1	Introductory question(s)	
2.	Transition question(s)	
3.0	Focus question(s) based on Field questions (1), (2), (3) and (5).	
3.2	Field Question 1	
3.3	Field Question 2	
3.4	Field Question 3	
3.4	Field Question 5	
4	Personal reflections Summarizing Questions	
5	Concluding questions	
6	Personal Reflections	
7	Concluding Remarks	

Appendix “E”
Template Checklist for Focus Group Discussion

Date.....

Event number.....

Cluster.....

Place of meeting.....

Start Time.....

End Time.....

Description of setting.....

Facilitator.....

Participants.....

Moderator.....

Observer.....

S.N	VARIABLE	SAMPLE QUESTION
1	Introductory question(s)	How do you rate the performance of <i>Dku</i> at the most recent funerals in town? High, medium or low?
2.	Transition question(s)	Let us all identify one funeral, in which the majority of us fully participated, stating the details of the deceased.
3	Focus Questions	At which of the five phases of the funeral did you experience the highest performance of <i>Dku</i> ? How prevalent is the performance of <i>Dku</i> at funerals these days as compared to those of the previous years
4	Summarizing Question(s).	Let us suggest ways of inculcating the practice of performing dirges on the day after burial and also gathering at the funeral ground to receive donations.
5	Concluding Question	As you know, we are discussing issues on keku so as to improve performance. Is there any issue that we should have discussed but did not?
6	Personal reflections	
7	Concluding remarks	

Appendix F

Template for Notes-taking for Focus Group Discussion

Date.....

Event number.....

Cluster.....

Place of meeting.....

Start Time.....

End Time.....

Description of setting.....

Facilitator.....

Participants.....

Moderator.....

Observer.....

S.N	VARIABLE	RESPONSES / KEY ISSUES
1	Introductory question(s)	
2.	Transition question(s)	
3.1	Phase 1 songs	
3.2	Phase 2 songs	
3.3	Phase 3 songs	
3.4	Phase 4 songs	
3.5	Phase 5 songs	
3.6	Mourning Songs	
4	Personal reflections	
5	Concluding remarks	

Appendix G The Corpora

Corpus 4: Mmi alε elo Music by Leklembi Kosi Notated by Hesper Adesua

Music by Leklembi Kosi
Notated by: Hesper Adesua

Mmi a lε E----- lo Mni a

6 lε E----- lo l o ku ukyε si mu ye wε ku ukyε si mu

11 ye wε ku ukyε si mu yε wε fε l'o ka wε ku ukyε si mu yε wε ku ukyε si mu

15 yε wε ku ukyε si mu yε wε fε l'o ka wε ε ε *D.C. al Fine*

Corpus 5: Akpivutsotso hagbe (Signal song to end akpi.)

Osee yee aye aye

Folk song

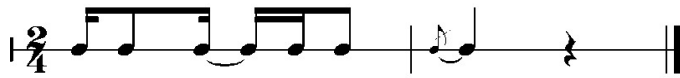
Notated by Hesper Adesua

O se a ye a ye a yeo se yoo----- o se a ye a ye a

6 yeo se yee ----- O se ye ye ye ye yee O se ye

13 se ee ye..... Se ye se ye se ye

Corpus 6 *Akpivutsotso dze* (Rhythmic pattern to end akpi instrumentals)



Corpus 7: *Bofo buyifo* (We are capable of doing it)

With Courage
ad libitum

Folk Tune
transcribed by Hesper Adesua

Bo fo buyi fo boan te si kpio Ye ye Bo fo buyi fo boan te si
 kpio ye ye Bo fo buyi fo boan te si kpio ye ye Bo fo buyi
 fo boan te si kpio ye ye

Corpus 8a Category of Hymns

Do alo lolo

(EPC HB 435)

Do lo lo - lo - to do to na-dzu-dzo wo wo la de wo ho-la fa ko nu mie
 lo wo ve vie Ye-su lo wo wu do gbe do gbe do gbe
 Ye-su lo wo wu

Corpus 8b Category of Anthems

Miatɔ si le Dzifo

(Notated by Hesper Adesua)

10

le dzi fo c-ne. wo lo lo nu la mia fa gbe wo nyc. Xo-xo kple dzi dzo le

14

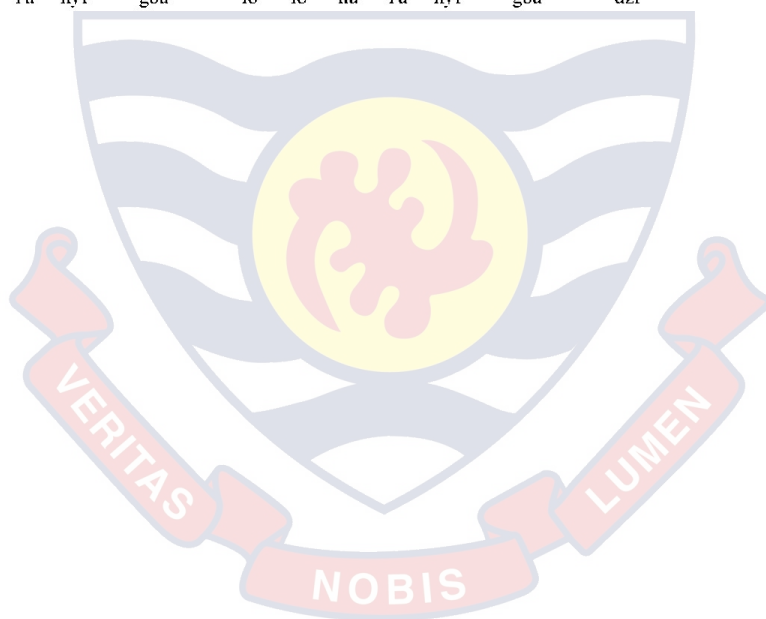
mee. — Woa dzo woa dzo le xe xe sia me yi xe xea me no no

19

zu do yea ta be woa wo wo lo lo nu l'a nyi gba dzi. Woa wo De la fe —

23

lo lo nu l'a nyi gba lo lo nu l'a nyi gba dzi



Corpus 8c *Dies irae, dies illa.* (The faithful departed).

THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED
Dies irae, dies illa. Vatican Plainsong.
(A.G.M.)

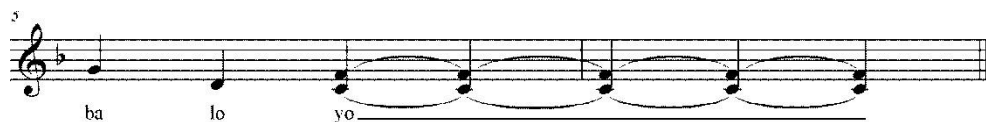
Verses 1-2; 7-8; 13-14
1. Di - es i - rae, di - es il - la! Sol - vet sae -
- clum in fa - vil - la, Tes - te Da - vid cum Si - býl - la.
3. Tu - ba mi - rum spar gens so - num Per se - púl -
- chra re - gi - ó - num Co - get^{om} - nes an - te thró - num.

NOBIS

Corpus 9 Ayo leba (Homes have become desolate)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

A yo le ba le ba le ba — A yo le ba le ba le ba — A yo le



Corpus 10 Atoni kele (Everything including firewoods)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo
Ke le ko le me ke le a to ni am be me

Chorus
ke le ko le me ke le e

Solo
an to me be bi kya

Chorus
ke le ko le me ke le e ke le ko le me ke le e

Solo
ke le ko le me ke le a to ni

Chorus
ke le



Corpus 11 Akyeakpoli (The Allied Hornbill)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

The musical score is written in 6/8 time and consists of five systems. Each system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are: "A kyea kpo lie----- mia me ne nie wo dzi mia me ne nie ga su so-----".

Solo
A kyea kpo lie----- mia me ne nie wo dzi mia me ne nie ga su so-----

solo
----- A kyea kpo lie----- mia me ne nie wo dzi mia me ne nie ga su so....

Chorus
A kyea kpo lie----- mia me ne nie wo dzi mia me ne nie ga su so....-

Solo
A kyea kpo lie----- mia me ne nie wo dzi mia me ne nie ga su so....-

chorus

Corpus 12 Akukɔ di kɛnyɛ (The rooster has crowed)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

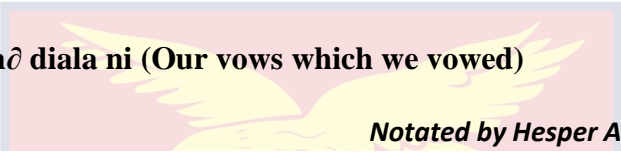
Solo



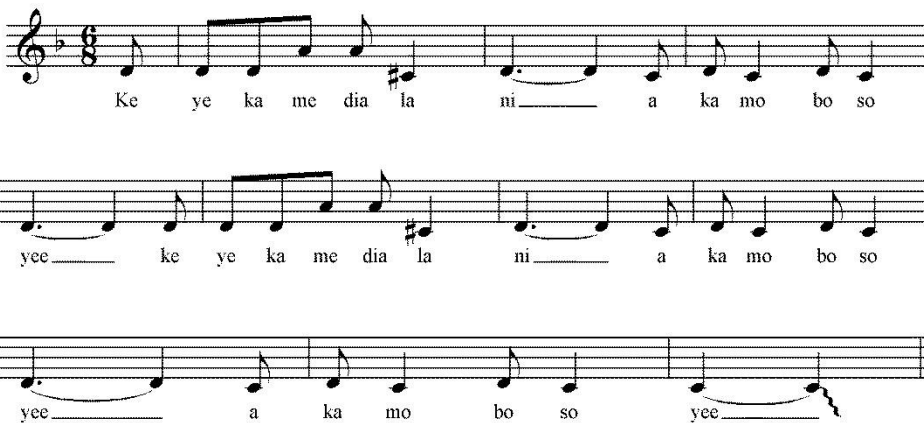
A ku ko di ke nye li ya___ o li ya ma o e A ku ko di ke nyeo a yo

Corpus 13 kɛnyɛ kamɔ̃ diala ni (Our vows which we vowed)

Notated by Hesper Adesua



Solo



Ke ye ka me dia la ni___ a ka mo bo so
yee___ ke ye ka me dia la ni___ a ka mo bo so
yee___ a ka mo bo so yee___

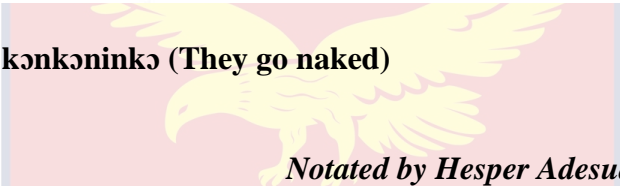
Corpus 14 Bekyese mɛ (Send me [wealth])

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Le bi ye e ti kio bekye se me Be kye se me se ke se keo Be ti di Bekye se me keo

Be kye se me se keo Bekye se meo Le bi ye e ti ko Bekye se meo Be kye se meo

Corpus 15 Bekyi aya kōnkōninko (They go naked)



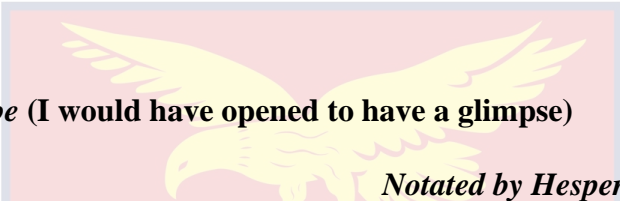
Notated by Hesper Adesua

Be kyi a ya kon ko ni ko Ukyue bu te bu te u ku se le te ke nye ka le lam

kpa Be kyi a ya kon ko ni ko o

⁷ The scale construct





Corpus 16 Ntasini mbe (I would have opened to have a glimpse)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo 
Na ta si nim be Na ta si nim be Na ta si nim be

Chorus 

Solo 
Na ta si nim be Na ta si nim be fe ne lo Na ta si nim be Na ta

Chorus 

Solo 
si nim be Na ta si nim be Na ta si nim be Na ta

Chorus 

Solo 
si nim be fe le lo

Chorus 



Corpus 17 Kpɔm duu (Stir at me)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

6/8

Kpɔm mu du me vie me ɖi nawo, Kpɔ mu duu me vie me ɖi nawo Kpɔ mu

6

duu me vie me ɖi lo ne Kpɔ mu duu me vie me ɖi nawo Kpɔ mu

11

duu me vie me ɖi nawo, Kpɔ mu duu me vie me ɖi nawo Kpɔ mu duu me vie me

16

ɖi lo ne kpɔm mu duu me vie me ɖi nawo

16

Corpus 18 Akpa maye ntu mɔ̄ (Do I catch them up on foot)?

Notated by Hesper Adesua

A kpa ma yen tu me___ A kpa ma yen tu me___ u
du o___ o to lo___ a kpa ma ye ntu me___

Corpus 19 *Biky∂ me afanto* (Leave me a sign of leaves)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo
Le be yon kwan ta bi kye mea fan to

Corpus 20 *L∂ esu bu∂sias∂ m∂* (Extend our greetings to them).

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Le su bue sie se me le su bue sie se me Le
Su bue sie se me le su bue sie se me lo

Corpus 21 *Udu, weinsi ∂mb∂ bub∂*. (He / she is gone not to come again).

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo

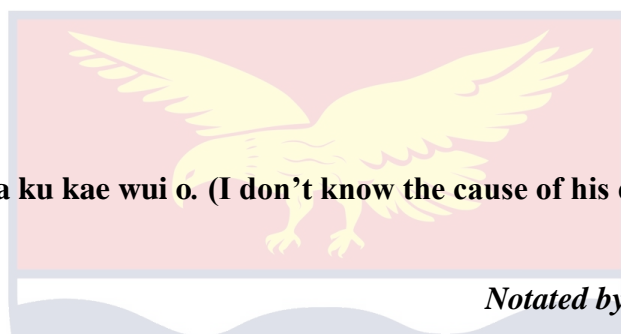
U du o wein siem ba bu bao u do o wein siem

5

ba bu bao u du o wein siem ba bu ba u du o wein siem

9

ba bu bao u du o wein siem ba bu bao



Corpus 22 Nyemenya ku kae wui o. (I don't know the cause of his death)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo

Nyeme nya ku ka e wuio a da tsi la ge Nyeme nya ku ka e

5

wuio a da tsi la ge ne dzi me le fowo na gbu gbɔ



Corpus 23 Edu vɔ edzo (He /she has consumed everything and is gone)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Wo (E) du vɔ wo (E) dzo

Corpus 24 Bimu wə site (Cover him with soil)



Notated by Hesper Adesua

Bi mu we si teo bu be we si le bu mu nee Bi mu we si

6
teo bu bewe si te bu mu nee e..

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 6/8 time. The first staff contains the lyrics "Bi mu we si teo bu be we si le bu mu nee Bi mu we si". The second staff starts with a measure rest marked "6" and contains the lyrics "teo bu bewe si te bu mu nee e..".

Corpus 25 Owe likpɔ o? Ewu likpɔ o. (But who is dead? Grandma is dead).

Notated by Hesper Adesua

O woe li kpeo E wu li kpeo? O woe li kpeo? E wu li U kpe tsya woem

kpe to se ken te saa yo wee U kpe tsya woem kpe to se ken

te saa yoo we se kea te *D.S. al Fine*

Corpus 26 Befia wɔ̄ diyo (Bequeath her property)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Solo
Bu be di yo bo fia ne Bo fia we di yo

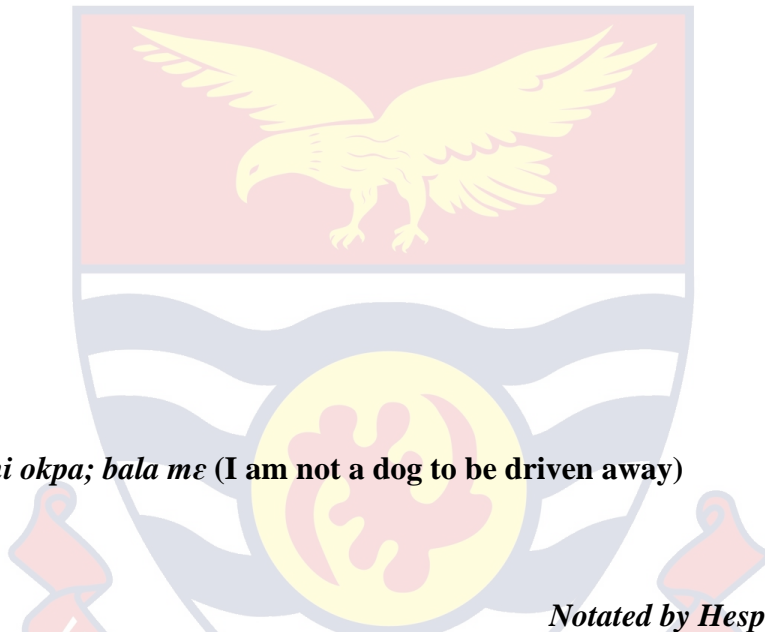
Chorus
Bu be di yo bo fia ne Ba fia we di yo

Corpus 27 Owan ntɔ̄ (Cooked a meal of ashes)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

U biam be le wan η to ba di dio, ba di

5
dio e U biam be le wan η to a yoo.



Corpus 28 Minni okpa; bala me (I am not a dog to be driven away)

Notated by Hesper Adesua

Minn nio kpao Ba la me sa sa sa sa sa ne

minn nio kpa o Ba la me e minn nio

9
kpao ba la me ba la me sa sa sa sa sa

