

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**TROPE, TEXT AND CONTEXT IN *NYADODO* OF THE EWE
OF GHANA**

BY

GLADYS MANSA FEDDY AKYEA

**Thesis submitted to the Department of English of the College of
Humanities and Legal Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy
degree in Literature**

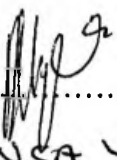
NOVEMBER, 2016

**SAM JONAH LIBRARY
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**

DECLARATION

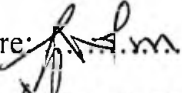
Candidate's Declaration

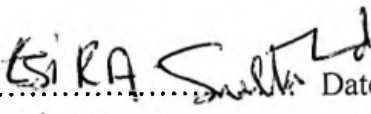
I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:  Date: 31st AUGUST 2017
Name: GLADYS MANSA YAWA FEDDY AKYEA

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: Sept. 1, 2017
Name: K. Doku-Agyemang

Co-Supervisor's Signature:  Date: 1/9/17
Name: ESI SUTHERLAND-ADDY

CALL No.	
ACCESSION No. 0061	
CAT. CHECKED	FINAL CHECKED

ABSTRACT

The study on *nyadodo* has been motivated by the conviction that apart from the well known oral artistic genres of the Ewe, *nyadodo* texts also provide a lens into the oral literature and values of the people. Looking closely at *nyadodo* texts by the use of literary tools, the study revealed a beauty of language whose quality is enhanced through tropes that are drawn from the people's physical environment as well as their social and biographical experiences. The study discusses *nyadodo* as a genre that shares some micro and macro elements with other oral genres of the Ewe, even though it has a unique structure of attribution. The study collected a number of *nyadodo* texts and employed rhetorical-sociolinguistics, a composite analytical tool, for data analysis. The result revealed various levels of meaning and a delineation of typology of referents. Further, the analysis showed an interlocking of aspects of Ewe world view, its socio-cultural norms and values in the tropes. The study concludes that the Ewe use *nyadodo* to interrogate life, examine character and to guide members to live a responsible life. Further investigations into other aspects of *nyadodo* such as author delineation, cross-cultural study and gender forms are recommended.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study was borne out of the desire of the late Dr. Fabian Opeku for a scholarly venture into less investigated Ewe oral artistic forms. I am very grateful for his constant prodding and total belief in my capacity in accomplishing this goal. I had hoped that he would live to celebrate the successful completion of this initiative. But alas!

I am also grateful to my supervisors, Professors Esi Sutherland-Addy and Kwadwo Opoku Agyemang for their unalloyed encouragement; especially in times of near disillusionment. They did not stop at anything in supporting me to reach this far. Thank you.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Rev. Father Simon Kofi Appiah and Rev. Ken Yao Djotepe for their counselling and spiritual support.

Thank you, Dr. Vincent Erskine Aziaku for sharing your experiences as a doctoral candidate with me; this has encouraged me to come this far. My research assistants, Mercy Adzo Klugah, Ernestine Abla Segbedzie, Benjamin Kubi, Cosmas Amenorvi, John Titriku and Emmanuel Dzogbelu, thank you for the hard work.

I wish to thank my family and friends for their support; especially, my sister, Dr. Beatrice Feddy, my brother, Delali Blutse, my husband Nkunu Akyea and my dear daughters, Oyeba Afua Akyea and Kwasibea Adzo Akyea for standing by me and continually challenging me to finish hard. *Mise ŋu loo!*

Finally, to you my Jehovah Ebenezer, I say, great is your faithfulness.

Take all the glory.

DEDICATION

In memory of my parents,

Joseph Yawo Feddy and Comfort Akua Abiwu

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
DEDICATION	v
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
Background to the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	8
Research Questions	9
Purpose of the Study	9
Significance of the Study	10
Delimitation	13
Definition of Terms	14
Research Setting	15
Methodology	24
Data Collection	26
Translation of Texts	33
Analytical Tool	36
Conclusion	38
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	
Introduction	40
Studies in Prose	41
Tropes, Indirection and Oral Art	51
Gender and Oral Art	57
Oral Art and Context	77

Oral Art and Theory	91
Rhetorical-Sociolinguistics Analysis	94
Meaning and Oral Art	103
Conclusion	108
CHAPTER THREE: FORM, STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF <i>NYADODO</i> TEXTS	
Introduction	110
Form of <i>Nyadodo</i> Text: Morphological	111
Personal Names: Morphological	116
Syntactic Elements in <i>Nyadodo</i>	133
Health Status and <i>Nyadodo</i> Texts	143
Manipulation of the Basic Structure	144
Conclusion	153
CHAPTER FOUR: <i>NYADODO</i> TEXTS IN CONTEXT	
Introduction	155
Composers of <i>Nyadodo</i>	155
Female Compositions	158
Male Compositions	163
Exophoric Evidence and <i>Nyadodo</i> Compositions	166
Real Originators	166
They Normally Say So	180
They Used it Once	182
Words are put into their Mouths	183
Dialectal Evidence	185
Linguistic Evidence	191
Conclusion	196

CHAPTER FIVE: TROPES IN <i>NYADODO</i> TEXTS	
Introduction	197
Tropes in <i>Nyadodo</i>	197
Metaphor	198
Personification	266
Ideophone	269
Question	279
Paradox	282
Metonymy	284
Hyperbole/Exaggeration	286
Name	287
Conclusion	290
CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary	292
Findings	295
Statement of Contribution	298
Recommendations	300
REFERENCES	303
APPENDIX	326

FIG. 1
 MAP OF GHANA SHOWING THE STUDY AREA

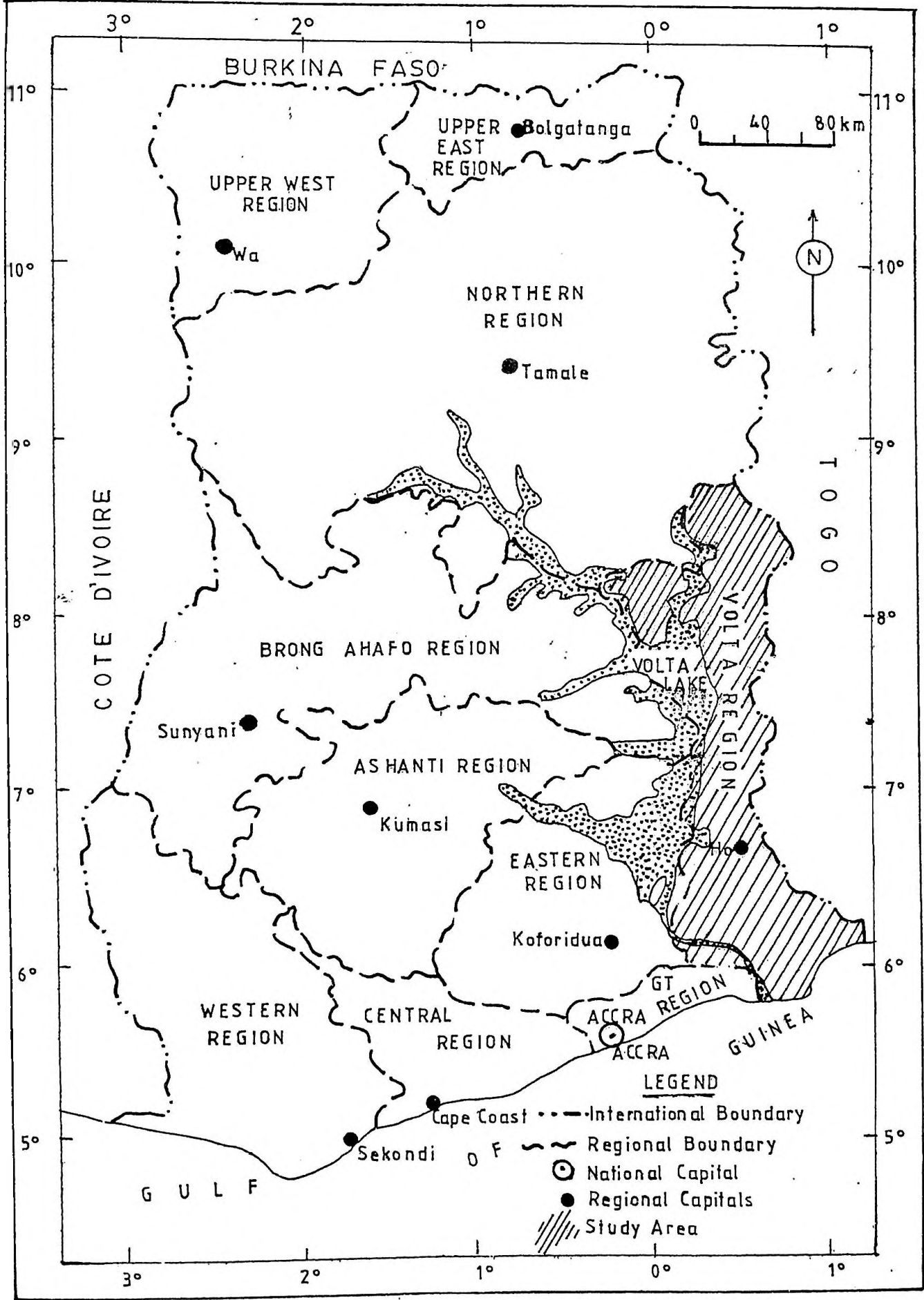
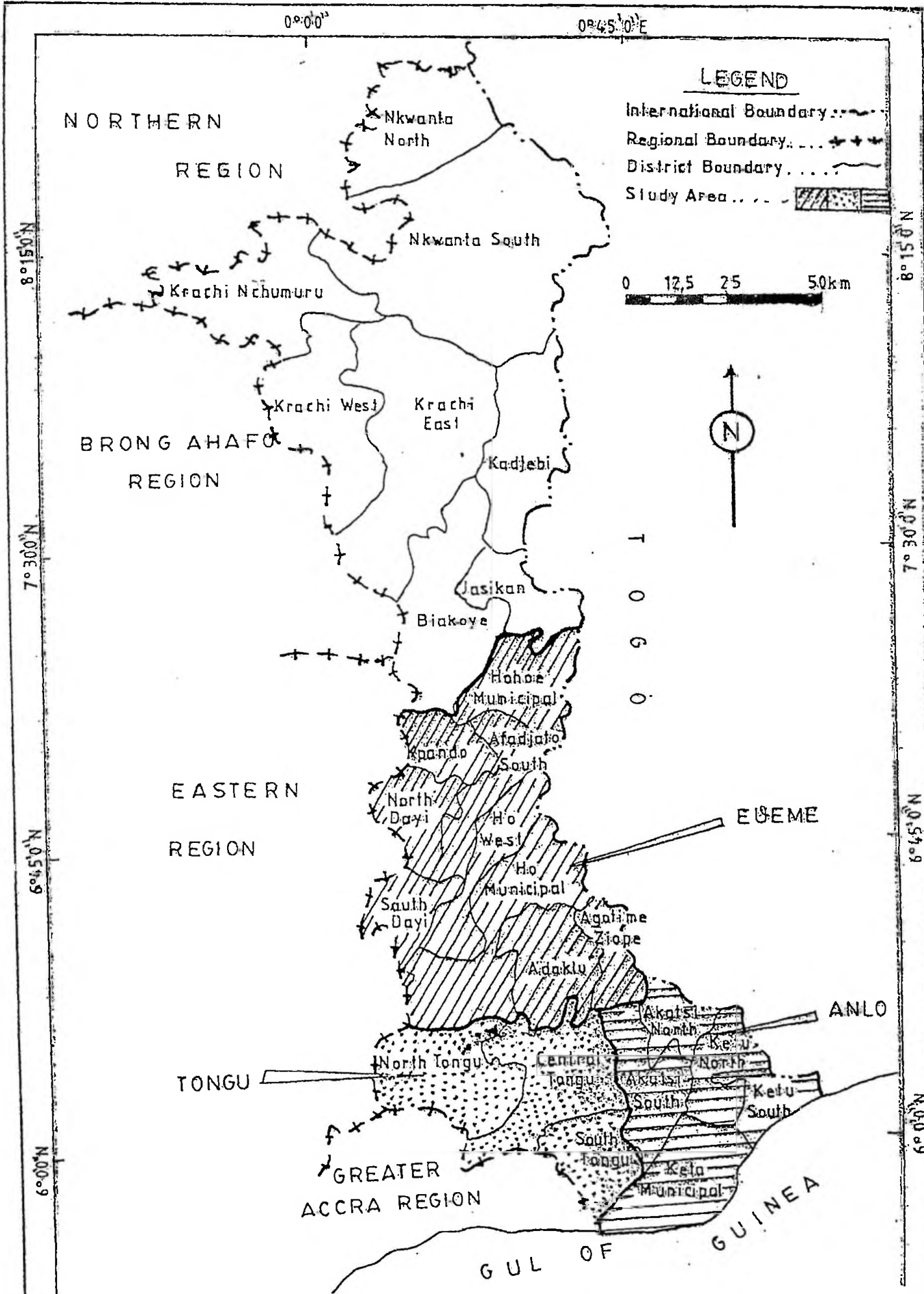


FIG. 2

MAP OF VOLTA REGION SHOWING STUDY AREA



LIST OF FIGURES

- Figure 1 Map of Ghana showing the Study Area
- Figure 2 Map of Volta Region showing Study Area

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The issue of literature serving both aesthetic and utilitarian purposes has engaged the attention of scholars over the years. Studies have also been carried out over the years to correct some of the biases and descriptions such as 'trivial formulations', 'crude', and 'uninteresting forms' of oral literary forms of Africa. Nketia (1955), Finnegan (1970), Apronti (1972), Awoonor (1976), Egblewogbe (1991), Okpewho (1992), Hampate Bâ (1995), Orwin (2003), Barber (2007) and Burns (2009) are some oral literary specialists and anthropologists who have researched into the oral traditions and artistic forms of Africa to underscore the great complex literary qualities of these forms aside their utilitarian values.

An important theme that is of interest to literary critics in recent years is about oral literary works of non-literate societies as space not only for expressing emotions and making indelible personal experiences; but also as a critical medium in negotiating power, interrogating social systems and structures. This space has been stressed as available for all categories of people including the vulnerable of the society. The continent of Africa is thus described appropriately as a place of 'voice' that is varied and full of vitality and linked to the lives of the people (Gunner, 2007). Everyone therefore has this 'voice' to express incidents (personal or general) in life, even those one may refer to as 'trivial.' These incidents are developed in forms such as stories, fables, recitations, songs, statements, myths, legends and proverbs to draw attention to people's individual circumstances and world out-look. They

are forms that generally possess the capacity to outlast the here-and-now because of the 'magical power' of the spoken word (Ong, 1982). Therefore, Vansina (1995:142), for example, appropriately describes these expressions as possessing 'a mysterious power' that create things. This means that spoken words embed power that energizes and transforms personal and social experiences into artistic products that have cosmological and ontological essence. Orwin (2003) as well as Mugambi & Allan (2010) also agree with the view that spoken words remain central to a people's life and that literary texts do not only have an aesthetic role, they also encapsulate the history and living experiences of the individual as well as the sensations of the group. Gunner (2007) therefore cites Africa for example as a 'site of enormous, long, and ongoing creativity in relation to orality as a vector for the production of social life, religious beliefs, and the constant constituting and reconstituting of society, ideology and aesthetic' (p67). It means that oral societies recognise spoken words not only as a means of everyday communication but also a medium of preserving wisdom that is embedded in key utterances.

Okpewho (1992) corroborates the view on the role of the spoken word to non-literate societies by observing that of all the functions of oral artistic forms of Africa, the one that is perhaps paramount is recording of life. Life, one would understand as not necessarily ancient happenings but also life cycles of birth, initiation, marriage, social advancement and death. This means that oral literary texts must be regarded as a means by which non-literate societies like Africa regulate and organise themselves; a channel through which their present, past and future are expressed. Generally then, oral literary texts create conducive formal spaces where the people reflect on life and interrogate their

existence. Verbal textual genres are therefore often set up hand-in-glove, with explicit, elaborated genres of exegesis and interpretation (Barber, 2007). This means that these texts are put together to be interpreted and like a puzzle; they literally pose a challenge that demands resolution because it is possible that texts will tell us something about an individual artist, a social experience, a cultural value or a world view.

Paying attention to the words and the rhetorical techniques is thus critical in assessing the relevance of a text as being central to understanding personhood; a channel that offers us the opportunity to get into other people's experiences or world view. The identity of every social group Vansina (ibid: 148) explains, may be embodied in their oral forms, also referred to as the 'social surface' of the people. These forms obviously reveal the thoughts of their owners and thus act as a canvas for recreating the artist and the society. This process brings together images, actions, movements, experiences and statements (Amuta, 1989). Hampate Bâ (1995) explains this recreative process and essence of oral literary forms of Africans as a means 'to sculpt the African soul'. The basis of Hampate Bâ's view lies in his recognition of man as essentially bound to the word he utters and is committed by it. The spoken word in whatever form of the African is that which bears witness to what the individual as an artist as well as his society stands for. This synergy between the artist and his society through the spoken word is made possible because the artist is a member of his society and as it were, incarnates its structural, ideological and philosophical inflections (Amuta, 1989). The artist's individuality and the values of his society are thus merged in the spoken words

of the artist; the very cohesion of African societies may be said to be tied to respect for the spoken word.

Barber (2007) in her anthropological work on oral traditions and genres has indicated some features that a text must possess to exhibit the potentials and full benefits of the spoken word as discussed above. The first element is that a verbal text must be able to be entextualised. This means that it must have the quality of being detached from its immediate context of composition or local context and made available for repetition and recreation (Barber, *ibid*: 22). For example, Ewe proverbs in particular are recognised as texts since they exhibit versatility and are used to elucidate a point in other similar relevant instances. By this, the context of texts of oral forms in general (as far as their relevance and commentary are concerned) is expanded over space and time. In this way oral texts achieve the qualities of being new, ephemeral, evanescent, being distributed and dispersed.

It must be noted that even though entextualisation is a critical feature of oral texts, sometimes oral texts can offer an element of fixity. This characteristic which involves quotation and attribution to a source that predates the text gives a text the quality of permanence. Performance of a proverb among the Ewe and Akan of Ghana for example, sometimes, requires attribution to elder-hood which is done by prefixing the proverb with *tsitsiawo* and *mpanyinfo* (elders comprising the living and the dead) respectively. Attribution to elderhood thus draws attention to the pre-existence of the proverb text and stamps on it authority and permanence. The permanence of texts is evident in their availability to be presented as an object that needs attention; oral texts may thus display an element of obscurity; sometimes, as a

result of passage of time or the nature of the text as a form deliberately composed for a privileged few.

Another feature that is considered by some literary critiques as important to the delineation and interpretation of texts is giving the text a utilitarian function. Oral literary forms as pointed out above are essentially embedded with words that express the different life situations of a people, their social structure and the conception of the world. This means that oral texts possess internal and extra-textual clues that will demand resolution, generate interest, and bring to the fore the different reverberations and sensations of life it may engender about its people (Orwin, 2003; Vansina, 1995). A text as an object of beauty must not be partitioned from its social ambience.

These qualities of a text as explained above are similar to the Ewe conceptualisation of aesthetics. The Ewe consider artistry in general as *adaṅu* and the process involves *lɔ* (to weave), *fo/gbi* (to braid), *tù* (to build or compose) (Fiagbedzi, 2005). Artistry (*adaṅu*) connotes finesse and excellence to the extent that in the Ewe oral artistic categorisation, a text must be embedded with an attraction that will make it an object of attention that will outlast the moment. But the concept of artistry (*adaṅu*) among the Ewe is not only beauty; it also involves usefulness to the socio-cultural demands of the people as well (Fiagbedzi, *ibid*). The implication of this is that in as much as oral texts of the Ewe must display uniqueness of form, coherence, connectedness and the application of rhetorical elements to render it beautiful, content is vital if the text must be endorsed by the society. To the Ewe, texts which possess these two major qualities will elicit comments such as *enya se* (it is pleasant to the ear), *edze to/eso to* (fitting to the ear/ balanced) or

descriptions such as *adodoe* (*very good*), *nyui* (*good*). A non-artistic work on the other hand to the Ewe will be the type that lacks the element of functionality and thus may be described as *enya se, enya kpɔ ya gake tso dui adeke mele eɲuti o* (*it is pleasing to the ear, and the eye but it has no relevance*). A text, be it a song, a chant, appellation, proverb or statement (such as *nyadodo*) among the Ewe, must therefore espouse a theme, a message, a form, appropriate rhetorical devices that will make the text balanced and make it also an object of attention. An oral artistic work that is described as *mesɔ to o* (*not fitting to the ear, not well balanced*) is the type that lacks the elements of beauty and functionality as enumerated above (Fiagbedzi, 2005).

The discussion so far has revealed that in studying oral literary texts of the Ewe, in particular, both the aesthetic as well as the functional purpose must be considered since the two give a text its worth. The renowned oral literary Ewe composer, Vinɔkɔ Akpalu has expressed this idea in one of his songs thus: *Uegbe li xoxo hafi yevua va.../ Uegbe le alea, de wɔagoglo*. (*The Ewe language has been in existence long before the coming of the white/The Ewe language has depth*) (Seshie, 1991). Indeed the Ewe language is deep for its textural quality and possessing the quality of being an object of attention (beautiful) and a medium of encapsulating the people's emotions and views about the world (Anyidoho, 1997).

We can conclude appropriately with the view of Iyengar and Nandarkumar, (2009) that literature, whether oral or written, depends largely

on the manipulation of language to render the 'inner landscape of the mind or the passions, feelings, agitations and ecstasy of the heart and soul' (p5). So, it is possible that when some members of a society speak they may be satisfying a personal need to express their emotions; the intrinsic energy that they exhibit through words can only be experienced and realised when it is expressed orally (Donnelly, 1994). That oral literature is the 'true' literature of non-caligraphic societies like Africa by which they express views on the world and issues concerning their existence cannot be overemphasised. These artistic forms are closely connected to the people's sensibilities; they provide the society '...a collective sense of who they are and to help them define or comprehend the world at large in terms both familiar and positive to them' (Okpewho, 1992: 110). Even though literacy or writing has become widespread and strengthened by technology, oral communication has remained the most readily available form for Africa (Busia, 1976; Abiola, 2007).

Scholarly works on African oral literary texts such as songs, narratives and tales evidently show these and other forms as possessing the qualities of a text. For example, Adali-Mortty as far back as 1967 acknowledged and commended the high level and display of wit and artistry (*adaṅu*) by the Ewe in their oral texts to express a variety of emotions and their outlook on the world. But he noted rather with concern the paucity of research on Ewe oral art forms and enjoins Africans, in general, and the Ewe in particular, to be the first agents of interpreting themselves, their own arts and culture. Berry (1961), another oral tradition scholar, had earlier encouraged colleague scholars to 'do careful stylistic analysis of the literature of their mother

tongues' (cited in Okpewho, 1992: 13). Finnegan (2012) also lately in commenting on the extent of studies into oral artistic forms of Africa commends the great strides that have been made so far; nevertheless, she is disappointed that 'we have not after all progressed so very far beyond the notable compendium on African literatures' (xxxix). This comment is not to be understood as an attack on African literary specialists and researchers; rather, it must be seen as pointing to the enormous variety of oral artistic forms that are available as fresh areas for scholarly investigation. This then must be seen as the underlying motivation of this research.

Statement of the Problem

The literary manifestations of the African have long been acknowledged. But it has been noted that, 'practically all accounts to date give only a tiny selection from the manifold literary genres of any one society' (Finnegan, 1970:80). If indeed Africa is a continent of 'voice' (Gunner, 2007) then there is undoubtedly a continuous motivation to express and respond to life in various forms. *Nyadodo* is one of such 'new' artistic forms through which their authors make statements about their specific contexts as well as the larger context of the Ewe community. Despite the advantages of *nyadodo* as an oral artistic form (*adaɲudo*) and its potential for providing another means through which the unconscious collective ideas and images of the Ewe will be discovered, relatively little research attention has been devoted to it. The paucity of work on *nyadodo* spans literal translation, collection and transcription and aesthetic analysis of its texts.

Research Questions

The present study seeks to answer the following questions.

1. What is *nyadodo* and who are its composers?
2. What is the relationship between context and composition of *nyadodo* texts?
3. What tropes are employed in *nyadodo* and what do they reveal about the Ewe?

Purpose of the Study

According to Feibleman (1968 cited in Omatsala, 2013:163), artistic works are ‘not a mere matter of entertainment...’ or merely ‘folksy, domestic entertainment.’ These artistic forms represent a domain in which individuals in a variety of social roles articulate a commentary upon power relations in society and indeed create knowledge about society’ (Furniss and Grunner 1995, cited in Sutherland-Addy and Diaw, 2005: 6). As rightly suggested by Derrive (1995) oral literary text is a power tool for all especially the ‘socially dominated’ and an avenue for this group to exert ‘compensatory or counter powers’ (cited in Sutherland-Addy and Diaw, 2005: 6).

These observations are true to oral artistic works of the Ewe. The content of a literary item like *nyadodo* text will not only be the raw stuff of life but reveal how the texts provide space for the different people to express their deep feelings, negotiate power, interrogate their existence and make relevant comments about life events. These will be captured in the language and its varying elements whose analysis will make us discover the beauty of the genre and a fresh view of life and daily experiences of the individual and the Ewe as a whole. This is possible since we acknowledge that ‘...artistic systems and

values of the use of words may not overlook considerations of the underlying ontological values on which the creation and use of words are based' (Anyidoho, 1997:124).

It is also worth noting the suggestion that 'locally produced texts, composed and transmitted according to people's own convention, in their own language, encapsulating their own concerns, do seem to speak as from within' (Barber, 2007: 2). This means that the worth of an artistic work such as *nyadodo* of the Ewe will not lie only in how best language has been manipulated. The collection and analysis of *nyadodo* texts will enable us to understand further the relationship between a people's art and the reverberations of the different groups in that society.

The purpose of this study therefore is to examine the relationship between an artistic form, *nyadodo*, of the Ewe and the people's socio-cultural life and world view. This will be done by collecting *nyadodo* texts, identifying major tropes that are embedded in the texts, and analysing them from a rhetorical-sociolinguistic point of view. Analysis of data will reveal how individually and collectively tropes heighten not only the aesthetic quality of *nyadodo* texts but most importantly how these figures of speech that emanate from the Ewe linguistic environment highlight the social and philosophical outlook of the Ewe.

Significance of the Study

As stated earlier, *nyadodo* is a major communicative strategy of the Ewe of Ghana that has both aesthetic and utilitarian purposes; however, scholarly work on the genre is scanty. Adali-Mortty's (1967) request for a rigorous study of Ewe verbal art forms in particular and those of Africa in

general have been echoed by Berry (1961), Awoonor (1976), Dzobo (2006), and Okpewho (1992). The study must therefore be recognised as a response to these calls that enjoin scholars in general and indigenes in particular to carry out research on fresh oral literary forms to underscore an important philosophical statement of the Ewe that, *Ame ηutæ kɔa xɔme ze gbā, hafī wolea afi le te ne. (It is one who must first of all lift the pot in his/her room for others to help catch the mouse under the pot)*. Two works by Kove (1998) and Akyea (2009) on *nyadodo* are exploratory and geared towards lifting the genre out of obscurity as far scholarly attention is concerned. This present study goes beyond the foci of these earlier works in highlighting the genre as an important communicative and artistic mode replete with literary qualities, social and philosophical values.

It is also worth noting that somehow emphasis has been on a few standard oral forms such as myth, legend, folktale, songs and proverbs to the neglect of apparent less substantial or minor genres of the Ewe. This practice or attitude is unfortunate since the less researched types like *nyadodo*, as will soon be evident in the discussions, play roles as passing on information, providing space for expression of emotions, regulating social relations and commenting on ontological issues. Bauman's (1977) encouragement to researchers and specialists to look for and study the spontaneous, unscheduled, optional performance contexts of everyday life texts as well supports the significance of this study on *nyadodo*. An analysis and the interpretation of one of those less researched genres of the Ewe, *nyadodo*, will provide an alternative avenue, apart from the commonly cited genres (proverbs, tales and songs) in gaining insight into the ethnography of the Ewe. The experiences of

the individual referents of *nyadodo*, their sensations, and the values of the society as a whole would thus become available to a larger audience through another form; it will break the monotony. The opportunity to explore other worlds, where lives unfold according to different understandings of the natural order of things does not reside in few oral art forms of the Ewe.

In addition to the above, *nyadodo* should be of great interest to scholars and researchers more than even proverbs and songs that have engaged their attention all this while. It will not only provide visibility for the genre but it will be cited as a more concrete proof for individual artistry of oral literary forms of the Ewe in particular and Africa as a whole. African scholars in particular, for example, Awoonor (1976) have opposed the communal label of oral artistic forms of their people with the explanation that lack of knowledge of authors of oral literary forms of non-literate societies like Africa, does not mean an absence of authors/originators. This researcher agrees with the view that individual signature is available and that Africans will continue to show the worth of their lore to assert not only its spiritual, moral richness and didactic values but it also the conviction of this researcher that scholars will also use forms like *nyadodo* to answer the charge of lack of individual authors. It is hoped that through the exposition on the structure and referent types as well as specific contexts engendering the individual texts, the study will provide a starting point in identifying specific genres in support of individual authorship claim by Africans in general. This study will thus be a response to the demand of many scholars that the actual circumstances of composition and the personality and skill of individual poets deserve fuller consideration than they have yet received (Finnegan, 2014).

Another important reason why this study is crucial concerns preservation and dissemination of the art form. Alemna (1993) in discussing the role of libraries in the preservation of oral traditions of Africa in general and Ghana in particular, has called for the collection and storage of oral materials for ready access to researchers. *Nyadodo* texts that are collected will be available and utilised as reference materials for students, lecturers as well as researchers in their study of oral literary forms in particular and language as a whole from varying perspectives.

Delimitation

Nyadodo like other verbal artistic texts exhibit dynamism and so it is expected that *nyadodo* will continue to be composed during the period of the study. Therefore, texts will be selected and analysed taking into account the different referent types: individuals, communities and units of community, relevant tropes as well as the focus of the study and the research questions. As suggested by Nketia (1955) and Finnegan (1970) verbal art forms could be studied from many perspectives, including musical, linguistic, stylistic, performance and socio-cultural context. In this study, there is a dual emphasis that deals with the tropes that are embedded in *nyadodo* and how these figurative expressions concretise the 'within', or the world of some categories of people of the Ewe society.

In addition to the above, even though the title of the work implies a study that will involve the Ewe of Ghana, the study concentrates on the major groups of the Ewe living in Ghana, (Eweme, Anlo and Tɔɔɔ) for reasons of accessibility, time and linguistic convenience.

Definition of Term(s)

Tropes

The focus of the study is identifying tropes in selected *nyadodo* texts to show their relevance as a literary element that enhances the aesthetic quality of the texts and expresses the world of the Ewe people. In this section, a brief discussion is provided on the nature, scope and function of tropes. A full discussion on trope analysis in literary works will be provided in the chapter on review of literature.

Generally, tropes and schemes are considered types of rhetorical figures. In Grecian rhetoric, a non-literal but meaningful use of a word is referred to as *tropos* (McQuarie & Micky, 1996: 425). Thus, when a particular ‘expression deviates from expectation [but] the expression is not rejected as nonsensical or faulty’, then there is a trope use of language (McQuarie & Micky, *ibid*: 425). Culler (2005: 70) also describes a trope similarly as a rhetorical figure that is an ‘alteration of or a swerve from ordinary usage’ and further explains that literature in essence depends on rhetorical figures such as tropes. Mooij (1976) describes such occurrences as figurative in English while Dyer (1988:10) explains that rhetorical figures include tropes and are in essence a ‘mock violation of the normal use of language, the norms of logic, morality, social rules and physical reality’. Tuan (2010) in his contribution adds that the ‘deviations’ in the rhetorical figures occur at the level of form rather than content and these are bound up in context.

From the above, it is clear that ‘deviation’ is an essential characteristic of a rhetorical figure or a trope and the deviation results in varied meanings that thought or expression can offer. Christopher (2009) metaphorically likens

the variety or multiplicity in meaning to the different positions our bodies assume when we sit, lie down, or look back.

While Mooij (1976), Culler (2005), Tuan (2010) and Dyer (1988) all agree on the 'turn and twist', the deviation quality of tropes as well as their relevance in literary works, Tuan's (ibid) explanations go beyond the linguistic elements to include the methodology in discovering the multiple layers of meanings that tropes express. Christopher's (ibid) metaphor above, linking tropes to body positions and meaning derivation, should be seen as an attempt to show the essential link among text, trope and context.

All in all, we can consider tropes as devices that help us to make sense of an experience and a lens through which one can discern the form and aesthetics of a literary work as well as the world out-look of a people. Also the nature of literature demands that its language be estranging, puzzling or de-familiarizing and this is achieved through the use of tropes. The 'organised violence' that is committed on ordinary everyday language can only occur when figures of speech/tropes are effectively used (Eagleton, 1996).

In this study tropes will be discussed and analysed as a rhetorical device that has a 'turn and twist' essence producing different layers of meaning that depend on the contexts that produce them. The word, phrase, proverb, riddle or a symbol which creates suspension of immediate intelligibility will be considered as a trope that will be identified and analysed in this study.

Research Setting

The importance of context to the researcher using qualitative methodologies cannot be underestimated since a better insight into the

meaning of a social action or statement could only be gained if the social context in which it occurs is well understood (Neuman, 2007; Barber, 2007). The discussion in this segment therefore provides broad information on the Ewe. It includes their language, their dominant belief and attitude regarding man in relation to nature, the society and their world out-look. These will reveal the character and context of their value systems which Forde (1976) describes as a people's 'charter.' These aspects of the people will help in revealing the nature, form, content and style of their artistic forms in general and *nyadodo* in particular.

The Ewe of Ghana comprises two major ethnic groupings (Southern and Northern). The South is further divided into Aḡlɔ and Tɔḡu (Nukunya, 1997) while Northern Ewe is inhabited by the Eweme and those normally referred to as the Guan (Gavua, 2000). Within each of these groups, there are several sub-units and various dialects that exhibit some linguistic differences—lexical, phonological and morphological. In this study categorisation of the Ewe is limited to Aḡlɔ, Eweme and Tɔḡu.

According to UNESCO grouping of languages, Ewe is a community language of Africa and its homeland stretches from Ghana, Togo, Benin (Dahomey) to Badagry in Nigeria (Atakpa, 1997; Kumassah, 2014). The major dialects, Aḡlɔ, Eweme and Tɔḡu of the Ewe language are sub-divided into smaller types that may total about twenty-five with varying degrees of mutual intelligibility (Lawrence, 2005). Even though there are different views on the number of dialects which compose the Ewe language, the Ewe people have and use a standard form of the language referred to as Ewegbe (Duthie, 1996; Mamattah, 1978). The standard form is written and sometimes spoken

in only very formal situations for which reason the people sometimes refer to it as 'book Ewe.' In their everyday informal interactions each of the ethnic groups normally communicates in their respective dialects. *Nyadodo* texts are examples of such communicative modes that are composed in the dialects of the various ethnic groups. Indeed, a performance of *nyadodo* text in the dialect of the ethnic group it emanates from is considered more authentic and exciting than those performed in the 'book Ewe' or Standard Ewe. One of the unique features *nyadodo* therefore lies in its performance in the original dialect.

The Ewe people are religious and this is very much linked to and expressed in their everyday life experiences. Even though the influence of foreign religions such as Christianity is very strong in reshaping the social life of the Ewe, the indigenous religious systems of the people are still potent. The indigenous religion of the Ewe, Gavua (2000) informs, has no 'official' name but according to Dzobo (1998) it is a product of the forebears which attempts to explain and give meaning to the existence of human beings. Gaba (1997) refers to it as a 'host indigenous form' in contrast to Christianity and Islam. The religion that is practised by the Ewe is based on the belief in a Supreme Being whose worship is exhibited through strict adherence to prohibitions and veneration of other sacred entities and objects. The Ewe tie their values to entities, deities and ultimately to the Supreme Being (*Mawu*) and other vicegerents (Gaba, *ibid*). The supremacy and uniqueness of *Mawu* is shown in the singularity of the name in contrast to other divinities which have a generic name and therefore their plural forms such as *trɔ/trɔwo* and *vodu/voduwo*. The Supreme Being is therefore outside the pantheon of gods.

Also, the Ewe consider life as founded on the supernatural. Their ideas about man, society and nature; their interpretation of the universe, natural, and social occurrences, in relation to man by the Ewe is thus greatly influenced by the indigenous religion. Their world as it is in other African societies is made up of the community of the living, the dead and the unborn (Asare Opoku, 1978). The Ewe refer to the material world of nature and of the living as *kodzogbe* (*ko: poverty; dzogbe: desert* or literally, *a field of poverty*) an 'existentially subsisting field of poverty' (Fiagbedzi, 2005: 13). According to Ewe world view, all humans are created by a mother figure *Bomeno* and are sent into the *field of poverty* (*kodzogbe*) or the physical world. Since man in Ewe world view does not come into *kodzogbe* with anything, he must struggle or strive to make life worth living in this *desert or field of poverty*. This material world is also sometimes referred to as *xexeme* which is explained literally as *outside-within* by Fiagbedzi (ibid). The *kodzogbe* space displays elements of rational and irrational occurrences as such it is 'well-ordered and disorganising, creative and destructive, existent and becoming, expanding, contracting and segmenting' Fiagbedzi (ibid:13). Life to the Ewe is a complex one that involves virtue, malevolence, indignation and other natural happenings that impinge on the success of individual or group life. To interrogate the complexity of causation and seek answers or explanations a myriad of emotions are evoked. This may engender specific oral forms such as dirges (*avihawo*), *konyifahawo* (*songs of lamentation*), *gliwo* (*folktales*), *lododowo* (*proverbs*) and *nyadodo*.

Another concept that emanates from the above and very strong in ordering the lives of the Ewe is the idea of destiny. In the Ewe ontological

view every one created enters the physical world *kodzogbe* with nothing except a unique vow (*adzɔgbedede, gbefofo, gbetsi*) which is taken before *dzɔgbese* (*destiny*). As in many African societies, destiny (*dzɔgbese*) among the Ewe, gives out the different life stations to individuals and these are largely fixed. Its unchangeability emphasises the uniqueness and power of the Supreme Being and the limited power that man has (Asare Opoku, 1978). The supreme end of man according to Ewe world view is for man to enjoy the beatific life in *Bome* with *Bomenɔ* and ancestors forever. This therefore demands a system that supports and demands a high moral uprightness from the individual. The aim of this system is to provide social harmony, development and peace for the good of man. Social theorists like Afansyev (1987) <https://www.questia.com> therefore argue that social consciousness is the basis of development of any community. Social consciousness is based on the idea that a community only develops when its body of wisdom reaches a point that all members are conscious with its norms and values, are committed to them and act in consonance with them. The development of a community is thus based on a strong philosophical foundation that is shared by all.

What is acceptable or reprehensible to the Ewe and the quests for a better life that will keep safe and secure the fabric of their communities are derived from their religious life. Development of Ewe community can be said to be grounded on a communal intellectual foundation. Morality as a social phenomenon is strongly directed by common sense and communalism; therefore, members of Ewe community are supposed to do things with, to and in respect of others. Ethical egoism or selfishness is thus repudiated giving way to an attitude to help others in trouble, not to harm anybody and

generally, seeking the welfare of others (Gyekye, 1996). Respect for and practise of the social phenomenon is rewarded; while its abuse is sanctioned by appropriate traditional systems and authorities such as the gods, ancestors and family heads.

Like most ethnic groups in Ghana therefore, there are internal and external social control measures and systems, including artistic forms to ensure that systems work ensure that the entire fabric of society is kept intact for the benefit of all. Apart from physical penalty like flogging, songs and sayings such as *halo (song of insult)*, *ahama (insinuation)*, *lododo (proverb)* and *nyadodo* are also employed appropriately by the Ewe as means to sanction immoral behaviours. For example, a child who has infringed a moral code is ostracised and teased through the song: *Mide le hame, ka minaka / Dadaa l'avi dzi, ka minaka*. This literally means, *we take him/her out of the group; disperse we disperse / The mother is weeping; disperse we disperse*. To revoke the membership of an Ewe from any segment of the Ewe community is a punishment that none wants to experience. Themes in folktales also either punish moral lapses or pontificate on moral uprightness at the end of the tale (Asare Opoku, 1978).

Even though the Ewe in general control social excesses and the control systems that the ethnic groups employ display similarities, there are some marked differences in their details and types. For example, the Ewe as a people have systems that punish and reprimand sexual promiscuity, but *trɔ kosi* system as a punishment strategy for such immoral behaviour is practised among the Aŋlo and Tɔŋu, not the Eweme people.

Communalism is another focus of activities of the individual members of Ewe society. Communal feeling is thus critical in considering moral values of the people. Their traditions and artistic works including oral forms are arrangements in the people's quest for a better life for all. In their world view system individuality of man is expressed but the Ewe also know and express the idea that man is never alone. This is exemplified in the Ewe proverb *Ati deka mewɔa ave o* (*One tree does not make a forest*).

The individual life is thus present but it is intertwined with that of all members of the community—the living (family, clan, children, friends), the dead (ancestors) and the unborn. The 'humanness' (*amenyenyeye*) of the individual is determined by their relationship with the community members. The individual is described as belonging to society which is 'a series of inter-relationships in which each one contributes to the welfare and stability of the community, and avoids that which is disruptive to the community's life' (Asare Opoku, 1978:162). The Ewe saying, *Deku vovo deka gblɛa bubuawo* (*One rotten palm nut spoils the rest*) explicates the discussion above. When the Ewe describes a person as *menye ame wɔnye o* (*s/he is not a human being*) or ask the rhetorical question *ame nele ekpɔma?* (*do you see him/her as a human being?*), it means to be human is not only to physically belong to the whole community, but to attain humanness 'is to participate in the beliefs, ceremonies and rituals of [this] group' (Mbiti, cited in Asare Opoku, 1978: pp91-92).

Gyekye (1996: 24) in his discussions on elements of African cultural values, states clearly among other things that, '...experiences of the capacities,

limitations, struggles, successes, failures, frustrations, sufferings,... the generally good naturedness of the human being in attempting to live a worthy and bearable life in this world are embodied in sayings, and folklore'. One of such sayings of an African society—the Ewe of Ghana— is *nyadodo*. In this saying, we will discover the expression of pain, frustration, joy, reprimand and other emotions by various members of the society. Oral forms are great strategies in the maintenance of social order.

The inevitable end on *kodzogbe*, is when one journeys (dies) to join the other members of the Ewe community—the dead in the spirit world known as *tsīefe* (*the elders home*). This world is populated by entities such as *ɲpliwo* (*ghosts*), *tɔgbeawo*, and *mamawo*, (*ancestors*). Man's eligibility to this world is dependent on responsible life exhibited in so many ways including going through the cycles of life successfully. Marriage, which is the focus of existence and the space to perpetrate the unity of the community members—the living, the dead and the unborn is one of the cycles. Asare Opoku *ibid*) describes the instituton of marriage as a duty from members of the African society. It is not a matter of choice; in fact, it is a rhythm of life in which everybody must participate. Any one who refuses to marry is therefore considered as a law-breaker and under-human. We will notice later in the analysis of texts in Chapter Five how the institution of marriage is an important source of troping in *nyadodo*.

It is worth noting that the Ewe like most traditional African societies are currently deep in the radical and pervasive epistemological transformation from an older, dynamic set of local beliefs, and practices, referred to as *dekɔnu*. There is a visible steady growth of new sets of beliefs and practices

that have grown out of the introduction of Christianity and western education (Burns, 2009). These changes one would agree could influence the people's artistic compositions and world view.

The social organisation of the Ewe and their moral values are not only locked in their world view such as belief in the Supreme Being, the reverence for ancestors and life after death among. The social stratification puts males above females; thus, invariably giving males more social, political and economic power. Women and children are supposed to be seen more than heard. The patriarchal system which the Ewe practise therefore favours men even in artistic productions. It is worth noting that even though some oral forms of the Ewe may appear gender specific, as has been discussed, *nyadodo* is not gender specific and therefore open to all the different segments of the society.

The predominant economic activities that the Ewe people engage in are based on the natural resources, both agricultural and non-agricultural, that their geographic areas are endowed with. Fishing is thus done in the sea as well as in the lagoons, streams, and ponds by the Aɔɔlɔ, and Tɔɔɔ mostly, while the people of Eweme engage mainly in food and cash crop farming (Ahiawodzi, 1997). These differences in economic activities are however not to be regarded as rigidly defined, since the people also engage in non-agricultural activities such as weaving, metal fabrication, pottery, cattle rearing, brewing, and commerce (buying and selling).

The Ewe as a whole engage in both modern and traditional recreational activities such as drumming and dancing, playing of traditional games, swimming, storytelling performance to mention a few. They use their

everyday life experiences in their totality, the fauna and flora, to create artefacts and literary texts such as *nyadodo*, proverbs, appellations, and songs to make statements about life in general and themselves. Even though there abounds a considerable amount of usage of modern gadgets of communication and writing, oral forms still remain important sources of artistry and information about the present, the past and the future among the Ewe.

Methodology

This study is posited within qualitative research paradigm which is an approach that emphasises the social context of a phenomenon and it is geared towards the understanding of a phenomenon in its totality without necessarily reducing the analysis to figures or quantifiable components (Koul, 2011; Neuman, 2007). The social context is so important in a qualitative research that Neuman (ibid) cautions that when a qualitative researcher ‘removes an event...from [the] social context, in which it appears...meaning and significance are distorted’ (ibid: 89). Similarly, other critics have stressed the need to resort to social theories in analysing literary works especially those of non-literate societies and warn that an attempt to analyse folklore for example from the ‘textural’ or linguistic point of view alone will amount to a ‘linguistic fallacy’ (Dundes,1980; Agyekum, 2013). Textural qualities such as rhyme, alliteration and tropes in general must necessarily be linked not only with textual context but the broad socio-cultural context as well.

In the interpretation of a text of a particular genre of local non-western societies therefore, Dundes (ibid) advises that one must focus attention on how the particular local culture defines and distinguishes between different speech forms and how these are embedded in their lived experiences. Dundes explains

further that context is necessary and it is only when such a data is provided can any serious attempt be made to explain the variations in text and texture. It is evident from the above that the social identities of informants, situational meanings of *nyadodo* texts and their specific utterances are necessary to their interpretation to avoid the mutilation in the analysis of oral texts like *nyadodo* (Osisanwo, 2008; Veenstra, 1995; Owusu Brempong, 1992).

The interaction between form, content and the immediate context as well as the wider world view of the Ewe has therefore formed the basis of data collection and analysis in this study. *Nyadodo* texts are composed in space, time and in a particular society, (the Ewe); therefore the texts are tied with the people's 'social energy' and systems. Also, *nyadodo* is not fixed in sequence; it involves different composers, different content and specific contexts even though the form is similar. Qualitative method will help grasp the subtle shades of meaning of the texts as well as guide the discovery of the different tropes embedded in the texts. This will support the sociolinguistic dimension to the discussion on *nyadodo* texts while rhetorical analysis will guide issues such as the type and use of tropes in presenting a message.

The purpose of this study is to show the importance of tropes as carrying the world view of the Ewe. As such purposive design was used to seek out situations which are likely to be of importance and fruitful to the interest of the study. The world of the individual and the group as a whole does not lie in only the intellectual, cognitive knowledge but of emotional, affective components as well. The immediate and broader contexts of performance and how these are fixed in the utterances have therefore informed and guided the collection and analysis of data.

Data Collection

Okpewho (1992) offers guidelines on how to do a successful fieldwork in the study of oral artistic forms of Africa. They include initial preparations such as knowing the research locale, finding out who the local experts are in the kind of oral literature to be investigated, and assembling the right materials for the fieldwork. Apart from the above, Okpewho has suggested that meeting with the artists, recording, transcription, translation and storage must be taken seriously if one must be successful in studying an oral genre.

As a researcher on oral art forms, Okpewho stresses as important, going to artists directly or being introduced to them and to create the right atmosphere for further meetings the researcher must try to observe courtesies and generally 'behave [well]' (p. 342). The other critical area in Okpewho's guidelines is that on recording or interviewing. He advises that even though the non-directive style in interviewing could be time consuming, it is worth the effort since in speaking freely the informant may be telling about his or her personality. Questions to the informant must be based on the following areas: life and background, the dynamics of the informant's society and their artistic prowess. Listening to recording a couple of times and choosing the right transcription style—standardised or dialectal have been emphasised and proposed for adoption and adaption by the researcher. Okpewho's guidelines were considered and adopted to a large extent by this researcher in collecting data on *nyadodo*.

Data were collected using interviews. It involved initial considerations and activities including locating interviewees and informants who are knowledgeable on the subject matter for their input. Some of the informants

were introduced to the researcher by some other people in the community while those known already by the researcher were approached directly. This last group were mainly from the community of the researcher. A series of preliminary meetings and follow-up discussions were held with some of the interviewees on different occasions. These meetings were aimed at introducing the researcher and her team, the purpose of the research and its importance and to book appointments for further meetings. On the advice of community gatekeepers that *ne ebe mafia o; mabi o* (*if you do not want it burnt, it will not be cooked*) the necessary traditional protocols in the form of either alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages or other types of tokens were offered to informants.

Generally, the non-directive style was employed during interview sessions. Questions were based on thematic areas that included bio-data, social status, artistry and knowledge of community history, events and heritage. These interactions provided invaluable information on the genre, the research locale, socio-cultural underpinnings and other issues that are crucial to data analysis. The interactions brought home the different engendering points of some *nyadodo* texts which included historical occasions, emotional experiences, the desire to rebuke and castigate and to reform society. The anecdotes or what this researcher refers to as 'little stories' that engendered some of the texts provided a tremendous guide in the translation and analysis of data. On the average, between twenty-five minutes and one hour was spent during interviews and informal interactions with informants. At least thirty people, including men (mostly), women, educated, non-educated, referents themselves, the aged and the youth were interviewed. Their ages ranged from

35years to 92 years. It is worth noting the fact that some *nyadodo* texts were performed during the interview sessions of these people. For example, during an interview session, when the interviewee, Dr Opeku, seem not to be paying attention to the interviewer and was ‘queried’ by the wife, he quickly responded with the *nyadodo*, *Tɔgbi Sri be yewole dzea dom gake yefe ŋku le amla koea dzi / Tɔgbi Sri says they are chatting but his eyes are on the tax* (#76). He explained that he may seem to be distracted and not paying attention but would like to assure me that he was focused on our core reason for seating—the details of the interview.

The interviews were guided by ethical considerations as outlined by Sacks (2009). All the interviewees were thus fully informed about the nature, scope of the study and its end result which is the printed text. In accordance with their demand, names of some of the interviewees, some information and classified experiences have been treated as confidential. Thus, some of the contexts that evoked the composition of some *nyadodo* texts have either not been posited in their specific contexts or included in the final write-up. In order to avoid embarrassment, total rejection and above all to create a congenial atmosphere, permission was sought for the use of a tape recorder and an *itel* tablet in recording interview. It is worth noting that interviewees who demanded anonymity and were most unwilling to be photographed were the few women that were contacted.

In collecting data, the researcher never lost sight of the relevance of language as the most powerful means of evoking meaning. However, in oral literary researches one cannot ignore such paralinguistic forms as expressiveness of tone, visual communication, and passion as integral parts of

verbal artistic forms. It is for this reason Alemna (1993) and Okpewho (1990) propose the use of audiovisual apparatus which this researcher employed to help capture enough of the poetry and to help minimise the loss of vital elements such as mentioned above during data collection. One would agree with the view that the emotive expressions would be important signposts to identifying a trope and understanding the import of a *nyadodo* text.

Nyadodo texts were extracted from Kove (1998) and Akyea's (2000) works and data were gathered also from the researcher's own knowledge and intuitions as a native speaker of the Ewe language. Apart from these sources, key persons domiciled in the communities, students and research assistants were identified, trained and contracted to collect *nyadodo* texts and to interview for the study. A major setting that generated data included performance of *nyadodo* during conversations at informal settings such as drinking spots/bars, market places and in vehicles. One of such instances was in October 2015, in a bar-under-tree near the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) Headquarters in Accra, Ghana. The researcher went there at about 10:00 am to get a bottle of water and met a gentleman who was in a hilarious conversation with friends. From comments around his table, the man's general demeanour, and disposition, it was obvious to the researcher that the man was one of those we could categorise as being on the lower level of social standing. He performed and indeed dramatised (turned the hip to the left and right) a *nyadodo* text thus: *Peki dee be alimee mi tsa da (Peki person says it is your hip; throw it #9)*. This further attracted my interest and curiosity compelling me to request an interaction with the group. They happily accepted my request and went ahead to provide valuable

information on the particular *nyadodo* text. They pointed out the wisdom in the text and the context for its appropriate use. One striking feature of *nyadodo* which was exhibited in the performance by the man was that even though the performer said that he was not a citizen of Peki and was not conversant with the Peki dialect, he made the attempt to perform the *nyadodo* in the Peki dialect. A further discussion on the relevance of geographic space and dialectal influence with regards to *nyadodo* will engage our attention later in Chapter Four of this report.

Another advantage of the non-directive approach to data collection for this study was informants recall of reminiscences, jokes, historical ‘gossips’, rumours and anecdotes. Questions and further probings triggered recall of happenings which the informants narrated to support composition of *nyadodo* texts and author validation. One of these events that evoked the *nyadodo* text: *Davɔdzi be yefe nya medzea Atɔkɔtɔwo ɲu o, yata wòle alea / Davɔdzi says he is not taken seriously by the people of Atɔkɔ that is why things are the way they are* (#71) was narrated by Mr Kwamiga Nyatuame of Woe in the Keta traditional area. We can therefore agree with (Vansina, 1985:17) that a mass of information may not be in the historical consciousness of the people, but it is nevertheless transmitted as gossip, when the occasion warrants it. Even though sometimes interviewees found them difficult to recall, Vansina’s motivation recall cue helped to trigger their narration. The researcher and her team therefore motivated some informants by stressing the honour the study and documentation of *nyadodo* texts will bring to the community and the its significance to the Ewe as a whole. This

of being labelled *nyadɔewɔlawo* (*gossips*), two actually had to ask permission from a brother to participate in the interview and requested that their names should not be recorded. In another instance, the female respondent allowed the interview only in the presence of male family members. The male participation was explained as a support for the female to gain confidence. This situation the researcher found quite ironical but not surprising since the patriarchal system can sometimes be so entrenched to the point where women's stories or voices remain insignificant; nothing but 'woman talk' unless authenticated or 'supported' by men. The stigma of inferiority of the female is thus exhibited here. Among the few women interviewed were Kro Yawa of Have, Da Abrā of Ho and Mama Denyeameter Sadzi of Afife.

Data generated from community leaders and elders have been necessary not only to authenticate information, provide reliability and validity for the work but also to help generate information on referents that have passed on or are not readily accessible. The accounts of these elders and community leaders obviously contained information concerning past times, circumstances and situations which might have evoked a *nyadodo* composition or performance (Alagoa, 1978). These interviews allowed the researcher to validate information and also to link text, context, and trope utilisation.

It is worth noting that all the strategies employed in collecting data are in consonance with indigenous Ewe information retrieval strategies such as, *ame fe nume tete se*; literally meaning, (*feeling the mouth of a person*),

nya ta biabia (asking about a case/happening), *nu gɔme dede* (explanation/exposition of something), *nu gɔme kuku* (digging into something). Even though oral information has been condemned by some critics as undependable (Murdock, 1959), this researcher agrees with the view that life of the majority of people in non-lettered societies is recorded in orality and so there is no way one could side step oral information that emanates from memory in the study of the people and their lore. The worth of oral information as against written forms when it comes to evidence of things past is really not the form but the worth of man as the recorder or transmitter of the evidence (Hampate Bâ, 1995). Oral tradition must therefore be seen as bedrock of the life of the people even though new perceptions, new ways of expressing sensibility and new priorities will continue to emerge as they must in a community of change and transition (Agovi, 1989:53). Therefore, no matter how confused or muffled memory may seem, it has proved a store house of the Ewe people's life and has played a vital role in the researcher's efforts in gathering data for this study on *nyadodo*.

Translation of Texts

Oral literary texts in essence are not meant to be written since their oral nature gives them an originality and uniqueness. To convey a credible and authentic emotive force behind oral art forms is therefore an uphill task since it is the responsibility of the researcher or collector to reconcile two different media of cultural expressions (Adejara, 1989; Innes 1990; Sidikou, 2001). The print version of an oral text, to many, is nothing but an echo of something that happened in performance in another language (Mapanje and White, 1983).

A shift in tone, movement from a spot to another, or refusal to have face contact with audience, is relevant if one has to form the right opinion about the art and the culture that engenders it. But these essentials may be just difficult to capture and transfer into a receptor language such as English in our present case. Translating *nyadodo* texts has been most daunting if one considers the fact that the texts are rendered in three different major dialects, Aṅlɔ, Tɔṅu and Eweme, of the Standard Ewe language and their corresponding differences. More important, one has to appreciate the fact that the beauty and uniqueness of *nyadodo* texts as has been pointed out really reside in the dialectal forms in which they originate and the peculiarity of the referent.

The following texts are marked with their peculiar tones to underscore the relevance of the discussion on translation. The referents of *nyadodo* texts 1 and 2 below are from Kpando and Have respectively. Example 3 is from Aṅlɔ while example 4 is performed nasalised since the referent is a ghost.

1. *Kpándó nyɔnuwó bé mɛnɛ́ mifúfú ànyì / Kpando women say
let us push him to the ground. #61*
2. *Hɔlū Yawe be èviwonɔwé lòò / Hɔlū Yawe says mothers lòò
#72*
3. *Kétá tsùkuna be edzo re Yèsù kple atsɛɛafu dòmè /Keta
lunatic says it is between Jesus and the sea. #85*
4. *Agbòzumè Ɔplī bē yeáhányá nā wɔa? / Agbozume Ɔplī says
do I know for them. #109*

Nevertheless, translation of *nyadodo* text is crucial for preservation and ‘broadcast’ otherwise it would remain in ethnic closet and will not achieve the

required visibility. Chinweidu, while not denying the presence of the challenge, supports the benefit of translation thus:

It is inevitable that translation should play a decisive role in any presentation in one language of works which were originally composed in the hundreds of languages which Africans have used to communicate with one another. This fact may cause disquiet to those who thoughtlessly bemoan what is inevitably lost in translation, and who do not give appropriate recognition to what comes through. It ought, therefore, to be noted that what gets lost in translation tends to be such language specific features as rhyme, rhythm, assonance and metric patterns which may not be reproducible in a language with different resources. On the other hand, much gets conveyed by competent translators, particularly the sense and force of the passage....*If what comes across is memorable, felicitous and moving, and if it retains the sense and something of the style of the original, then the result...is as good as can be.* (p. xxxiv, cited in Acquah, 2002:24) (emphasis added).

To achieve the best in the present circumstance therefore, the researcher concentrated attention on the message, but also paying attention to the cultural nuances and underpinnings of the various ethnic groups and making sure that equivalents are available in the target language. This is almost an obligation that a researcher on oral forms must observe, for we 'owe at least to the culture from which we have taken something the duty not to violate our change but to accord it as much of its integrity as the host culture will allow' (Okpewho, 1990: 111). This will help in making the texts gain some reality and continuous freshness.

This researcher, to present translations that will be as near as possible to the original and to accord the texts some crediiblity, listened to recorded interviews a couple of times to extract *nyadodo* texts. These were read

through a number of times and examined not only to select those embedded with tropes but to inwardly digest the different meanings they will yield. Some experts on fieldwork with regard to oral art forms such as Okpewho endorse dialectal transcription of texts arguing that spoken word must be accorded the 'integrity and respect it enjoys in the familiar context of its expression' (1992: 348). Collected *nyadodo* texts were transcribed as close as possible to the dialects of Ewe and translated into English albeit without tone markings. Literal translation was done and sometimes modified carefully to capture the spirit, the tone and feel of the original; in such cases certain words and expressions from the original dialects were retained. In some cases, *nyadodo* texts were read to informants and referents to ascertain their specific context correctness so as to avoid the tendency of recording tasteless recordings that may emphasise units of thought and content to the neglect of artistry (Okpewho, 2007).

To retain the sense and something of the style of the original, to maintain the force and power in the words/expressions translations were rechecked with competent translators in the Department of Ghanaian Languages and Linguistics (University of Cape Coast) as well as other scholars and indigenous experts in the Ewe language. The researcher's familiarity and appreciable competence in Ewe language and socio-cultural environment also supported the process of translation.

Analytical Tool

Translation of oral artistic forms may be daunting, but equally difficult is choosing an appropriate analytical frame or theory for texts (Muleka, 2014). Anyidoho (1997) for example suggests that, 'A comprehensive theory of

verbal art in Africa may very well have to begin with a proper appreciation of the ontological value of the word, not merely as a semiotic fact but, above all, as a natural cosmic force with a potential for creative and destructive ends'(p123). This means that since performance of oral literary texts involves more than mere words, in arriving at a theoretical decision towards their interpretation and understanding the intricate meanings they provide it will be rewarding for a researcher to consider many other variables. The referent's life and background, community life and its history, events and belief systems would be critical in the composition of oral artistic texts such as *nyadodo*.

In his essay on 'Verbal Art as Performance' Bauman (1977) cautions against the tendency of relying solely on the devices of language to attract attention as the 'touchstone' of verbal art analysis. Muleka (2014) together with Anyidoho (ibid), Birch (1996), Bauman (1977), Castle (2007) and Angmor (2010) argue strongly for a consideration of a composite theoretical approach if one wants to get the full import of oral literary texts. Mc Carl (1984) for example, has exhibited the appropriateness of this approach in a single study by using a medley of frames including, folklore theory, narrative analysis, performance analysis, and literary structuralism, to analyse oral texts of participants in a fire-fighters retirement dinner (cited in Birch, 1996:14). The link between a piece of art and its social setting and meaning derivation are amply demonstrated in the study by McCarl.

From the foregoing, it is evident that in analysing tropes in *nyadodo* texts to discover their aesthetic value as well as their relevance to the community and the individual a composite analytical frame such as rhetoric-sociolinguistic frame would be appropriate. A composite tool, rhetoric-

sociolinguistics, which combines elements of rhetoric and sociolinguistics analysis aims at linking language and exophoric elements such as socio-cultural contexts, life stories of texts in the analysis of tropes in the data. It is similar to Di Yanni's (2002) model of analysing literary texts which takes into consideration the following:

1. *Observing*: At this stage, attention is paid to the language as used in describing the details; that is observing the tropes that are used to foreground the thematic concerns in the texts is critical.
2. *Connecting*: The researcher must look for the different ways in which the details are connected and the possible meanings that these details offer.
3. *Inferring*: The meanings that are assessed at the connecting level are linked to the context of the texts. The worldview, socio-cultural, and ontological relevance emanating from the ideas could be appropriately assessed at this point.
4. *Concluding*: The final stage is when one arrives at a conclusion on the quality and relevance of the work (p672).

Nyadodo texts will be carefully observed for the presence of tropes, their link with the socio-cultural environment and personality of the referents. This approach will show the interrelatedness of literature and sociolinguistics and will allow us into the consciousness and experiences of *nyadodo* composers, their users, their everyday personal lives and events.

Conclusion

This first chapter of the study has provided a general background to the study, the problem that has engendered the study, the purpose and significance

of the study. It also includes a definition of trope, a discussion on the methodology, data gathering strategies and the relevant analytical tool. It was noted that data collection was mainly oral and essentially tied to plausible and acceptable Ewe indigenous system of information gathering. It cannot be overemphasised that all the various aspects of the world of the Ewe are active in the production of their artistic forms including *nyadodo*. Knowledge of the people will therefore facilitate a better understanding of the 'world' of the composers of *nyadodo* texts as well as the general discussion on the multiple meanings that the texts will exhibit. In light of this, the chapter has an exposition on the the research locale, identifying the various broad aspects of their lives as Ewe. In the next chapter, a review of literature is done in order to underscore the problem and the essence of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

In the introductory chapter, a broad discussion on issues germane to the thesis has been provided. These also included an exposition on data collection strategies as well as the relevant tool that has been employed in the analysis and treatment of data. It has been argued that many studies have corrected some of the earlier prejudices against the nature, worth and composers of literary works of non-caligraphic societies like Africa. The chapter also emphasised the point that the above notwithstanding, there is the need to search for new unresearched artistic works to further concretise the concept of individual artistry and the relevance of these fresh oral forms to their audiences.

The discussions in this chapter will highlight relevant works that will help particularise the research questions further and the need for their investigation. It will review various perspectives on the nature and scope of tropes and its worth in oral art forms in particular. The chapter will further show the interaction between oral artistic performance and the contexts that evoke their compositions. The relevance of context to meaning delineation and the choice of appropriate analytical tools for oral art interpretation in general and *nyadodo* texts in particular will also engage our attention in this chapter.

Studies in Tropes

Even though most scholars agree on the importance of tropes in discourses, they vary on their uniqueness. As far back as 1922, Donald cites Quintilian as classifying tropes as words or phrases which have converted from their proper signification to another. He includes metaphor, irony and allegory as examples of tropes. Leech (1973) on his part has identified two major classes of traditional rhetorical style which include tropes and schemes but warns that it is almost impossible to draw a fine line between tropes, schemes and other literary devices. He states that schemes have been described by traditional rhetoricians as figures (such as alliteration, anaphora, and chiasmus) that are 'abnormal' arrangements that lend themselves to the forceful and harmonious presentation of ideas. Schemes deal more with positioning, repetition of words or phrases and are realised more at the physical and sensory levels. Schemes are more of syntactic deviations for aesthetic effect (Cockcroft and Cockcroft, 2005).

Tropes on the other hand, Leech (*ibid*) notes, are devices which have been considered as more radical in scope and more powerful in content involving a shift of meaning, operating at the conceptual or semantic level. This means that the radical nature and function of tropes stem from the multiple layers of meaning and ideas that are generated from their use. Tropes such as metaphor, irony and synecdoche are noted to involve an alteration of the normal meaning of an expression and as 'foregrounded irregularities of content...a formal or a semantic deviation' (Leech, *ibid*: pp74-75). Leech corroborates Culler's (2005) view that there is a great interdependence

between levels that are identified as scheme and tropes, figurative language, figures of speech, and rhetorical figures.

A trope and its relationship with a figure of speech is another issue that has engendered scholarly discourse. Sadock (1982:42) considers any non-literal and 'apparent clash between what is done (what is said) and what is intended' as a figure of speech. Figures of speech in this sense have connotative meanings just as tropes for which reason Sadock shows no difference between a trope and a figure of speech as far as their nature and function are concerned. Thus, alliteration, metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, hyperbole, irony and euphemism could all be considered tropes or figures of speech since they display a feature of deviation and they all could generate an intense experience in thought and content.

Azasu and Geraldo (2005) also show a similar approach concerning a figure of speech and a trope. They refer to figures of speech as ornaments of style and suggest that the terms figures of speech and tropes are synonymic as far as their non-literal feature or aesthetic import in a given text and functional importance are concerned. Azasu and Geraldo identify about thirteen different types of commonly used figures of speech which they also interestingly refer to as tropes. These include metaphor, simile, personification, metonymy, oxymoron, hyperbole, apostrophe, metonymy, synecdoche, euphemism, and alliteration among others.

Some rhetoricians such as Holman and Harmon (1986) therefore consider tropes and figures of speech as similar and capable of being used interchangeably. These rhetorical devices are resources that a literary composer could exploit to enhance aesthetic as well as utilitarian values in his

work. From the arguments so far, one is inclined to accept figures of speech and tropes as similar as far as their feature and function are concerned. Both are employed not only for embellishment but they also reveal style and the creation of text (Putnam, 2004; Di Yanni, 2002; de Man, 1979).

To emphasise the strong similarity between tropes and figures of speech, Agyekum (ibid) defines tropes as ‘the figurative use of a word in a sense that is different from its literal meaning, [they] manifest in ironic expressions, metaphors and similes’ (p 262). Indeed, it is clear that these features and manifestations are not different from those that figures of speech exhibit. So, after a careful consideration of the two, Agyekum concludes that tropes and figures of speech are the same, and so ‘another word for a figurative language is trope and a trope is language used in a figurative way for rhetorical purpose’ (p184). Agyekum’s point of view on tropes and figures of speech is thus not different from the ‘deviation’ or shift in meaning quality that other scholars have stressed as the main distinguishing feature of these devices. What must engage our attention is the identification of tropes/figures of speech as a rhetorical element.

Agyekum (2012: 184) suggests that a figure of speech could be identified when ‘a speaker or writer for the sake of freshness or emphasis of some point of interest, departs from the usual denotations or normal use of words’. The meanings of these figures of speech or expressions, he explains, must be inferred or derived from the ‘larger cognitive, cultural or environmental context’ (Agyekum, ibid). He further explains that an important function and mark of a trope is its quality to make one to pause in order to understand the meaning of an expression in a literary piece of work.

This means that a trope/ figure of speech must possess qualities that could be used to help set a frame around a text, thereby removing that text from ordinary language and life. A trope or figure of speech attains its quality when it demands from its user and receiver especially, a reinterpretation of the message and also some knowledge of the one receiving the message about the context of the device. To identify the vivacity and energy that a trope/figure of speech provides in a text, consideration must be given to the items and their arrangement.

From the above considerations on tropes, schemes and figures of speech one can make the following deductions. The first is that theorists and rhetoricians rarely make a clear distinction between tropes and figures of speech. It will thus be fruitless to try to arrive at a fine border line or definite categorisation since there is a great deal of interdependence, 'criss-crossing' and overlapping in their nature and function. Indeed the examples that have been cited to explain tropes, figures of speech, and scheme clearly underscore the point being made about the overlap feature.

The second deduction that can be drawn is closely related to the first conclusion. The range of these devices is wide, straddling the conventional tropes which are common to all literatures to other such devices as riddles, proverbs, names and even tales which are available to oral literary form composers (Egblewogbe, 1991). Finally, as suggested earlier, it would be more beneficial to focus attention on trope recognition and identification, the steps towards their analysis, isolation of their strangeness in an utterance or text and their general importance in an artistic form. These will guide how they heighten discourse; affect meaning in a text and how these together throw

light on the emotional state of the composers as well as the users of a genre (Ansah-Koi, 2006).

Meyer's (2007:133) view that 'figures of speech or tropes do not only vivify, intensify emotions, and engage our attention but also clarify ideas' underscores the relevance of this study. This study invites us then, to consider the rhetorical device, trope, in *nyadodo* texts as not merely ornamental. The tropes in the texts will provide emotive power that evokes a particular response from an audience; they will make moral truths more concrete, vivid, graphic and easy to remember. It will be shown in the analysis of texts that indeed tropes are important not only to literary composers but to all categories of people who use them. We shall realise that trope language possesses semantic density; and that, it is speech that is suffused with obscurities, foregrounds, expresses multiple layers of meaning and therefore an important measure and resource for creativity (Bauman, 1977; Corbet, 1990; Christopher, 2009; Plett, 2010).

The relevance of tropes in oral discourses and literary forms of a people has not gone unnoticed. Trope relevance has been explored in studies by many researchers including, Peek and Yankah, (2004), Acquah (2012), Nkansah (2012), Yankah (1995), and Straton, (1995). Peek and Yankah, (2004) for example, in their entry on tropes in the encyclopaedia on African folklore emphasise how songs that are embedded with tropes have been critical in political oratory for the purposes of vivifying a point and concealing meaning. Tropes such as euphemism, circumlocution, metaphor, paradox, irony and personification have been identified as essential in creating 'unfamiliarity' and sensation thereby giving political speeches an attraction

and interest. Peek and Yankah, (ibid) conclude that tropes have force that inject any form of discourse with aesthetic quality and are therefore useful in making more accurate an idea or concept. In addition to these, tropes in political contexts serve a euphemistic role in allowing some level of freedom to employ 'taboo' words that will enhance speech formality.

The conclusions of Peek and Yankah, (ibid) on tropes and their value in discourse are evident in Ewe aesthetic evaluation. Among the Ewe of Ghana, texts that are self-evident, that is lacking tropes are sometimes considered uninteresting and evaluated as lacking not only aesthetic but emotional effect as well. Such texts may be described as *me vivi o*, (*it is not sweet / tasteless*), *mewɔ do de ame dzi o*, (*it has not worked on people*) that means it is not emotionally charged enough to make the hearer to respond to some physical or psychological needs. Because it lacks the emotional charge the Ewe will add comments such as *deko mesee ko* (*I merely heard it*) or *ele yaa* (*it is bland*) to *mevivi o* (*it is not sweet*). On the other hand, discourses that are 'garnished' with tropes such as *lododo* (proverb) or *nyadodo* appropriately are commended as *etô* (*it is thick/condensed*). Condensation implies that the discourse is open to meanings whose understanding will be dependent on tropes and their specific cultural and artistic contexts.

Saah in discussing the essence of tropes in discourse has also observed that even though brevity, order, clarity and candor are qualities expected in expression, in Akan formal discourse 'a person who is able to decorate his speech with such embellishments as proverbs, metaphors, and idioms is seen

in the eyes of the elders as a wise or witty person' (p367). The aesthetics of a text, one may say, lies in its emotive worth which is evoked through the use of tropes. This is the focus of Acquah's (2012) study on *Asafo* songs of the Fante. His study is very significant in as much as it emphasises the essence of tropes in oral literature in a Ghanaian culture akin to the focus of the present study on *nyadodo*. Tropes such as metaphor, simile, personification and symbols in *Asafo* songs of the Fante have been identified as undergirding the aesthetic as well as cultural relevance of the genre. In the analysis of data, Acquah corroborates the 'twist and turn' nature of tropes and he also stresses how this feature makes tropes 'difficult' to negotiate. The difficulty is not to be understood from the point of impossibility; rather, from the effort that must be made in deriving connotative meanings from the texts that are anchored on the sheer force of cultural habit.

Through the analysis of tropes in selected *asafo* song texts, Acquah vividly but forcefully brings to light the various emotional expressions such as anger, lust, fear, sadness, surprise, happiness, shame, love, and pride which invariably, express the thought or communal value systems of the Fante. Acquah therefore concludes appropriately that even though some oral forms may be individualised (such as *nyadodo*) artistic creations reflect the society's cosmological and ontological thoughts. In addition to this, Acquah's work confirms the view that the concept of individuality is mostly intergrated and fused with all other members of the community—the living, the dead and the unborn.

Ohwovoriole (2013), upon studying the funeral dirges of the Urhobo people in the Delta State of Nigeria for their aesthetic relevance, notes that the

genre is replete with symbolism that evokes the different 'forces, contradictions, and fears' in Urhobo society. Ohwovoriole's work supports Darah's (2004) view that tropes or figures of speech are used in charging language to elicit appropriate emotion. As would be realised later in the analysis of *nyadodo* texts, symbolism and other embedded tropes are used to 'charge' statements that insinuate, castigate, ridicule, and create laughter among others.

Egblewogbe's (1975) article on the importance of games and songs in educating the young is an important work that shows the interaction between beauty and functionalism of artistic works. In the article, Egblewogbe emphasises the aesthetic qualities of the song texts and their function as a medium through which Ewe values and socialising systems are instilled in the young ones. He follows the discussion in another paper, 'Imagery in Oral Literature with Special Emphasis on Ewe Poetry' (1991), primarily to provide a sound justification for the recognition of Ewe verbal art forms as genres whose essence is derived from the powerful figurative language that they possess. Tropes such as metaphor, simile, personification, allusion, hyperbole, and proverbs that are embedded in Ewe *Borborbor* songs for example, evoke different emotions and offer multiple meanings. Egblewogbe emphasises the point that these tropes are essentially derived from the everyday lore of the people but they make language in the songs 'special'. He therefore joins other literary scholars to debunk derogatory comments about the production and quality of verbal artistic forms of non-literate Africans. He suggests that an effective way to concretise the claim of the literariness of African oral forms is for scholars in Africa to continue to unearth and analyse new genres from the

literary point of view. That way, Africa verbal art forms will stand 'side by side written literature anytime, anywhere' (ibid: 121). We shall not only then argue for the presence of literature in non-literate societies but also stress the relevance of literary works artistic channels in expressing the total life of a people.

Egblewogbe's paper in the main provides a general overview of various types of songs as examples of verbal art forms of the Ewe and does not therefore provide an in-depth analysis of any specific type. *Nyadodo* has existed alongside other genres of the Ewe, and has performed roles such as creating laughter; castigating, admonishing and providing general commentary on individual and social life but it has not received an in-depth scholarly attention. Nevertheless, Egblewogbe's papers (1975; 1991) provide thematic and situational relevance which are explored on a larger scale in the present study on *nyadodo*. It is also necessary to regard the present study as a response to his call for language and literature specialists and researchers to 'search for, record and analyse oral literary materials and write papers and monographs on [their] various aspects of features' (cited in Akyea, 1999:23). Analyses of the tropes in *nyadodo* texts will confirm Egblewogbe's view that oral literary forms (not only songs) of the Ewe are also embedded with imagery that exposes and foregrounds the Ewe world out-look.

Other people such as Fiadjoe (1996) and Nayo (1965) have studied the literary and musical elements of Akpalu's songs in their respective dissertations to underscore the essence of context in the analysis of oral literary texts. Fiadjoe, in particular, while showing the connectivity among personal life experiences, language, culture and artistic works, has discovered

and analysed tropes such as repetition, metaphor, simile, personification as major devices that foreground the thematic underpinnings in Akpalu's songs. She shows in her analysis that these tropes provide multiple meanings that an individual member of a community expresses about death, poverty, loneliness, and vocational hazards. Fiadjoe also echoes the views of Egblewogbe (1975) in recommending further search and study of other oral literary forms of the Ewe for their artistic qualities and socio-cultural underpinnings. These qualities of tropes and their essence to oral artistic works have been amply demonstrated by Alabi (2009) in her analysis of tropes in Nigerian proverbs. She notes that the power of proverbs in expressing strong feelings, instructions and even amusement is anchored on the use of witticism and other tropes. Tropes, she also emphasises, are not only beneficial in creating aesthetic effects and heightening interest; they also have a social function. It is in light of the above that Thornborrow & Wareing, (2005) strongly feel that much of our perception of the world of a people and us can be said to be shaped by figurative uses of language.

The tropes in this study will include words, phrases and expressions that will be shown as resources that push language and thought. It shall be argued further through analysis of data that tropes are very powerful means by which referents of *nyadodo* texts make statements about themselves and their environment. The deep and sometimes inexpressible emotions of the composers find vent in *nyadodo* texts. Thus, *nu si wu dzi nu mate nu agblɔ o la, ha mee wɔdzi ne ɔ* (*what is too much for the heart and the mouth cannot say, one sings it in a song*). Song (*ha*) in this sense, embodies all types of artistic forms that are embedded with tropes as

channels that carry the strong feelings of a people and the avenue for us to understand their world.

Tropes, Indirection and Oral Art

Tropes such as metaphor, irony, metonymy and synecdoche heighten the emotional and aesthetic quality of a literary work but they can also be used to great advantage in discourses, dialectical tensions, formal negotiations, every day talk and the organisation of tasks (Putnam, 2004). Spoken word as has been stressed throughout the discussions so far is a powerful tool that is necessary in communication. In the introduction to *Women Writing Africa...* edited by Sutherland-Addy and Diaw (2005) a strong case has been presented in relation to how delicate and sensitive spoken words could be.

Spoken word, it is noted, has the ability of flying away to unknown destinations because it can evoke varying emotions and meanings. To this end, words that are spoken must be truthful, brief, thought-provoking and well-prepared; for, ‘... once spoken, words cannot be swallowed up again’ (Sutherland-Addy and Diaw, *ibid*). The power of spoken word has been summarised as everyday talk which may seem ‘common’ but it is ‘replete with ritual dangers and uncertainties’ by McDowell (1985:115). Even though every African is described as ‘a born orator and a connoisseur of oratory’ (Finnegan, 1970:444-5) it calls for original and individual talent that are manifested in speech formalities. It is thus important for all (including the Ewe) to handle speech with utmost care since public self-image is a quality that every member of the community desires for themselves and from all.

Among the Ewe it is not uncommon to hear such comments as *mebuame o* (*s/he does not respect*), *menya nufo o* (*s/he does not know*

how to talk) or *melea be na efe nufo o* (*s/he does not manage his or her speech*) when appropriate speech protocols are violated. Metaphoric descriptions such as *efoa nu abe gb̄e le agbeli dum ene* (*s/he talks like a goat eating cassava*) may be employed to show displeasure with speech that lacks decorum. As discussed in the introductory section of the work (see section on setting), one way the humanness (*amenyenyē*) of a person is delineated among the Ewe is very much tied to the quality of their utterances. A person who engages in speech that lacks the right protocol may be considered as mentally imbalanced and described as *mele k̄r̄et kura o* (*s/he is not correct at all*). To avoid these ‘ritual dangers’ of speech and thus prevent the anger of any segment of the community—physical or spiritual, some form of speech protocol is demanded and desirable. Aside the content and style of speech, rules of precedence or hierarchy are important. Among the Ewe as may be in most African societies, such as the Akan of Ghana and the Rundi of East Africa (Finnegan, 1970), hierarchy is expected to be followed in communication; a senior is thus given the chance to speak before a younger one in most cases. The rule of precedence is closely linked with the right posture of a person during the speech act. Thus content, style of delivery and setting of speech are all critical in revealing individual character and also crucial in the preservation of community values and norms.

The observance of communication protocols such as *mede kuku* (*please*), *taflatse* (*excuse me*) or attributing speech to ‘Stand-ins’ or ‘Spokesmen’ can be recognised as important in developing social consciousness of the Ewe where individual life is locked up with the life of the

community. Rituals of deference, mediation and face-to-face interaction in communication are thus critical to the survival of the group. An essential concept that the Ewe consider in their everyday activity is habituation which is a process where the Ewe unconsciously adapt their ways of thought to the social and physical conditions under which they live (Abotchie, 1997). Therefore, when the Ewe for example breaks the taboo regarding mentioning the real names of some reptiles such as snakes in the night, selling oil in the night or being blunt with the genitalia of a woman it will be tantamount to creating a social danger. In the world view of the people, nature, the living, the dead and the unborn will all be offended and affected.

Indeed, the above demands may be available to all other cultures as well but it seems that the employment of speech formalities or strategies to save face and society as a whole is more demanding and more manifesting in non-literate cultures (Yankah, 1995). These societies attach a lot of importance to protocol in the spoken word because they are aware of its potency and 'potential for instantly enhancing the socio-political status of its practitioner, as well as the capacity to undermine his or her social standing' (Yankah, 1995).

Aside the frames mentioned above, verbal indirection referred to as *badedemo mo na nya* (covering the face of word with clay) by the Ewe is an important strategy that is employed to 'clothe' the content of speech. Verbal indirection is explained as a 'communicational strategy in which the interactants abstain from directness in order to obviate crises or in order to communicate 'difficulty' and thus make their utterances consistent with face and politeness' (Agyekum, 2004: 42). It is worth stressing again the

fact that the Ewe (like the Akan) are not against directness and openness in discourse. Indeed, the Ewe appreciate such elements and may query the absence of directness and clarity in statements as *nya fe ngogbe koe nyo* literally meaning *it is only the front of speech that is good* while the excessive use of tropes will sometimes elicit such complaints as *eme meko o; enya petee le wantsii* (*it is not clear; the whole speech is dragging*) among some Eweme people. The word *wantsii* really suggests that the speech is tortuous, not straightforward and thus not understood. The point here is to recognise the importance of what is said, how it is said and in what context it is said. The ‘ritual dangers’ referred to above by McDowell (1985) in the use of spoken words and the relevance of tropes in this regard come to the fore. Innuendos, circumlocution, euphemism, metaphors, alliterations, riddles, anecdotes and tales are some tropes that can be useful and readily available resources for interlocutors to obviate possible undesirable confrontations. Among the Ewe, proverb and especially *nyadodo* texts (as will be demonstrated in Chapter Five) are effective in achieving the desired societal demands in speech act. Proverbs especially are attributed to either a ‘Spokesman’, elderhood; while in the case of *nyadodo* the community, or some of its segments, are the referents. The speaker who employs a ‘dangerous’ *nyadodo* for example, can claim and be granted immunity since the statement is attributed to someone else. Yankah, (1995) has discussed a similar situation about the Akan, stressing that ‘indirection through the use of *kasakoa* (metaphor), *akutia* (innuendo), or *ebe* (proverb) is one frequently used mode of controlling the potency of spoken word’ (p50). His explanation

that ‘...the ambiguity of indirection where there is often a shift from one domain of experience to the other, prevents the easy assignment of malicious motives to its user’ (Yankah, *ibid*) is applicable to the Ewe in their everyday communication or socialisation.

Another way the Ewe express indirection and anonymity is through the use of linguistic items such as *amewosi*, (*people’s wife*) *asamesi/mamee* (*somebody*) and *dee* (*person*) as exhibited in the following *nyadodo* texts:

1. *Maame be menye adusi ta yeagbe fu gba o. /Maame*
(somebody) says in spite of toothache I will chew bones. #16
2. *Amewosi be menye kɔkɔ fuanyi ta yeagbe vu wɔɔ. /Amewosi*
(somebody’s wife) says pushing her down will not stop her
from fighting. #26
3. *Peki dee be aalimee mi tsa da. / Peki dee (person) says it is*
your hip; throw it. #9

The first example is about somebody who had toothache problem but enjoyed meat-on-the-bone products. This in most cases caused excruciating pain but one was sure that the habit would be repeated by the NP (*mamee*). When s/he is reminded of the consequences of the habit, s/he would retort, *menye adusi ta magbe fu gba o*. This means ‘enjoying’ meat-on-the-bone will continue regardless of the problem and its consequences. Informants were unanimous on the identity of the NP but insisted that open disclosure may result in conflict and its attendant repercussions which the society does not desire. Also, that way, the larger society would be saved the embarrassment since it is the genre’s nature to travel beyond its original

performance context; *nyadodo* must 'break' beyond its immediate boundaries.

A similar situation is expressed in the second example. Even though -*si* in the NP *amewosi* in Ewe morphological arrangement denotes female, it is obvious that particularisation of the NP will be a really difficult task. The NP in the third example is also indeterminable since there are many persons *dee* from Peki. The linguistic items, *amewosi*, (*people's wife*) *mamee* (*somebody*) and *dee* (*person*) are used to mask the identity of the NP thereby exhibiting the feature of a trope that has both the manifest and the hidden interpretation. Speakers will use these *nyadodo* texts in discourse not only for their aesthetic values such as embellishment but also to underscore a social relational relevance. Since expression of these themes may offend the Ewe social consciousness '...it is the trope's obliqueness that the speaker may count on...' (Yankah, 1995: 56).

One can therefore suggest that indirection as a literary device that creates suspense and enhances interest, but it is also an important communicative strategy the Ewe employ to enhance human relation and keep the community together. Since the content or theme of some *nyadodo* texts may carry the feelings of their composers and may be like scars that are indelible reminders of embarrassing historical events, indirection becomes an important strategy in communicating these life stories/events. Conflict, acrimony and its concomitant effects may thus be averted.

Yankah, stresses the above by suggesting that while an innuendo is directed at a specific target who is expected to be 'aware of the subliminal frame

of interpretation’, euphemism as a rhetorical figure is like ‘filter that aims at decorum and politeness’ (1991: 53). The employment of tropes in oral forms in general and *nyadodo* in the present case is essential as a means of embellishing discourse but it also helps an Ewe to break taboos or community values, avoid conflict, in their effort to interrogate some of the philosophical foundations of the community. Decorum is achieved; the individual saves his or her face and enhances the quality of their character. It may help to cause some social change, maintain harmony and promote development. Further, verbal indirection is especially helpful to the ‘voiceless’ such as women to articulate their emotions. We can not agree better with the suggestion that ‘the skilful use of indirection has made it possible for women for example to be heard on the most delicate issues of concern to them and to fight for change’ (Sutherland-Addy and Diaw, 2005: 22-23).

Gender and Oral Art

It has been discussed that composition and performance of *nyadodo* cuts across gender, social and health status. Oral literary scholars such as Kiyimba (2010) have also emphasised that gender construct is very much embedded in artistic forms of non-literate societies. These oral forms have provided a powerful means for the vulnerable; especially, women in the society to speak. This notwithstanding, present data on *nyadodo* seems to confirm some earlier views that women’s involvement in literary engagements is on the down side. Some of these views will be discussed here to underscore the prevalence of the phenomenon and its factors.

It is quite revealing that even though gender issues are mostly seen through the eyes of women, there are male expositions that explore gender in

oral art of the African. One of such works is Kiyimba's (2010) *Masculinities in African Literary and Cultural Texts*. The book, which is a collection of essays, critically explores and provides insight into male power and dominance in the social system through both oral and written artistic works. In Part One of the book, Kiyimba argues in his essay, 'Men and Power: The Folktales and Proverbs of the Baganda' that 'patriarchal ideology of dominance remains unchallenged because it is rooted in the culture's founding myth which permeates everyday life' (pp5-6). Cultural mechanisms, especially oral forms and everyday communicative strategies are tools that are used to perpetrate male hegemony and make absolute the undisputed leadership of the male in the Baganda society. Kiyimba shows through analysis of Baganda folktales and proverbs that male as a gender may be comical and even display irresponsible behaviours but will still hold on to the social construct of dominance. Oral forms therefore engender patriarchy and power which combine with the potency of the spoken word to the submergence of the female. Kiyimba shows that in the origin myth of the Baganda for example, this posture of patriarchal supremacy is explicit and indelibly marked. In this myth, *Walumbe* (Death) because of the disrespect of her sister Nambi, he followed her and Kintu (the husband) from heaven and started killing their children. The woman in the world view of the Baganda is thus perceived as the disobedient one who brings death and hardship to a whole society. On the orders of (Kintu) the husband of the disobedient wife, women could be beaten, treated with disdain and suffer marginalisation in the social and political structure of Baganda society.

Man on the other hand remains the parent of their children to the extent that what makes one a *bona fide* member of the family is a proof of a father not a mother from that group. Kiyimba cited the following Baganda proverb, *Ab'oluganda baagalana, nga kitaabwe waali* (Brothers and sisters love each other when their father is alive) (Kiyimba, 2010: 45) to buttress the point. The father and not the mother is thus the pivot around which life revolves and he is regarded as the source of unity.

Some proverbs and folktales of the Ewe express views about women that are similar to the Baganda experience. For example, in the following Ewe proverb, *nyɔnu abolokpakue, nefo ge hafi wòavu* (*A woman is a a corn-meal-gourd/receptacle that you must beat before it opens*) paints the woman as docile, intransigent and stubborn. She must therefore be disciplined through rough treatments like beating to make her smart. It is interesting that the process of disciplining is appropriated by a male (Akyea & Asante 2011). Similarly, the Ewe lineage group is more often traced first to patrilineal descent. Thus the *ametsitsia*, (*the elder*) who is a male is the head of the lineage. Abotchie (1997) however reports that even though the male is assisted by a female the status of the female counterpart, *mama* (*grandmother*) is more of an 'expedient and consultative nature than executive' (p16). So, while the male lineage head controls everybody in the lineage, his counterpart (a female) handles the affairs of women only. We will therefore agree with John Stuart Mills' observation that from their very earliest years women have been made to believe that 'their ideal character is the very opposite to that of men; not self-will and government by self-control, but submission...' (cited in Kiyimba, 2010: 39). This construct has been

forcefully entrenched through oral forms including folktales, songs and sayings.

Tanure (2010) has also analysed gender preference in his article, 'Deploying Masculinity in African Oral Poetic Performance: the Man in *Udje*.' *Udje* is an oral genre that is practised by the Urhobo of Nigeria as a form of entertainment but also with the aim to 'wound' and destroy. It is revenge oriented and like the *halo* of the Anlo Ewe of Ghana, *Udje* is a medium that males use to transfer their violent energies into artistic competition or artistic war. Thus, the performance context, especially what the male performer brings into the event, is suffused with elements that provide an insight into Urhobo perspective on gender. Tanure notes that the songs are replete with tropes that connote perceived male qualities such as toughness, intimidation, rigidity, and self pride among others. The physical structure of the male performers is further entrenched in the genre by acclamation of the man's handsomeness which he must show off by being bare chested during a competition.

The content of *Udje* according to Tanure is to extol masculinity to the extent that even where the woman—wife or concubine—is praised and commended it is to enhance the prestige of a male—husband, brother or son. The conduct and actions of a wife and even her hometown can rub on the stature of the man. Womanhood has thus become a good content resource that is exploited in *Udje*. Thus, a dirty wife, a bad cook, a quarrelsome concubine for example is a recipe that an opponent can use in *Udje* song to diminish the prestige of a man. Tanure notes that in the Urhobo socio-cultural system therefore it is not all men who are masculine. Those who are cowards,

wretches and lay-about will be men only; the influence of masculinity is observable in the relationship between a man and his wife or concubine. The popular maxim, there must be a good woman behind every successful man encapsulates the content, form and performance of *Udje*.

The above expositions on masculinity in verbal art forms paint a picture of women being inconsequential in male dominated cultures. By and large, women are restricted, hopeless and thus suffocating under some socio-cultural arrangements. But some researches have also revealed that women have all the time found a way out to speak about their individual and collective situations. These restricting systems ironically are the strong channels that are available to women to comfort themselves, confront systemic inhibitions and contribute to the development of their societies.

Sidikou's research in 2001 on the verbal art forms of women of Niger, Mali and Senegal unequivocally stressed the potency of the spoken word in women's life. She however laments that even though women play significant roles in the development of their various societies they are not given the chance to tell their own stories and are mostly marginalised in literary researches. Her research also reveals and confirms the assumption that 'male performed-proverbs, tales or mythical narratives describe women as 'socerers' and 'eaters of men.' Such unkind descriptions, she thinks, and one would agree with her, could put fear in women and thus prevent them from engaging in public discourse. This may sound ironical, since among most African societies, the female is ontologically an indispensable extolled and somewhat idolised member of the community. This is true of the Ewe world view where

the origin of all human kind, as explained in Chapter One, is attributed to a female, *Bomena*.

Another issue that has been clearly articulated in Sidikou's research on the three societies— Niger, Mali and Senegal— is the relevance of spoken word to women in non-caligraphic societies. The literary space is employed by women in these societies to espouse their feelings and sentiments like any other person. Women are composers of texts that they use not only to underscore their creative capability but more significantly for negotiation of power and self affirmation. Language in the verbal art forms of women composers as manifested in the Mali, Niger and Senegal case, she acknowledges, is complex emanating from the use of proverbs, esoteric rhetoric and tropes in general. The tropes especially are dense with expressions of the images of women in their community and celebration of the body of females. The rhetorical strategies are used by women to essentially transcend and transform their world, interrogate political and social systems such as polygamy that directly affect their lives. The images and rhythm are strong channels that emphasise insights about the complexity of relationship in society and the family.

Even though authorship of *nyadodo* is not gender specific it will be revealed that female referents and the community of women employ the texts to explicate issues that are individuating and communal. Issues of motherhood, commerce and survival in their world and their relation to entrenched patriarchy are espoused in *nyadodo* texts that are attributed to them. Even though available data on *nyadodo* compositions of women are few, supporting Sidikou's lament that women are marginalised in literary

researches and engagements, these *nyadodo* did not remain in the minds of the women. Through the publishing role of the society, female compositions are disseminated and thus extending their individual thoughts and character beyond their specific contexts of composition.

Women and their artistic involvement have been proven in *Women Writing Africa* edited by Sutherland-Addy & Diaw (2005). The work comprises essays and researches that illuminate women's artistry and engagement in development processes and the general social consciousness of their societies. Besides, the work also supports the argument that women have been unfortunately absent from official records of West Africa and thus there is the need for women to tell their own stories. Rewriting the story of women especially by women themselves will help correct the prejudices about women; especially, concerning their artistic prowess. The essays argue that the stereotypical painting of African women is based solely on their body; thus, drawing attention away from the huge intellectual capacity also needs to be rectified. The situation where men's status and importance are continually asserted through rituals, war and festivals, but where women's issues are further pushed to the background must be corrected, the work has stressed.

In their presentation of women's oral artistic forms, therefore the contributors in *Women Writing Africa...* are able to show that even though societal systems seem to exclude women from the sphere of public speech, they use oral forms to break taboos, to 'rebel', to compensate or counter powers, and to negotiate social issues. Out of their daily activities women emerge from behind the walls of their homes and enter social discourses. Their homes metaphorically include all those small, seemingly inconsequential

spaces like the kitchen, labour ward, market, and the farm which they use to engage in political, socio-economic and cultural discourses. The dirges and lullabys they sing, the folktales they narrate and the statements they make are all relevant means to analyse their own situations—their pains, joys and survival. For example, the Tuareg mother, it is observed, does not sing the lullaby just to comfort, soothe and lull her baby to sleep; she may be using the medium as a quiet tone and melody to disguise a deep melancholy (Sutherland-Addy and Diaw, 2005). Similarly, the Ewe woman may use artistic forms to great advantage as revealed in a popular Ewe lullaby *Dzedzevi*. Part of the song is cited here to reinforce the importance of a woman's space and the spoken word to her survival.

Nye ɲtɔ fe dzedzevie loo, toboli *My very own little one loo! 'toboli'*

Megafoe nam o, toboli *Don't beat her/him for me, 'toboli'*

Neganyo tse nyee dzi, toboli *Even if good, I bore her/him,*
'toboli'

Negagblē hā nyee dzi, toboli *Even if bad, I bore her/him,*
'toboli'

The first line expresses ownership and the strong bond between mother and child. This idea of ownership and contentment are suggested in the phrase *Nye ɲtɔ* (*My very own*) of the first line and carried through the last two lines of the song. The trope *toboli* portrays an image of a *bouncy, rounded and adorable* baby; an endearing and treasured possession. Embedded in these emotions of joy and satisfaction may be a sarcastic comment on any member of the community—father, husband, co-wife or family member—or any one who may pose a threat to both the baby and the mother. Metaphorically

speaking, the life of a woman is like the challenges and uncertainties that confront her in performing a primary role, child birth, in marriage. Child birth can be ugly and life threatening but the woman will not allow these to overwhelm her. She will strive to rise above the challenges by emphasising their benefits rather. The lullaby above is an example of a mother's soliloquy that seems to provide her with a cathartic effect; an important space for her to celebrate motherhood and herself.

N'gbesso and Abobaut who are among the contributors to *Women Writing Africa...* have also demonstrated through analysis of a female genre *Eyidi*, or naming song among the Abe of southern Cote d' Ivoire the role of songs for social negotiation. *Eyidi...* they explained, is a communal performance that 'identifies, and redefines a conflict, allowing the speakers to reframe a difficult social situation' (Sutherland-Addy and Diaw: 340). This immediately points to the link between purely aesthetic function of a text and its role in the physical development and level of social consciousness of a people. The songs reveal that language in *Eyidi...*, is terse and allusive but embedded with a message that can ridicule, humour and make relevant ethical comments. Terseness of expression contributes to the genre's 'objectification' (Barber, 2007). This means *Eyidi...* will draw attention to itself for interpretation through the manipulation of all its linguistic and exophoric items. The tropes will thus help fix the genre not only as a literary form but also an appropriate channel for Abe women to break out from their 'little corners', to indirectly but forcefully articulate their emotions. Cultural boundaries may have been defined for and imposed on Abe women by dominant power structures and institutions but through their verbal

expressions such as *Eyidi...* Abe women are able to manipulate the system to great advantage.

The designation of *Eyidi...* as a naming song may be considered a trope that offers possible layers of meaning. Names can be figurative and their interpretation can lead to the understanding of the world of the individual and their bigger culture. The figurative language in *Eyidi...* and the whole performance context therefore helps in endorsing and making strong and appropriate the description of an offender. The offended uses the genre to create a name for the offender and through that she may experience a catharsis. Descriptions such as the ‘backstabber’, the ‘meddlesome one’ and the ‘inattentive’ that are suggested in some examples of *Eyidi...* texts, to this researcher are circumstantial names. Their effectiveness is strengthened and made vivid as tropes that are linked with the performative, social and geographic contexts. For example, in one *Eyidi...*, an offended party describes the offender character as ‘The ear that is determined to go to Gabon...’ (Sutherland-Addy and Diaw, 2005: 341). By the grammatical process of hyphenation we can have a noun—The-ear-that-is-determined-to-go-to-Gabon that is like a puzzle that must be unravelled for its beauty and utilitarian worth. The length of the name may suggest the distance between Gabon and Abe and may further foreground the source of the conflict, explain the offender’s inattentiveness and the victim’s justification for naming her as such. The long distance that is suggested in the sentence, ‘The ear that is determined to go to Gabon...’ can make it difficult and almost impossible for the offender to pay attention; thus, providing an inner logic for the plot in the song. Answers to such questions like why does the Abe woman turn her ears to Gabon, what is

crucial about Gabon, why does she show disinterestedness and the determination to ignore others will all provide interesting comments on gender issues of Abe in particular and Cote d' Ivoire in general. All these will draw attention to the text but could be better appreciated when posited within Abe world.

There is an interesting area of comparison that needs commenting on here as far as the two genres—*Eyidi...* and *nyadodo*—are concerned. *Nyadodo* is not gender specific as we find in *Eyidi...* and the composers and performers of *nyadodo* include men, women, the powerful, the dominated, those at the periphery of life and indeed all who find the genre a useful strategy in making personal statements, commenting about the society as a whole, interrogating life, protesting, and asserting themselves. *Nyadodo* can therefore be described as 'gender-friendly' even though as pointed out earlier, as far numbers are concerned, texts attributed to males outnumber those to women.

In his work on the oratorical importance of the *Okyeame (linguist)* in Akan ethnography, Yankah (1995) discussed the problem of women in the rhetorical enterprise. His conclusion on the discourse of gender manifestations in literature is not different from the viewpoint of many scholars and researchers. Yankah opines that '...the expressive power or limitations of the African woman cannot be easily separated from an assortment of social, political and artistic inhibitions which are largely prescribed by tradition' (p68). For example, cultural, and in recent times, Christian values desire and oblige women to exhibit a high sense of reticence especially where there are men. This is a criterion by which a woman's stance in society is measured;

and so this is how she can be described as *nyɔnu nyuie* (*the good woman*) among the Ewe for example. Women who are assertive and display any behaviour in contrariety earn such descriptions as *nyɔnu dze aglā* (*a riotous/arrogant woman*) or *amemabula* (*a disrespectful person*). According to Yankah, formal meetings among the Akan, for example are not restricted to males but reticence is required of women who are present; because where there are men, women must be quiet even when the subject matter concerns them. They can only contribute to the discussion upon invitation 'to say a few words' which may even be rare.

Yankah's argument here is evident in many of the social, political and cultural systems of the Ewe that are inhibitive to women. Women, who break out of this inhibition, are labelled differently. For example, the strong will to overcome such inhibitions engendered the *nyadodo* text: *Abiwu Ama be ne 'yɔ Ku be Efo tse awu wò, yɔe be Ku nāvo. / Abiwu Ama says even if you call death Brother, he will kill you; call him Death and be free* (#38). While the few female interviewees described the referent, Abiwu Ama, as outspoken, a 'no nonsense' person and generally a fighter, some male interviewees described her as *nyɔnu sesē* (*strong/difficult woman*) and *dzrewɔla* (*quarrelsome one*). It is interesting to note the following male interviewee's view about Abiwu Ama thus: *nyɔnu mi ya ŋutsu koŋue* (*as for that woman, she is really a man*). Indeed, the referent's break of cultural protocol could only come from a male, not a woman who is expected in the Ewe socio-cultural system to be reticent and 'refined.'

Like the Baganda and Urhobo, male oral forms of the Ewe are marked with volatile expressions and non-linguistic items such as guns, clubs among others. For example *avadeha* (war song) and *adeha* (hunting song) which are typically male-specific oral genres among the Ewe are characterised by frightening costumes and make-up; performance is mainly to depict valor, bravado, assertiveness, and masculinity. The accoutrements of these are ritually barred from women. On the other hand, women in female dominated art forms like *avihe*, (dirge) express emotions such as weeping (which is not culturally acceptable for men). The musical instruments women use include mainly miniature rattles and small drums that are even played by men. So, even though there are some female genres like *mmobome* of the Akan where some form of militancy is portrayed, the genre, it could be suggested, is performed in respect of male prowess and glorification. These definitely are tensions that underly and entrench the submergence of women as far as their involvement in oral artistry is concerned.

Yankah points out that it is not only the above that inhibit the creative capability of women in Akan culture in particular and Africa as a whole. Certain communicative roles such as *Okyeame* (linguist), public announcers and drummers of the talking drum are typically male. He cites one of those rare situations where a female, Eno Asuama is *Okyeame* (Yankah, 1995: p76). The woman here is however surprisingly debarred from performing an important function of *Okyeame*—the pouring of libation. This irony is further emphasised when the Akan metaphorically refer to the *Okyeame* as *ohene yere* (wife of the chief); but the role is played by males. It is observed that similar arrangements occur among the Ewe. It will not be far fetched to say that in

almost all communities among the Ewe the *kpodola* (*public announcer*), *agblɔvufola* (*drummer of war drum*) and *du tsiami* (*state linguist*) are mostly males.

Indeed, the Ewe proverbs: *Nyɔnu kpɔ ga medoa agblɔvu o* (*A wealthy woman does not institute a war drum*) and *Nyɔnu metsɔ tu o; akpleɖatie nye tɔ* (*A woman does not carry a gun; hers is the wooden laddle*) explicate the place of women in traditional roles. The making of *agblɔvu* (*war drum*) for example is associated with war and valor; so the drum is ‘adorned’ especially with human-skulls that are evidence of bravery in the many wars that the men had fought. Its institution is also associated with rituals that the ‘unclean’ woman cannot be part of. Metaphorically, it is not wealth but ruthlessness, bravado and valor that are the hall marks of greatness. In the same way a woman must not display any form of militancy or veer into the arena of male dominated role such as carrying a gun. She must remain in the kitchen which is symbolised in *akpleɖati* (*the wooden ladle that Ewe women use in preparing ‘akple’, a traditional meal*). These support what Kiyimba (2010) and Tanure (2010) reveal in their respective essays on gender and artistry; the silencing of women is reflexive of the trend that privileges men over women. The voices of men and their experiences therefore become the prism through which we see women.

Women in Ghana have been described as becoming quite active participants in interactive radio discussions in recent times. They have become assertive, more open and candid even on traditionally tabooed issues.

But this sudden boldness of women to speak out has been attributed to the introduction of faceless communicative medium such as the radio (Yankah, 2006) which can be referred to as a medium of indirection. This sudden boldness of women notwithstanding, the discussion shows that generally, women are 'quiet' because of constraints that are embedded in social, political and cultural systems of the African.

We can conclude that women may be quiet but they break their silence and make powerful statements in areas they dominate. Women break these traditional barriers no matter how unsurmountable they may seem through the limited spaces that they possess.

Burns' work (2009) on *Female voices from an Ewe dance-drumming community in Ghana*, seems to respond to the laments on the paucity of research on female artistic endeavours. Burns also agrees with the view that non-literate women are active in the physical development and the intellectual foundation of their communities through artistic works that disseminate and preserve the fabric of the society. The *Dzighbordi Habɔbɔ* dance-drumming club of Dzodze in the Volta Region of Ghana, which is the focus of the research, emphasises the essence of songs as performing both communal and individual roles. The group which comprises mainly women regards and labels the songs they compose and perform as *adekeɖehawo* (*busy-body-songs*). To the women in *Dzighbordi Habɔbɔ*, Burns rightly notes, the song they compose and perform is an appropriate medium to voice what it means to be a woman in the world of the Ewe; a space to complain and to seek redress.

One striking feature of the group that this researcher finds worth discussing is that the women label their compositions as *adekeɖehawo*

But this sudden boldness of women to speak out has been attributed to the introduction of faceless communicative medium such as the radio (Yankah, 2006) which can be referred to as a medium of indirection. This sudden boldness of women notwithstanding, the discussion shows that generally, women are 'quiet' because of constraints that are embedded in social, political and cultural systems of the African.

We can conclude that women may be quiet but they break their silence and make powerful statements in areas they dominate. Women break these traditional barriers no matter how unsurmountable they may seem through the limited spaces that they possess.

Burns' work (2009) on *Female voices from an Ewe dance-drumming community in Ghana*, seems to respond to the laments on the paucity of research on female artistic endeavours. Burns also agrees with the view that non-literate women are active in the physical development and the intellectual foundation of their communities through artistic works that disseminate and preserve the fabric of the society. The *Dzibordi Habɔɔ* dance-drumming club of Dzodze in the Volta Region of Ghana, which is the focus of the research, emphasises the essence of songs as performing both communal and individual roles. The group which comprises mainly women regards and labels the songs they compose and perform as *adekeɖehawo* (*busy-body-songs*). To the women in *Dzibordi Habɔɔ*, Burns rightly notes, the song they compose and perform is an appropriate medium to voice what it means to be a woman in the world of the Ewe; a space to complain and to seek redress.

One striking feature of the group that this researcher finds worth discussing is that the women label their compositions as *adekeɖehawo*

(*busy-body-songs*). Among the Ewe, *adekede* can also mean *nyadɔewɔwɔ* (*tale-telling/ being noisy/gossipy*); therefore, a person who is described as *adekede* is essentially meddling excessively busy and wishing to outrun others in ‘broadcasting’ community news. Another important element of *adekedetɔ* (*tale-teller*) is that s/he is uncompromising and determined to get to the root of an issue, no matter how long or what form it takes; especially, if it concerns them. *Adekede* is also generally considered a habit of women (according to fieldwork information); therefore, a man who exhibits this trait is condemned and derided. Therefore, for the women in *Dzighbordi Habɔbɔ* to designate and cast their artistry in a culturally ‘derogatory’ term could be a metaphor which connotes a ‘defiant acceptance’ of being busy. It is defiant because the women have turned their everyday continuous struggle and trudging into a positive avenue to make comments, to complain and to seek redress. They are *busy-bodies* in the kitchen, in bearing children and looking after their families but they are also *busy* actively composing songs out of these experiences to tell their stories, to interrogate life so that they can get to the root of issues that affect their existence. Indeed, Burns shows that the thematic underlinings of the songs the women compose and perform are mostly derived from issues such as irresponsible fathers/husbands and family members.

Another interesting element that is worth commenting on here is the irony embedded in the group’s name *Dzighbordi/Dzighbɔɔɔ* (*Patience*), and the designation of the song texts as *adekede*. It may seem conflicting but this is what they desire to express and foreground about their varying life struggles.

The women, according to socio-cultural systems, are expected to be patient and reticent. While waiting ‘stoically for things to change’ as Burns (ibid: 157) describes it, they will engage themselves in composing songs to speak about their space, to interrogate traditional systems and individual values that impinge on their self worth. They will be busy singing to recount the deep and painful personal moments in their lives; such as divorce, the pain of motherhood, polygamous challenges, loss, unhappiness, deceit and poverty. The tropes in the repertoire of the *Dzigbordi Habɔɔ*, like *nyadodo* texts help to indirectly but forcefully ‘represent the collective struggle for life, hope and significance of an entire community [especially women]’ (Burns, 2009:123). A popular Ewe proverb, *aɔtsi megbea nyɔnu de ke fe nkume o* (tears do not shy away from any woman), emphasises the idea of the collective struggle.

One can readily recognise the two-fold relevance of the songs—beauty and functionality—that Burns (2009) discussed as important elements in the repertoire of the *Dzigbordi* group. The ensemble is thus not merely for entertainment, or to showcase the creative prowess of women which manifests in the use of rhetorical devices but it is also to provide a marginalised group with a channel or space to illuminate elements of some societal systems and practices of the Ewe group of Dzodze in particular and Ewe in general.

Sutherland-Addy (1998) also joins other scholars and researchers in stressing the creative capacity of women in her paper ‘Women and Verbal Arts in the Oguaa-Edina Area’. Individual and collective viewpoints as well as sentiments are themes that are expressed by women performers of *adenkum*, *adzewa* and *ebibindwom*. These genres like *Eyidi...* of the Abe and the

repertoire of *Dzighbordi Habɔbɔ* of Dzodze are gender specific at the level of management and artistic control. The song texts, according to Sutherland-Addy, are mostly satirical, attacking lack of individual values such as integrity, the display of treachery and greed which are perceived among some members of Oguaa-Edina. The repertoire of the group also includes those that express women's interpretation of and views on social, political situations and systems such as war, leadership and governance.

It is worthwhile noting that women in most cases may not be allowed to interrogate such discourses, even though they have the right as members of the community, Sutherland-Addy's report shows that these female genres are ironically highly patronised. The women use the genres as a 'screen' by saturating the songs with tropes that 'make powerful statements about the community and reflect deeply about life's vicissitudes on behalf of all' (p38). Once again, we see here the collective struggle theme that is reflected in women dominated groups as exemplified earlier in the Dzodze *Dzighbordi* group.

Women in other cultures also continue to break social taboos that restrict them. We have already seen glimpses of marginalisation of women and the struggle of women to overcome this phenomenon in Sidikou Aissatou's (2001) research on verbal arts of women in Mali, Niger and Senegal. Adebayo (2009) has a similar report concerning women in some Islamic communities in Nigeria. He explains that Islamic social value system is generally known to be quite uncompromising as far as male-female relationship and status of women are concerned. For example, the system makes it an offence for a woman's voice level to be higher than that of a male; consequently, there are more male

oral performances than women have in Illorin even though 'men did not outnumber women in all the verbal genres' (Adebayo, *ibid*: 166). One can readily see the idea of women keeping mute or being reticent where there are males quite evident.

Despite this ironic imbalance and restriction, Adebayo (*ibid*) shows that Iyaladuke a female artist is able to break away from the Islamic strictures through her *Senwele* music to start a genre that has survived rejection and currently enjoying great patronage. *Senwele* music is explained as a gatepost for a lot of traditional oral forms because of improvisation which allows different oral forms to be subsumed in new forms. We can also immediately recognise genre interaction that this report has discussed in Chapter Three on form, content and structure of *nyadodo* texts. Iyaladuke uses *Senwele* music to explore philosophical and psychological themes that include the self, attitude, sentiments, temperaments, emotions and world views of the people of Illorin in Nigeria. Iyaladuke's songs are described as not only volatile but also therapeutic for those socially restricted (including women) in the Illorin social context. The most significant literary device that embeds these values or effects is tropes.

What is implied and can be deduced from the discussion so far is that female engagement in the various aspects of artistry is hampered. Apart from the studies above, many of the interviewees whose opinions were sought on the matter during fieldwork were of the view that females are by nature shy and unwilling to voice their emotions in ways that could create 'trouble' for them. Some also attribute the occurrence to the fact that females are 'secretive'; thus, they will not want to express themselves in such indelible

manner like *nyadodo*. Others however, unfortunately confirmed the general prejudice about women's creative prowess by attributing the disinterestedness and paucity in literary works to the creative incapability of women in very scathing comments. For example, a male interviewee, Mr. Victor Kamassah, an Anglo domiciled in Ho is of the strong conviction that the paucity of female compositions is due to the fact that, *nyɔnuwo fo na nu koŋ, gake menye nya gbagbea dekee wogblɔna o*; meaning, *women talk a lot but they do not say anything of worth*. He also added that since women do not say anything of importance, it will be difficult for people to engage them in serious discussions on issues such as the present research. Indeed during fieldwork, as reported earlier, it was difficult to get females to interact with the researcher but it is unacceptable to attribute this to the fact that women have nothing worthwhile to share. There are women in all cultures and among the Ewe who possess great artistic competence but the fact is that the world of the Ewe woman for example, is extensively controlled by patriarchal system which demands reticence from women. The control permeates artistry where for example Ewe proverbs are credited mainly to 'our forefathers' (Dzobo, 2000).

The review on gender and artistry all in all has confirmed the perception that the marginalisation of women is firmly rooted in and founded on the oral traditions of their various cultural systems. Even where women seem to be extolled, they are used to enhance the dignity and value of male. It has also been proven that women are mostly ignored in the official records of artistic works despite their numerical strength and invaluable contributions to the social consciousness of their various societies. All these notwithstanding, it

is evidently clear that oral artistic texts composed and performed by women are not only entertaining; they are very crucial to their existence as well as the development of the social consciousness of the communities.

Oral Art and Context

This segment of the review will show the various perspectives on the link between oral literary texts, context and analysis. Most literary critics, especially researchers on oral literary forms of Africa in general have advocated and argued for an interpretive strategy that is holistic since there is an inextricable link between art, language and the socio-cultural space of texts. Their stance is supported by their convictions that in cultures that are essentially oral, artistic expressions extend beyond textual quality into the culture of the people. The power of the spoken word in oral literature, according to Owusu-Sarpong (1995) for example, 'emerges from the appropriate use of cultural metaphor... (as cited in Sutherland-Addy and Diaw, 2005: 7). This demands that an interpretation of the metaphor must draw from the culture that produces it. Spoken word is so '...bound up in with its ecology or rather with the sum total of the social and cultural environment within which it is framed' (Yankah 1995:10). Abiola (2007) supports this view by contending that '...language for imaginative purposes represents a fundamental component of the symbolic structures by which the individual relates to society and by which society itself relates to its universe of existence' (p77). This means that the spoken word is tied hand in glove with the way of life of the people and so it must not be considered just as a proposition about something; it has a socio-cultural implication. It also means that analysis of literary works in the indigenous languages of oral cultures must recognise

their socio-cultural importance and not emphasise only the text. When this is done, we will understand better the social determinants such as power and status that underlie some oral genres and why for example women are tied to some specific genres. This also requires that interpreting oral forms must be hinged on the traditional philosophy of art as a pragmatic engagement which is in close relation to its context (Angmor, 2010; Asante & Akyea, 2002; Agyekum, 1996).

Context consideration in analysis has therefore been explained as taking place when a researcher of oral literary forms, for example, is able to link the personality of the oral artist, the historical background, the social context of the events, the cultural, the situational, the discourse, textual and performance in the interpretation of oral texts (Agyekum, 2003). This means that the historical and political events, the bio-data of the artist, his or her personality together with the normative and value systems of their society are crucial in meaning derivation of texts. One cannot agree better, in this regard, with Sperber and Wilson (1995:125) that an 'utterance on a given interpretation is optimally relevant if and only if it has enough contextual effects with the hearer's attention'. This means that creativity is a shared venture between an individual whose imagination, insight and originality are influenced by their society. Therefore, the importance of context in analysing *nyadodo* texts which emanates from the Ewe society for example, cannot be overemphasised.

Arguably, oral literary texts alone are meaningless to the members of another culture without the consideration of the context that produces those oral texts. For example, the extent to which tropes disguise or illuminate can

best be evaluated by giving serious consideration to the individual and cultural circumstances or the disposition of the users. Therefore, the need to appeal to the linguistic as well as the extra-linguistic circumstance in which an utterance is performed cannot be overemphasised. These circumstances will help reveal the standard meanings that a word or an expression can provide.

Bauman, (1983) a folklorist, also endorses context analytical frame in the study of folklore and cautions that 'If we are to understand what folklore is, we must go beyond a conception of it as a disembodied super-organic stuff and view it contextually in terms of the individual, social, and cultural factors that give it shape, meaning and existence' (1983:362). For example, in the performance of a libation text to ask for divine presence and intervention, poetic excellence, imagery, wit, and artistic use of language in general and above all knowledge of culture are all important in determining the success of the activity. Therefore in the view of Anyidoho, in his discussion on the composition of Akan *apae*, apart from committing texts to memory, a good performer should also have a grasp of the incidents that motivated them (cited in Barber, 2007). The essence of context in interpretation has therefore been summarised by Barber (2007) in her explanation of what a text is as follows:

Texts are the means people say things (about experience, society, the past, other people) and do things (affirm their existence, build and dismantle reputations, make demands, imagine community, convene publics)...they are social and historical facts whose forms, transformation and dispersal can be studied empirically (p.200).

Aside their historical relevance and being available for quoting beyond their immediate context of production, Barber is of the view that texts also become objects of attention by being obscure. Texts will become obscure

because they are engendered by a particular culture which must be understood by the outsider and even sometimes a member of that culture. Obscurity in this sense then will demand an interpretation for meaning that will not depend on the intrinsic elements of the text alone but also on specific circumstances that are not implicit in the words themselves. Barber therefore makes it clear that texts will remain opaque unless they are 'bathed in a sea of contextual and historical detail...' (ibid: 76). For this reason, interpretation of texts, especially oral literary texts must be tied to general and specific contexts that engender their composition. In doing so, we shall realise the interaction among text, artist and their world.

Duranti and Goodwin (1992) also support the important role context plays in the analysis and interpretation of text. They identify the four elements that constitute context as setting, the behavioural environment, language, and extra-situational. They consider setting as what covers the social and spatial framework within which encounters are situated. The behavioural environment involves the use of bodies of behaviour for framing talk. Language as an element of context is the way talk itself invokes context for other talk and finally, background knowledge and frames of relevance are elements of extra-situational context. These four elements are critical to interpretation but it must be emphasised that they are so fluid and interdependent that one cannot separate one from the other in an interpretive process. In our discussion on *nyadodo* and its interpretation it will be clear that the rules of communication, social variables such as gender, age, status, power and distance will all play major roles in the analysis of *nyadodo* texts. The Ewe as a speech community owns the Ewe language that is linked with a

specific setting and a different cultural background. They also have different beliefs, value systems and cultural heritage as well as bodies of behaviour that will form the basis of their speech acts. Linking their *nyadodo* to its socio-cultural space and world view is therefore important in relation to context analysis.

Key proponents of context frame, including Barber (2007), Yankah (1998), Donnelly (1994), Duranti, (1992) and Mooij (1976) may vary in detail and emphasis but essentially they are unanimous on the view that apart from the linguistic environment, the entire cultural, psychological settings and personal histories in studying literary forms, especially, oral traditional forms are helpful.

The analysis of selected *nyadodo* texts is thus premised on the argument that tropes in the texts do not only heighten language thereby expressing the literariness of the genre. Since they are derived from the environment of the people, the texts will also provide a window into the socio-cultural context of the people. Even though some stylistics scholars would prefer an interpretation which relates the discursive elements of a literary text to its textual context, Simpson (2004) (cited in Mwinlaaru, 2012) argues that the 'more complete and context sensitive the description of language...the fuller the stylistic analysis that accrues.' The importance of context in the analysis of language in a literary text such as *nyadodo* therefore, cannot be overemphasised.

Wheelwright (1968) as well as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) in their respective discussion on the uses of tropes point out that simile, metonymy, personification and especially metaphor for example can help one to

understand the world of its users. This means that the different meanings manifesting from *nyadodo* texts in our present case will become more rewarding because the conventions employed in the texts will be familiar to the user. Barthes (1968) somehow endorses the above by suggesting that even where a text is autotelic, the reader will necessarily interpret the text from his experience of life in the world. This is based on the fact that connotative level of meaning is highly subjective due to the interactions among the text, the user and the values of the culture that generates the text. Barthes' argument is essentially about written text; but its relevance to interpretation and analysis of oral art forms is even more crucial. Similarly, Agyekum (2013: 154) has stressed that tropes such as metaphor, simile, personification, irony are essential elements that add not only pleasure and beauty to a literary work but knowledge about their users. Thus, in the case of *nyadodo* texts for example, analysis will necessarily be concerned with the ideas in the tropes and how well they enrich the world of the Ewe people.

Finnegan (1970) has explored extensively the literary products of Africa and has acknowledged the depth of artistry that manifests in these verbal forms. Her work has some relevant implications for this study in the sense that it is among some of the early works that recognises the creative ability of Africans and the need for researchers not to lose sight of the literary and linguistic resources that support the creative forms aside their social and cultural functions. She emphasises the point that literary resources such as tone, ideophone, witticism, prosodic systems are crucial to any literary investigation and analysis of verbal art forms but these must be guided by an

understanding of the cultural nuances of the people who produce and use the genre.

A similar argument is developed in Awoonor's work, *The Breast of the Earth* (1976) where he surveys the cultural and literary elements of Africa south of the Sahara. Awoonor like Finnegan, challenges erroneous views of some early anthropologists such as Frazer on the literary materials of the African and strongly objects to the idea that oral literature of Africans emanates 'from the collective action of the multitude and cannot be traced to the individual influence of great men' (p.73). His position on the relevance of context is evident in his argument that individual genius exists but the works of African poets have full meaning within the all-embracing scope of the folk tradition.

Part two of Awoonor's work particularly dwells on the literary activities of Africans to show evidence of the people's creative prowess. The work corroborates the view that verbal artistic forms of the Ewe in particular such as war songs, songs of abuse (*halo*), chants and praise poems and surrogate forms such as drum language perform aesthetic as well as utilitarian functions. These artistic forms exhibit their own intrinsic aesthetic qualities through literary resources such as tropes which are derived from the everyday activity and ontological expressions. Awoonor's view is that it is almost mandatory that these expressions are studied and understood within the 'specific genius of the language, culture, and the system of beliefs and philosophy of that group' (ibid: 25). This means that the people's worldview and socio-cultural context are important in the manipulation of language at its most sophisticated and complex levels in order to communicate a composer's

sensations to life. An interpretation and analysis of tropes in *nyadodo* texts from the context of the Ewe would reveal not only the sensations of the composers but will also lead to the understanding of their world. It is worth noting that even though Awoonor has discussed a wide variety of artistic forms of the African in general and the Ewe in particular in his book, *nyadodo* a very popular literary genre has not received attention in this survey. This means that one can still discover new and fresh genres for analysis and this is one reason why this study on *nyadodo* is necessary.

Angmor (1996) similarly but more specifically evaluates the literary situation in Ghana from 1911 to 1978. His view on the need for an interpretive model that takes into account the author and his background is not different from views earlier discussed. One of his conclusions that ties in with the focus of the present research as far as context consideration in analysis is concerned is that traditional African poetry rendered through speech, chants, and surrogate forms are pragmatic since they make visible the philosophical and sociological leanings of the composers and their community. Again, one should recognise the appropriateness of an analytical frame that helps to foreground not only artistry but also the world of the people who produce the art.

Similarly, Yankah's ethnographic work on Akan proverbs (1989) is very important to this present study in many ways but more essentially his recommendation that reliance on folk interpretation is more important than the preoccupation with text as the absolute in the appreciation and interpretation of an artistic work. His emphasis on the need for scrutiny of key factors in a controlled study of the nuances of verbal art performance is also critical to the

present study on *nyadodo*. There is an implicit criticism by Yankah of theories that insist on the exclusion of external information and tradition in the analytical process of verbal arts in particular and literary works in general. To prove how credible and practicable his views are regarding consideration to the social context as an integral part of the study of oral literary texts, Yankah relied on folk interpretation and context strategies to analyse Akan proverbs to reveal their artistic and sociolinguistics worth. As will become evident in Chapter Three of this present report, proverbs share some important general features with *nyadodo*; therefore, interest will not lie in the texts only but its relationship with extra-textual clues such as biographical data, life stories of referents and the total cultural space of the Ewe.

Orwin (2003), an oral literary researcher, in his study of Somali oral poetry reveals some important information that will support views expressed on context. According to him the Somali have two major types of poetry, *hees / heeso* and *maanso*. One of the distinguishing features between the two is extra-textual clues such as age, gender, profession, knowledge of author and social standing. The study notes that *hees / heeso* poems are performed by the less powerful as far as social and political status are concerned. The composers of this type of poetry are not generally known and improvisation is encouraged during performance by women and younger men who form the bulk of performers of this type. Orwin explains that since *hees / heeso* mainly involves dance and strenuous work which are mostly engaged in by women and younger men respectively it stands to reason that older men are not likely performers and composers of *heeso*.

The older men perform and compose instead *maanso* which is more fixed and rigid as performance rules are concerned. There are no additions of affective elements since performers are expected to memorize the texts, avoid improvisation and are under customary obligation to give the name of the author/originator before the start of performance. Performers can only be granted minimal variations because of frailty of the mind. *Maanso*, according to Orwin is thus categorised as ‘definitive’ poetry which is ‘a product of an individual who has created that text and with whom the text is forever associated through...an unwritten copyright law, no less strict than those observed in literate societies’ (Orwin, *ibid*: 340). According to Orwin, Somali oral poetry, especially *maanso*, despite its autonomy could transcend the original context of its composition and specific expectations of listeners who are present at the time and place of its original composition and performance.

These provide very interesting similarities and differences between *nyadodo* and Somali definitive oral poetry that needs commentary. In the first place, *nyadodo* shares with *maanso* the similarity in author acknowledgement and to some extent verbatim performance. As we would note in the chapter on the form and structure of *nyadodo*, performance of the texts follows a basic structure that is also almost mandatory. A performer of *nyadodo* text as is the case of *maanso* of the Somali is required to attach its originator and render the text as closely to the original. In that case we would refer to *nyadodo* also as ‘definitive’ or being stamped with permanence as suggested by Barber (2007). Also, in the view of this researcher, the proper interpretation and understanding of *nyadodo* texts is driven by extra-textual

clues as well as the textural elements as revealed in Somali oral poetry. Finally, both *maanso* and *nyadodo* share the quality of outlasting their immediate space and time of composition.

These similarities notwithstanding, it is worth noting some significant differences between the two genres. In the first place, *nyadodo* is not strictly status or gender bound. Fieldwork shows that except for children composers and performers of the genre cut across social strata of the Ewe. This is possible since *nyadodo* texts like proverbs are mostly evoked by experiences that may not have relevance for children. Another significant difference between *nyadodo* and *heeso* is that unlike *heeso*, *nyadodo* texts are not performed in association with dance or work. The Ewe have songs such as *dɔwɔha* (*work song*) for work. In all, Orwin's study has emphasised the relevance of both text and context in the interpretation, categorisation and analysis of a people's oral art form. It therefore underscores the choice of context frame in the analysis of data for this research.

Fiagbedzi in his book *An Essay on the Nature of the Aesthetic in the African Musical Arts* (2005) has discussed in depth the major strategy an indigenous Ewe artist engages to make indelible their artistic works. In the case of songs for example, the composer sings the song first, plays and demonstrates the new composition to their cantors, drummers and dancers as a way of 'fixing' and teaching their individual productions. One can posit that ingenious use of language, including tropes, in songs can be crucial in 'fixing' and making permanent an author's work. What is even more important to Fiagbedzi concerns evaluating and analysing these aesthetic forms of the African in general and Ewe in particular. To him, the value of these artistic

forms should not be isolated from parameters such as background of the individual creations and their creators, the intellectual, cultural and artistic milieu which inform the art. None of these parameters, he stressed, should be weighed over and above the other. This implies that text must not be absolute in interpretation; the broad context in analysing artistic forms of the African must be seriously considered if one wants to be faithful to the text. Fiagbedzi thus corroborates the views of Awoonor (1976), Finnegan (1970), and Yankah (1989).

Another practical demonstration of context relevance in oral literary studies is the article on socio-political uses of traditional oral literature of the Hill Guan, by Ansah-Koi (2006). In that paper Ansah-Koi explains that traditional oral literary forms like proverbs and folklore might have lost some social significance to contemporary forms; nevertheless, aesthetic and etiological values aside, traditional oral literary forms are of definite functional significance to communal existence. He also agrees with the view that 'Traditional oral literature is not mere art; neither is it simply art or art exclusively for the sake of art' (p94). Ansah-Koi therefore by implication emphasises the close interaction between a people's oral art and their life; this interdependence demands that we consider context as a critical frame in the interpretation of such artistic works.

To Iyengar & Nandakumar (2009) therefore, one cannot think of an interpretation that ignores context of production since the eruption of literature—oral or written—is as a result of some 'emotions of the individual, men and women driven by their pains and by their daemons, racked by their pains and fears, sustained by their dreams and visions' (p.9). Even though

they stress the specific context of literary composers rather than the broader world, one cannot fail to recognise the importance of extra-textual clues in artistic creation and interpretive processes. Referents of *nyadodo* for example, have reacted to their world to produce this artistic form. Their world, it must be understood, does not only refer to the physical space but also to all those experiences in the spiritual space and the inner life which are involved in the 'mystery' of the artistic creation. The humour, entertainment, pain, protestation and expression of self-consciousness among others have all been achieved through the use of tropes such as metaphor, metonymy, exaggeration, imagery, and proverbs. The tropes are derived from the cultural space so positing analysis of the texts within their contexts is almost not negotiable.

Ohwovoriola (2013) employed ethno-poetics that recognises oral texts as deeply rooted in the culture and tradition of the performer in the analysis of funeral poetry of Urhobo in Nigeria. She used the theoretical frame as a guide to meaning delineation and to also reveal the rhetoric actions that the texts express about the culture of the people. In this way her work has emphasised the performance arena as crucial to meaning derivation since outside their contexts texts will lack their implied content. From the above it is clear that embedded tropes may have a universal meaning but it would be much more rewarding if in the case of oral literary forms cultural nuances are carefully considered. It is for this reason that this present study on *nyadodo* texts is interested not only in the relevance of tropes as elements of beauty that objectifies the genre but also how they express the 'arena' of the individual referents of *nyadodo* and the Ewe as a whole.

Sherzer's study, 'Cuna *Ikala*: Literature in San Blas' (1977) has useful implications for the study on *nyadodo* as far as context relevance is concerned. Sherzer's analysis of *Ikala* texts reveals that literary forms of the Cuna are not only to be enjoyed but they form an instrumental part of the 'various aspects of Cuna life, including curing, greeting, and social control. *Ikala*, it is noted, is essential to the people and recognised as literature as long as the social role is not lost sight of. Basically, *Ikala* has aesthetic qualities that are realised through the use of tropes such as parallelism; linguistic processes such as vowel elision and length, voice pitch and knowledge of subject are elements of good performance of *Ikala*.

Sherzer has made very important observations in this study regarding the proper understanding of linguistic and non-linguistic elements in oral literary analysis. According to him, since classification of literary genre of a non-literate society especially, is at the same time a classification of their socio-cultural events, meaning delineation in *Ikala* for example must necessarily be linked to Cuna world. Sherzer's concluding remarks on *Ikala* that 'because of the constant and intimate relationship between Cuna *Ikala* and the contexts of its use in Cuna social life, no investigation of Cuna verbal form can stop arbitrarily at the limits of text' (p.148) underscores his conviction on context as important in oral literary interpretation or analysis. Knowledge of the socio-cultural signs or systems, values, truths of the society, simple principles of their behaviour is critically linked to the interpretation of their art since a rhetorical structure and its devices reside in the systems.

One cannot therefore agree better with a holistic analytical strategy that Fiagbedzi (2005) and others have strongly recommended if one agrees with

the premise that the artistic creative process involves the entire universe (moral, socio-cultural and religious practices) of the composer. Thus, it will be worth the effort to explore the link between the referents of *nyadodo* and the texts they create in order to show how personal documents that are derived from their 'petty, inconsequential' daily lives are nevertheless essential enough to entertain and to comment on ontological principles. In this study on *nyadodo* texts therefore, a holistic approach will be utilised to link text, artist and context so that interpretation, to borrow Ki-Zerbo's metaphor, will not be like a fish that is taken out of water, to die and decompose (as cited in Sidikou Aissatou, 2001:26).

The point that has been stressed so far is that oral art forms achieve beauty through the use of words with poetic and evocative connotations; the words are affective, metaphoric, imagistic, rhythmic, and symbolic. The collective Ewe sensibility is expressed through tropes that are used in the texts by the referents who also serve as the conscience of the Ewe society. The use of trope elements in *nyadodo*, it is believed, will arouse strong feelings toward the objects, issues or persons they describe; the tropes will carry both denotative and connotative meanings but all these could only be realised when the Ewe context is seriously considered and utilised. In this way, the artistic pleasure and the socio-cultural relevance would be achieved.

Oral Art and Theory

It is acknowledged that theory is critical to textual analysis in literature even though choosing an appropriate theoretical frame is a challenging endeavour (Birch 1996). This is because in negotiating meaning of a text one is bound to be confronted with questions of philosophical and ideological

assumptions behind a particular technique. The challenge seems to be more daunting in the analysis of oral literary texts because of their ephemeral nature (Muleka, 2014). Theories such as deconstruction, structuralism, feminism, formalism among others have been considered Eurocentric and mostly inadequate in analysing oral literary texts since there are differences in cultural settings. Angmor (2010) for example observes that literature has been so much conditioned by western education that many African critics unfortunately premise their analysis on western models. Indeed, if we consider the theory that rejects fixed meaning or a locatable centre to a text and accept the fact that a text is understood through a study of history or of the inter-textual character then care must be taken in the choice of an analytical theory for oral literary forms (Eagleton, 1983; Derrida, 1973). Inter-textuality is common to oral literary genres and texts but it is also worth noting that much of oral literature is ephemeral and elusive because it undergoes constant recreation, reshaping, refurbishment, entextualisation, and other performance dynamics (Muleka, 2014). Issues of genre interaction at both linguistic and poetic levels further make authorship and meaning delineation even more challenging. Thus, the unpredictable nature of oral expressions is bound to render the choice of an appropriate theory difficult.

Context consideration in oral literary interpretation would seem to be a solution to the problem as has been discussed above. Muleka (ibid) rightly observes, that an 'artistic or creative utterance in any one culture or situation is not a constant variable, nor does it subscribe to a constant criterion' (p.87). So, any theory that side steps the performer, Muleka warns, will be tantamount to 'theoretical grafting' or 'theoretical patchwork' (p.88). This means that the

supposition that theories used in the analysis of written texts for example should be adequate for oral texts in the discovery of meaning may be dangerous. An interpretation that is not premised on the ethnology of a people may thus run amuck. Muleka therefore advocates a 'performer-centrism', or 'narrato-centrism' approach as the best theory in analysing oral literary texts. This theory has four components which include the composition (the content), the transmission (method of rendition), the audience (recipients and their role) and context (circumstances engendering performance). This approach further displays the interaction between text, its qualities and context.

The central argument in 'narrato-centrism' is the need to look for indigenous parameters in understanding a people's oral expressions. For example, Okombo (1992); Benson and Hughes (1983) in their respective works have emphasised such an approach to oral literature analysis. Birch (1996) thinks that the choice of a theory or method in the analysis of a text really depends on the analyst's ideological and philosophical inclinations. The choice of a context-base analytical frame that considers the circumstances for the performance of *nyadodo* is thus supported by these view points. The performer of *nyadodo* will influence content, aesthetics and even meaning of the texts, so the disposition of the composer has been seriously considered in data collection, treatment and analysis. This researcher agrees with the view that '...historical background, psyche, position in society, expertise, world view, opinion about the audience, opinion about the occasion...' are all aspects of context that are crucial in arriving at a meaningful interpretation of *nyadodo* texts of the Ewe. This way, interpretation and meaning are guided

by cultural and social underpinnings and the aesthetic element is given better prominence.

Based on the discussions so far, it is evident that in as much as the philosophical and ideological stance of the analyst has relevance to the choice of a theory, the choice must necessarily rely on context. This present study finds Muleka's concluding remarks, that a study of oral literature that aims at a rewarding interpretation demands a composite theoretical approach, quite relevant to the choice of an interpretive frame for this present work. Other oral literary analysts such as Burns (2009) have employed composite strategies to great advantage. The total and complete understanding of *adekede* songs of the *Dzibordi Habobo* of women in Dzodze, for example was made possible through the utilisation of biographical and performance theoretical frames. Thus the life stories of the women composers in the group (Xornam, Targborlo, Dasi, Dzatsugbui and Sylvia) together with specific and general contexts of performance were linked to achieve the desired meanings of the songs. This and others that will be discussed presently have strengthened the choice of a composite frame, rhetorical-sociolinguistic (combination of rhetoric and sociolinguistic) as an appropriate for analysis of *nyadodo* texts.

Rhetorical-Sociolinguistics Analysis

The discussion so far has emphasised the need for a holistic approach to the study of oral literary forms and in particular *nyadodo* texts. It has also been noted that the choice of an appropriate analytical tool is critical if one should achieve completeness in the interpretive process of oral forms in particular. An explanation of a composite frame comprising rhetoric and

sociolinguistics; the rationale behind its choice for the present study will engage our attention in the segment below.

Rhetoric is an important characteristic of humanity. Its aim is not only to produce texts in accordance with rules of art but also to guide the interpretation and aesthetic of a text (Culler, 2005). Rhetoric has cut across many discourse types and indeed traversed the domain of persuasion to include critical frames in literature, such as semiotics, hermeneutics and deconstruction (Averil, 2001; As-Safi, nd). However, the problem of arriving at a unified definition for it has also been a challenge to experts (Ajadi, 1998; Plett, 2010). This study will consider a few of these definitions insofar as they highlight its importance in analysis.

Aristotle explains rhetoric as 'the faculty of discovering all the available means of persuasion' while Campbell considers the purpose of every speech as '...to enlighten the understanding, to please the imagination, to move the passion or to influence the will' (as cited in Ajadi, 1989). Corbett, (1990) from his view point highlights the extraordinariness of rhetoric in communication and rhetorical devices as its anchor. Another scholar on rhetoric, As-Safi (retrieved from the internet, 16/02/2015), invites us to perceive rhetoric as the effective use of devices of style to improve, enliven and enrich language in communication. The effective use of language, according to him, is exemplified by the use of figures and devices pertaining to tropes and schemes.

The above explanations emphasise some core elements of rhetoric including persuasion, enlightenment, pleasing the imagination, moving the passion which influence eloquence and enrich communication. All these could

be achieved through the manipulation of figures and devices such as tropes and schemes. Thus, a rhetorical analysis of a text will essentially involve the effort to grasp not only the substance of what we read or hear, but its effective relation to the structure and the style.

Culler (2005) and de Man Paul (1979) in their respective explanations seem to shift attention from the classical view that regards rhetoric as merely a strategy for eloquence or persuasion to a consideration that highlights tropes/figures of speech as essential in engendering different layers of meanings in a literary text. To this researcher, even if rhetoric is solely for eloquence and persuasion only, devices such as tropes will still be relevant. In fact, among the Ewe, eloquence or communication competence is not necessarily measured by speed and grammatical correctness but also the appropriate use of devices such as proverbs and other tropes to achieve aesthetic and utilitarian objectives. This researcher has earlier on pointed out that the Ewe commend and desire a speech that is laced or embellished with artistic elements that heighten and enliven discourse. The lack of these in a speech will elicit modifiers such as *yaa* (*bland*) or *gblɔdɔɔ* (*lifeless*), meaning the delivery is unexciting and lacks vibrancy. A person who delivers any such drab speech is described as *menya nu fofo o / metsi de afe o* (*s/he does not know how to talk / s/he did not grow up at home*). On the contrary, the presence of appropriate tropes in their proper contexts would earn a person such comments as *efe ade /nu me bi*; literally meaning, *his/her tongue / mouth is well cooked*. Rhetorical devices are therefore important since lack of these devices only makes us hear a happening and not to 'see' it. The devices are imagistic and thus help us to

enter the feelings of their authors and the broader contexts; so, without them we may not be able to 'heat the imagination of the audience' (Fénelon, as cited in Plett, 2010: 47). One purpose of literature is to give pleasure, move emotionally and inform; but these are dependent on how effectively the composer employs rhetorical devices such as tropes in attaining a vivid situation that would remain indelible in the minds of an audience. The socio-cultural events of the Ewe and anecdotes that are resources of *nyadodo* composition will be made indelible through the power of rhetorical devices. This is a major reason many have supported the use of rhetorical devices in literary texts.

Rhetorical devices and their analysis demands a 'dismantling' of a text in order to extricate it from a state of obscurity and to understand the strategies an author has employed in achieving his/her purpose. Bashford (1976) therefore posits that rhetorical method is not only a thought but also a principle that guides the analysis of content. He explains that just like the judge tries to make sense of statements of clients so would a literary analyst be guided by the rhetorical method to make sense of the artistic work and in so doing create a fresh understanding. One cannot fail to recognise the connectivity between rhetorical method and content derivation in a text from the analogy above.

There is also a strong relationship between context of a text and rhetorical analysis. Plett (2010) informs that rhetorical analysis demands a discussion of the concrete social environment of the author of the text, his or her relationship to predominant norms. A devotion to clarifying the historicity of the text by the analyst is emphasised as a valuable and indispensable stage

in the use of rhetoric. This demand justifies the need to take into account the specific and broader contexts in the analysis of *nyadodo* texts. The combination of rhetoric and a context based strategy will be a strong and appropriate frame for analysis.

Rhetoric analysis has been combined with other frames in analysing oral literary texts to great success. Babatunde and Odepidan (2009) have exhibited the usefulness of combining rhetorical theoretical frame with pragmatics —Pragma-Rhetorical—in the examination of some selected speeches of President Obasanjo of Nigeria. Pragma-Rhetorical tool has guided the researchers in discovering tropes such as metaphor, parallelism and repetition that are embedded in the speeches and how these tropes fore-ground the thematic concerns of the President’s message. The choice of pragmatics is strongly supported by the view that the foundation of a composer’s rhetorical communication are linked to the basic conceptual features of their environment since everybody is moulded by his cultural, social, and linguistic experiences. Combining rhetoric and pragmatics which is a context based tool helped in positing the aim of the text, whether to praise, castigate, persuade or humour within the socio-cultural context.

One important context based frame in the analysis of texts is sociolinguistics. Donnelly (1994) has stressed that even though linguistic units are necessary variables in accessing information in speaking and writing it should not be rated above other tacit factors such as context. The tacit elements in *nyadodo* for example would refer to paralinguistic strategies such as gestures and tone, the Ewe, what they believe and what attitudes they hold about life. What they say and how they say it can be accessed through a

sociolinguistics tool. Obviously, communication, one would admit, is more than words and may be a mere shadow of the inner feelings of the performers. The emotional, psychological states, and social motives which are important in a text would all be lost if the social relevance is ignored especially in the case of oral literary forms (Edu-Buandoh & Okyere, 2009; Finnegan, 1970). To adequately understand an art object, the one who is interpreting must be fully informed about the exophoric, that is the extra cultural, social and historical, information that forms the context that illuminates the work (Osotsi, 2002).

Donnelly (1994) therefore strongly recommends sociolinguistics as an appropriate analytical strategy that would address the question of how we appropriately 'gauge interpersonal and situational factors to ensure that what we say and write will be interpreted as intended' (p159). Khosravishakib (2012) in supporting the importance of sociolinguistics as a tool in literary studies cautions that literary texts 'bring up large issues of society' and as such the socio-cultural dimension should not be overlooked in the interpretation and analysis of the texts. *Nyadodo* texts may comfort, instruct, seduce, provide information about the Ewe and may even satisfy the personal needs of the composers. Their analysis will therefore require a contextual data such as biographical, performance space and general setting in order to link meaning with socio-cultural space and world view. This will provide a guide in identifying and understanding the multiple complex human factors that affect the production and performance of *nyadodo* texts of the Ewe.

Adam (2006), in an article on the importance of euphemism in oral traditions, supports the idea that the choice of words or figures of speech has significance far beyond grammatical considerations. Socio-cultural

determinants such as norms of decency, functions of the human anatomy, and the supernatural belief system of a particular linguistic culture would definitely inform the use of particular stylistic devices. Adam gives the example of cultures which detest the straightforward word regarding intimate body parts and their functions, excretory activity and all other things associated with it. To circumvent this and sometimes the embarrassment and societal reprimand, euphemism is employed. We can only understand the import of the euphemistic approach if we have deep knowledge about the ethnography of these societies.

In the discussion on the nature and scope of *nyadodo*, the point has been made that the genre is one of the communicative strategies of the Ewe and so the tropes would be embedded with particular emotive messages that may also explicate the values of the people. Indeed, through these emotions the Ewe reproach misdeeds, warn of danger, cast aspersions and sometimes humour. Composers of *nyadodo* are a necessary part of their society and one of the important strategies they have employed to communicate with their audience and society at large is the basic tropes. Fiske (1984) therefore considers messages that are embedded in the texts a community produces as a 'broadcast code' which is the means by which a society communicates with itself (as cited in Acquah, 2002).

Yankson (2008) has demonstrated in the article, 'Sociolinguistic Aspect of Akan in Accra' the essence of sociolinguistics in analysing a people's activity and their world. She relies heavily on the social context of her respondents to understand the kind of changes that Akan people living in Accra bring to bear on the indigenous Akan language. She used biographical

data, social and cultural contexts of her respondents to guide her analysis and conclusions. An important finding in her work that emphasises the relationship between language and sociology is that the community in which individual speakers are residing in Accra brings about the different changes that occur in the Akan language (p.96).

The issues discussed above strongly endorse a preference for multiplicity of analytical tool for oral forms. As far back as 1990, Okpewho expressed concern about how successfully literary studies and sociolinguistics could be merged for effective analysis. He condemns the situation where the study of oral literary works assumes more of either sociological or aesthetic attention; either way, he stressed, the text will suffer mutilation. It is clear then that we should be advocating rather for an exploration of the sociology or social circumstances of a performance with all its stylistic and aesthetic elements, especially if it aids 'contextual insight'. An investigator of oral forms from the discussion so far is obliged to be interested in probing the 'aesthetics basis for effectiveness of the devices used in the performance' (Okpewho, *ibid*: p.7) (highlight mine). The aesthetic basis could be religious beliefs regarding the composition of a song, the musical instruments may have spiritual meanings or undertones; but these are only relevant to analysis if they affect the audience as a device. This is quite evident in many of Akpalu, the great Ewe poet's, *Agoha*. The songs illuminate a religious belief of Anlo Ewe which emphasises the god of songs or the muse (*hadzivodu*) as the source of poetic expertise (Seshie, 1991). This influence has been recognised as an important source of tropes (metaphors especially) in his songs. The tropes help to elevate the songs, charge their emotive force, and authenticate

Akpalu's authoritativeness or direct link with a higher power. We would recognise a healthy 'marriage' between sociology, the world view of the Anjlo and the literariness of *Agoha*.

Okpewho (ibid) in a final word on forging this healthy collaboration between sociology and literary studies states that: '...for any fruitful collaboration to exist between the two [sociology and literary studies] in the study of the oral performance, we need to recognise not only the discrete contributions that they would make to the enterprise, but also the areas of tensions which must be reconciled' (p.8). He further advises against prejudices that emanate from atomism which restricts analysis to only traditionally known models and urges specialists and researchers to start operating 'at an intellectual level beyond the boundaries which separate academic disciplines, sharing an interest in the aesthetic dimension of social and cultural life in human communities' (p.18). To this researcher, Okpewho is implicitly endorsing a multi-analytical tool such as rhetorical-sociolinguistics that will guide analysis of data in this present study, for example.

The discussion so far on rhetoric and sociolinguistics (a context related frame) has proved that combining these two analytical tools would be adequate in the analysis of *nyadodo* texts. This is supported by the suggestion that literary language is essentially estranged, and the estrangement is effected through tropes which emanate from a people's world or environment. Also the argument that unfamiliarity of language would demand an exposition on the 'arena' that produces the literary text for a fuller understanding will become more evident. The choice of rhetorical-

sociolinguistics frame for this study is also strengthened by the view that interpretation of poetry depends on where one is standing at a point (Eagleton, 1996: 5). In this study on *nyadodo* texts, we are standing in the space of the individual composers as well as that of the Ewe in general. The tropes, as they make the familiar strange and imbue ordinary language with novelty will bring to the fore layers of meanings that would invariably espouse the Ewe socio-cultural context. This researcher agrees with the conclusion by Birch (1996: 25) that, 'different cultures, societies and individuals classify and understand the world in different ways and this recognition needs to be a crucial part of the thinking involved in a dynamic textual interpretation'.

Meaning and Oral Art

It is generally acknowledged that expressions in a language have meaning and denotation and these expressions say things that are true or false. But critics have expressed different views concerning the nature, scope and methods of delineation of meaning. Akmajian, Demers, Farren and Harnish (1990:198) acknowledge the complexity of *meaning* and the various approaches from which the concept of meaning has been explained. Literary critics also agree that a text can evoke different levels of meaning; however, negotiating meaning in a literary text is generally considered complex and elusive (Culler, 2005). Its complexity has been made more explicit by Eagleton (1983) who describes *meaning* as 'continual flickering, spilling and defusing' (p.134). Even though meaning and the process of its derivation seems cumbersome, it is an important property of poetry or any literary composition which must not be overlooked by any serious literary critic (Angmor, 2010).

Meaning has since been explained from different perspectives. One of such views is the intention of the composer of a text. In this explanation, the speaker or writer of a text becomes the reference point for the determination of *meaning*. We will recognise a suggestion that points to the relevance of context in meaning derivation. Other views on *meaning* determination stress relatedness to the text itself as a preferred approach; language in this case is then central to *meaning*. Each of these can be unique or looked at in combinations in the consideration of meaning from the level of a word, an utterance, and a text as revealed by some of the following specialists on *meaning*.

According to Akmajian et al (1990) *meaning* varies across dialects and individual speakers within the same dialect; meaning negotiation in a text includes idiolect, regional, social, literal and non-literal elements. The different perspectives are supported by theoretical frames to show their relevance to interpretation and analysis of a word, an expression or a text. Three of these—Denotation, Mentalist and Use theories—are discussed here in order to show the different conceptual basis of *meaning*, the indeterminacy and complexity of *meaning* as well as the relevance of these theories to meaning negotiation in *nyadodo* texts.

Akmajian et al (ibid) explain that *Denotation* in meaning focuses on the word and expression in a particular language. The theory therefore focuses attention on an expression or word as the actual object it refers to or denotes and nothing more. This theory is considered inadequate mainly because it cannot cater for situations where two expressions have the same denotations. This may not necessarily make the two expressions mean same since the

equivalence of a word or expression to an actual object will pose a problem. This approach would be inadequate also in literary analysis where language is heightened through the use of tropes that create complex and ambiguous situations.

To circumvent this challenge, some scholars on *meaning* are convinced that the *Mental Approach* which draws attention to ideas and not objects will be ideal in meaning derivation since 'the set of possible meanings of any given word is the set of possible feelings, images, ideas, concepts, thoughts, and inferences that a person might produce when that word is heard and processed' (Glucksberg and Danks, 1975:50). This theory identifies the individual as critical in meaning derivation. Critics like Akmajian et al (1990) are however sceptical about the usefulness of such an approach since sometimes some words lend themselves to issues beyond one specific item. Also, the approach may not cater for expressions that are synonymic since individuals may not express same feelings and thoughts. Another query is that it is not every expression or word that carries feelings or thoughts. For this reason, the *Use* theory which emphasises local assessment has been proposed by some theorists, including Akmajian et al (1990) who consider it as posing a lesser challenge than the other theories.

The above confirms the idea that meaning delineation or what it entails is a difficult venture. This researcher is of the view that elements of the three theories could be used individually or in combinations in the process of meaning negotiation in texts; especially oral literary types. The text, the individual, the social context and literal quality of a word could all be relevant in interpreting a piece of oral literary work. Possible meanings of a word can

contribute to the understanding of an utterance which in itself can be considered an act by a speaker while the meanings of a word, in turn, could emanate from the things they might do in utterances. We may consider this as a way of heightening the quality of poetic language.

Since a text represents 'an unknown speaker making his enigmatical utterance, ... something an author has constructed, and its meaning is not a proposition but what it *does*, its potential to affect readers' (Culler, 2005:57) the intention of a speaker, the text itself (ruled by its language), the reader, the composer and context will all be important in the derivation of meaning. The three theories, *Denotation*, *Mental* and *Use*, are significantly represented in the process of meaning derivation. Culler (2005) argues that it is better we look at the intergration of all these since none of them is absolutely encompassing for 'meaning is not about the author and his intentions and it is also not a property of text, the experience of a reader' (p.67). The interpretation of a text and negotiating meaning, he cautions, must therefore be guided by the overall principle that 'meaning is determined by context, since context includes rules of language, the situation of the author and the reader, and anything else that might conceivably be relevant'(Culler, *ibid*: 67).

Thornborrow & Wareing (2005) also allude to the importance of context in what they refer to as exophoric information as important to meaning negotiation. The thrust of their argument is that understanding and derivation of meaning has a strong link with the individual recognising the social realities which include political, cultural and total context of a text. Similarly, Scholes, Klaus and Comley (1982) indicate that in order to attempt an interpretive analysis and meaning derivation, 'we must not only look carefully at the work

itself but also look away from the work toward the world of ideas and experience' (p.12). Discovery of themes or meanings in a literary work by this will mean making connections between the work, the individual and the world outside it. The connections between the denotative levels of meaning will direct us to the many ideas the word brings out and the use to which language is put will help provide us with the various meanings a literary work provides.

Thornborrow & Wareing (ibid), Culler (ibid) and Schole et al (ibid) have re-echoed the relationship between context and the choice of an appropriate interpretive frame. For Barthes (1968), two levels of meaning are available in meaning derivation—the denotative and the connotative levels. He however suggests that the process in the conotative is more helpful because of its subjective quality; others in the culture that produce and use the text are likely to share in the emotions and feelings and thus offer varying interpretations. The words, phrases and tropes that embed the text may provide the necessary network of ideas from the different people. It is evident that there are varying dynamics involved in negotiating meaning in a text and the dynamics may include one's language, social, cultural and ideological inclinations. The interaction of context and text, really, mutes the denotative strength of an utterance in traditional societies. Rhetorical means such as tropes and schemes heighten the emotive aspect of the texts.

Meaning, we can conclude, is directed by the word and where it is situated. Our effort to create meaning out of a text is essentially a way of expressing our will to order the experiences of its composer. The spoken word (*nyadodo* texts) is situated in the bodies of behaviour of the Ewe, in the life

stories of the individual composers and within the spatial frame of the people. The texts are derived from the everyday mundane experiences of the people which also produce the tropes to be analysed. To derive meaning the text and its resources such as tropes, the situation of the referents, informants' comments and the broader context of language use will all be considered.

Conclusion

In summation, this chapter has in the main discussed some scholarly works that underscore the importance of the study on *nyadodo* and the appropriate analytical tools for data and meaning delineation. The review has shown that tropes are derived from the socio-cultural setting of composers of literary works and they are important resources that have aesthetic and utilitarian values. Since studies that have been reviewed do not show any difference between tropes and figures of speech, the two are considered synonymic as far as their nature, aesthetic and functional values are concerned. It is also evident from the review that even though oral literary forms are important medium for all categories of people for various reasons, women who are mostly marginalised use oral forms as an important channel to tell their stories.

Literature emanates from life and therefore its interpretation must not be severed from its environment. To this end works that have been reviewed, suggest that scholars and experts on oral artistic forms prefer interpretive tools that will recognise this link. It has been strongly suggested in the review that the choice of an appropriate analytical frame for oral literary texts in particular therefore must necessarily take into cognisance the environment that engenders the art. This will provide a more holistic and realistic approach to

the study of verbal art forms. In this regard, composite analytical frames have been strongly proposed and employed by some researchers to support the choice of rhetorical-sociolinguistic frame for the analysis of *nyadodo* texts.

CHAPTER THREE

FORM, STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF *NYADODO* TEXTS

Introduction

In the preceding chapter, a review of scholarly works on relevant aspects of the study was done. The discussion was placed in the context of oral literature as essentially a performance oriented and context-driven phenomenon and the need for a relevant frame for the analysis of texts. In the present chapter, the etymology of *nyadodo*, its form, structure and content will engage our attention in as much as they help to recognise *nyadodo* as a distinct oral literary form that attracts our attention to be studied. Both syntactic and exophoric information will be discussed to show their relevance in delineating and supporting authorial imprint.

Putting together, composing or weaving of tissues to form a text demands some structural arrangement or form that will mark the text uniquely. In general terms, we can think of 'form' as the shape or the manner in which the different parts of an item are put together. It means that the different parts or components of a text which are coherent and connected when set apart will generate different shades of meaning that will be linked to the internal and broader context of production. Form is thus closely linked with content and scholars such as Vaslov (1980), Amuta (1989) and Acquah (2002) have stressed the point that it is not natural to draw a fine line between form and content. The idea is that in our attempt to make sense of a text, we automatically engage in such a fluid and constant movement from form to content and vice versa. Below we shall discuss form and content as exhibited in *nyadodo* as a genre.

Form of *Nyadodo* Text: Morphological

Nyadodo as a linguistic item on its own can offer some insight into its form and content. As mentioned in the introductory section to this study, extant literature reveals very scanty studies on the genre. Kove's work (1998), for example, is a two-page discussion which provides a brief exposition on the nature of *nyadodo*, its authorship, function and a simple typology.

Even though Kove's work is not an in-depth and extensive exposition on genre, it has great relevance to the present study as it provides some basic information that will illuminate the issue of form and content of the genre. The first issue we shall consider here is the genre's etymology. Available information has not provided any diachronic explanation on the etymology of *nyadodo*; what find in Kove's work is more of the source and content of *nyadodo* texts. Personal life stories, everyday life of the people and social events that have impinged on the sensibility of the composers have been identified as evoking *nyadodo* texts. Kove describes these extra-textual elements as *amea fe megbenya (the person's history)* as fundamental to *nyadodo* texts. From this perspective, we can say *nyadodo* is reflexive; providing a channel into the personhood of the composers or referents. Beyond these one can discover some morphological and syntactic arrangements that are worth discussing.

Nyadodo reveals a morphological process from the morphemic constituent *nya (word)* and a duplication of the verb *dó (plant/ examine/ ride/ tune up/start/wear/ borrow)*.

This is represented as follows:

nya word (noun)

dó plant/examine/ride/tune up/start/wear/borrow (verb)

The word *dó* acts as a transitive verb as illustrated in the following sentences.

- a. *dó* (say) *dó nya.* (say/speak a word)
- b. *dó* (plant) *dó agbeli.* (plant cassava)
- c. *dó* (tune up/start) *dó ha da.* (tune up/start a song)
- d. *dó* (wear) *dó awu.* (wear a dress)
- e. *dó* (borrow) *dó ga.* (borrow money)*
- f. *dó* (examine) *dó ame kpa.* (test/examine a person)*
- g. *dó* (ride) *dó gasa.* (ride a bike)*

The illustration above shows that *dó* presents multiple realisations in the Ewe language; however, the examples of *dó* in examples *e*, *f* and *g* will not be appropriate in the context of *nyadodo*. However, *say/ speak, plant, tune up/start*, in examples *a*, *b*, and *c* could be explained literally thus: when *nya* (*word*) is planted it grows and spreads for other people to benefit from it. Similarly, *dó* as tuning up or starting something could be linked to how somebody reacts to life experiences, uses the imagination to create something new and it is used by other people. Expressions such as *edó vu*, is used to describe a person who has started a drum-dancing group which has the potential of spreading beyond the immediate locale (Burns, 2009). The Ewe poet, Akpalu, is also acknowledged as one who has *dó* (*instituted/initiated*) Agoha which has spread to other parts of Anlo. Similarly, when one tunes up a song, it is expected that others would join in singing the song. In the

examples above, one would therefore realise a tacit authorship/ownership implication and the disseminative feature of *nyadodo* in particular and oral art forms in general.

In example *d* where *dó* is glossed as *wear*, we can offer a metaphorical explanation in which we recognise *nya* (*word*) as being covered or ‘clothed’ and like any ‘wisdom genre’ it becomes a puzzle or a riddle that must be uncovered for its aesthetic and social relevance. In this regard, *nyadodo* can be represented as follows:

Nya (*word*) + *dó* + *dó* (*plant+plant*) → *nyadodo*

Nya (*word*) + *dó* + *dó* (*say+say*) → *nyadodo*

Nya (*word*) + *dó* + *dó* (*speak+speak*) → *nyadodo*

Nya (*word*) + *dó* + *dó* (*start+start*) → *nyadodo*

Nya (*word*) + *dó* + *dó* (*tune up+tune up*) → *nyadodo*

Besides these realisations in Standard Ewe (SE), *dó* is a dialectal representation of some Eweme speakers of the Ewe language (Have, Goviefe, Sovie, Vakpo and Woadze) for the Standard Ewe verb *gblɔ* (*say*). The examples below illustrate the situation where the verb *dó* (*say*) for these Eweme people may replace *gblɔ* (*say*) in their day to day oral discourse. The Aɲlɔ and Tɔŋu on the other hand are likely to use *gblɔ* (*say*) instead of *dó* (*say*) in both formal and informal contexts. It must be noted that this does not however affect intelligibility among Ewe people even though *dó* (*say*) is sometimes queried in formal written texts.

The sentences below exemplify the explanation above.

a. *Mansa gblɔ be nyɔnu la dzo* (SE) → (*Mansa said the woman is gone*)

Mansa dɔ be nyɔnuɔ dzo (dialect) → (*Mansa said the woman is gone*)

b. *Mansa gblɔ nya la na fofoa* (SE) → (*Mansa say (past) the word to the father*)

Mansa dɔ nya na etɔɔ (dialect) → (*Mansa say (past) the word to the father*)

The morphological explanations above show that *nyadodo* texts are words that their referents *say/speak start* or *tune up*; they are words that have also been *planted* and are still alive. As a spoken *word* it has power and an inherent spirituality that energises it to spread as well as produce very strong effects that can affect individuals as well as a whole society. A society's world is therefore fitted to words and the words in turn are fitted to their world showing a strong bond between the reality and language (Agyekum, 2006). Kove (1998) alludes to this power of the spoken *word* and its disseminative ability in the phrase *nya gbā*, literally meaning, *word broken / word shattered* (emphases mine). *Nyadodo* texts, we can say, have force, vitality and growth embedded in their artistry; a quality that makes the genre fresh and their composers or referents 'live' long after the time of the specific composition (Akyea, 2009).

During data gathering, an informant, Abiwu Win, a seventy year old linguist (popularly known as Efo Win) in Have explains the vibrancy, spread and potency of *nyadodo* by alluding to the statements supposedly made by

Jesus Christ which are remembered and performed long after His death. Efo Win argued further and stressed the point that one way Christendom remembers and immortalises Christ is the continuous performance of the words he spoke. Efo Win also gave the example of his father, Abiwu Kwami, who is remembered by the community not only as an eloquent, intelligent *tsiami* (linguist) and a successful cocoa farmer but also the performer/originator of the *nyadodo* text: *Abiwu Kwami be obúkùbúkù, ofèndrèfèndrè / Abiwu Kwami says obúkùbúkù, ofèndrèfèndrè.*

Since a literary discussion of the texts will be done in Chapter Five of this report, let it suffice to say that the text above is ideophonic, offers a sensual effect and it is rhythmic. These aesthetic qualities together with the extra-textual information help to objectify the statement or make it attractive and indelible. The performance context, the informant explains is usually murky and devious display of behaviour which Abiwu Kwami abhorred and attacked. He always used the *nyadodo* to ridicule and castigate crooked behaviour during arbitrations. This composition can be said to identify and reveal the individuating character of Abiwu Kwami as well as express a community value. The morpheme *dó* thus has embedded in it a textual and contextual relevance.

Eliot's famous essay on 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' also underscores timelessness as a feature that underlies the aesthetic principle to the extent that 'No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists' (Eliot, 1991: 431). We can extend this view to underscore the interaction that exists between *nyadodo* and other genres on the level of

composition of texts. This interaction creates a perfect blend of the past and the present which looks into the future (Ricoeur, 1985).

The examples above show that *nyadodo* performance is a means of immortalising and publicising community members and thus making the referents' names indelible. The referents continue to 'live' through the potency of the spoken word. Publishing of the texts is thus motivated by the aesthetic as well as the social functional values that *nyadodo* texts possess. Another morphological element in *nyadodo* that needs comment is the presence of personal names.

Personal Names: Morphological

This can be represented schematically as NP → N (∅) indicating personal names with no inflections. These names come in various forms and combinations that are similar to the Akan system (Agyekum, 2006; Dzameshie, 1998) where naming is determined by a number of factors including day of birth (*dzigberɔ*), family (*fomenɔ/tɔgberɔ*), circumstances surrounding birth (*dziferɔ*), insinuations (*ahamarɔ*), survival names, and names that one acquires as a member of a religious group among others. An individual can therefore possess a name in any combination as illustrated in the following: Abiwu Akua Kuma Comfort. This name is made up of the family name (Abiwu) + birthday name Akua) + Kuma (little sister of an older sibling called Akua) + 'Christian' name (Comfort). Data have revealed a similar arrangement in the NP of *nyadodo* texts. The following are examples of the form.

1. Adzɔɔɔɔ (family name) be yee xà Aba. / *Adzɔɔɔɔ says he has sbothered Aba. #1*
2. Akubia (family name) be egbœ ðu woa? / *Akubia says has a goat eaten you? #65*
3. Aɔku Kofi (family+birthday name) be emesewoe le / *Aɔku Kofi says understanding time is there. #127*
4. Kɔku Anka (birthday+family name) be eku ðe ga ŋu. / *Kɔku Anka says it is dependent on money. #11*
5. Tagā Mansa (Bodily structure name; Big-Head Mansa) be nu nyuie mevo le Ablotsi o, ame koe kuɔ le gbɔ. / *Tagā Mansa says good things do no get finished Abroad, it is only human beings who die and leave the thing. #22*

A variant of the above is where the personal names are based on status, honour, achievement or profession of the NP.

1. Amegā (Big/Elderly Man) Zanu be gbe na gbe eyi ge. / *Amegā Zanu says refuse and refuse you will go. #95*
2. Tɔgbe (old man) Dɔku be I see. / *Tɔgbe Dɔku says 'I see'. #80*
3. Tɔgbi (chief) Sri be yewole dzea ðom gake yefe ŋku le amla koea dzi. / *Tɔgbi Sri says they are chatting but his eyes are on the tax. #76*

4. *Sodza Mensa be nyɔnunyado gamagblẽ de hã lia? Afle kpetike godoo. / Sodza (soldier) Mensa says can you flirt without spending money; you will at least buy toffee by all means. #104*

There is another instance where in the NP → N indicates personal names with a bound morpheme. In this case, the bound morpheme *-nɔ* is encliticized to them. This morpheme *-nɔ* which is one way gender is determined in the Ewe language means mother in the present situation. It must be noted that as found in other cultures—Akan—the Ewe has no gender-based pronouns but there are suffixes that distinguish females from males. Thus when *-nɔ* is encliticised to the NP the gender of the subject will be understood as a female.

Examples include:

1. *Adzovi-nɔ be mayia. / Adzovi-nɔ says let me go. #2*
2. *Paaku-nɔ be yebe dome le nya biala ame. / Paaku-nɔ says my stomach is interrogating people. #21*
3. *Akɔsiadzã-nɔ be ekakra menye edɔdɔ o. / Akɔsiadzã-nɔ says asking for it to be bought is not the same as ordering for it. #29*
4. *Tɔngɔɖi-nɔ be gbedeme fu. / Tɔngɔɖi-nɔ says old time is difficult. #107*

The structure that has N...tɔ, indicates personal names with the bound morpheme *-tɔ* encliticized to them. Depending on context, the bound morpheme *-tɔ* could have many meanings. For example, a *thief* is referred to as *fiafi-tɔ* (literally, thief father/owner), a *stupid fellow* is *lã-tɔ* (meat

father/owner), and a landlord is *anyigba-tɔ/xɔ-tɔ* (*land-father/owner or house-owner*). The morpheme *-tɔ* can therefore show possession or exhibition of some excessive behavioural quality; however, in this context, it could only mean a father of a human being—biological or otherwise.

The following are the two examples from the data:

1. *Kɔsikuma-tɔ be menya sie o. / Kɔsikuma-tɔ says it is not pleasant to hear.* #14
2. *Gɛko-tɔ be ahɔpuu. / Gɛko-tɔ says 'ahɔpuu.'* #30

It is worth mentioning here that throughout the data only two of this type has been identified compared to the five in the *-nɔ* category. This is interesting because as we will notice in the available data, male compositions far outnumber those of female. Another reason why it appears ironical is that *-tɔ* as indicated is a male determining morpheme and in a patriachal culture of the Ewe, one would expect that we would have more cases of texts that depict ownership of and possession of *nyadodo* texts. We may however explain the situation from the social relevance position based on the assumption that women are considered nurturers of children and naturally more physically attached to their children.

We also realise gender indication in the noun phrase that is made up of **a town and a sex-determinant**: male (*ɲutsu*) or female (*nyɛnu*). Texts with this structural arrangement are also few in the data. Another observation is that there is no text that uniquely is male (*ɲutsu*) determined; while there is only a text that is female determined. The following is the only example.

Kpando nyɔnuwo (place+gender (nyɔnu+plural marker) *be mina mifui anyi.* / *Kpando women say let us push him to the ground.* #61

From the exposition so far, it is evident that *nyadodo* composers cut across a wide spectrum of members of the Ewe society: individuals, social groups, professions and social status. Some of the names foreground meaning derivation; this will be discussed in the chapter on tropes to show their literary relevance.

As has been indicated in the introductory comments to this chapter, form and content are closely linked and therefore difficult to put in strait jackets. However, a brief discussion on *nyadodo* texts and their relationship with other genres of the Ewe is proposed here insofar as it brings out the distinctiveness of *nyadodo* as far as its content and form are concerned.

Many scholars including Finnegan (1970) have stressed the challenge an oral literary researcher is bound to face in drawing lines or creating boundaries between oral artistic forms and assigning appropriate terminologies but not running into conflict with local preference. Finnegan explains further that one absolute criterion is not enough to delineate verbal art forms; especially, when we consider the myriad of verbal art forms of Africa and how close and similar their elements of form, structure, content and even function can be. This notwithstanding, many scholars consider this as natural and an unavoidable occurrence or phenomenon that is relevant in the daily life of people who are essentially oral (Bascom, 1965; Nketia, 1986). Oral artistic forms of the Ewe also exhibit the characteristic of inter-genrecity at the level of form, structure and content. For example, a libation text before a meal or a

drink may be considered simple and well defined but its boundaries are limitless since the text as a poem is intrinsically embedded with other genres such as *adzo* (riddles), *lododo* (proverb), *ahanorkɔ* (appellatives) and so on (Osei-Tutu, 2002; Awoonor, 1976).

Indeed, proverbs generally can be cited as the most ubiquitous genre since it is possible to find their use in most linguistic and non-linguistic communicative activities of most African societies and the Ewe in particular. Anyidoho (1997:126) for example in his article, 'Ewe Verbal Art', alludes to the ubiquitous nature of Ewe verbal art forms, indicating that sound patterning in tongue-twisters of the Ewe, for example, is usually carried on to other verbal arts like riddles, proverbs, poetic names and songs. These are not however commonly referred to as tongue-twisters among the Ewe. Sutherland-Addy (1998) in her study on some verbal arts of the Oguaa and Edina, noted that *adenkum*, *adzewa* and *ebibindwom* share some aesthetic and utilitarian values but they are considered uniquely different by the people.

Nyadodo will be compared with two artistic forms—*nyatoto* and *lododo* of the Ewe for two reasons. First, it will illuminate the issue of genre interaction; second, it will establish *nyadodo* as distinctive. Also, *nyatoto* and *lododo* have been selected because of the similarities of linguistic, aesthetic and cultural relevance they share with *nyadodo*.

Nyatoto, morphologically, like *nyadodo* is made up of a noun *nya* (*word*) and a duplicated verb *tó* (*say+ say/start+ start/pound +pound*).

The various realisations of the verb *tó* are as follows:

1. *nya* (noun) + *tó* (verb) + *tó* (verb) → word + say + say → *nyatoto*
2. *nya* (noun) + *tó* (verb) + *tó* (verb) → word + start + start → *nyatoto*
3. *nya* (noun) + *tó* (verb) + *tó* (verb) → word + pound + pound → *nyatoto*

The verb *tó* is duplicated in each case as we found earlier on with *dó* in *nyadodo*. The derivational process in both *nyadodo* and *nyatoto* is consistent with nominalisation process in Ewe; especially, with regard to inherent complement verbs. Inherent complement verbs are those that must mandatorily collocate with the object to convey meaning. The process requires that the noun is maintained and the verb duplicated to form the noun. For example: *du* → *eat* (verb) + *nu* → *thing* (noun) → *nuɖuɖu*. In the case of *nyatoto*, and *nyadodo* the noun is *nya* (word) while *tó* and *dó* act as their corresponding verbs.

Apart from the morphological explanation of *nyatoto*, Kove (1998) provides a mythological perspective from which *nyatoto* can be explained. He explains this as a means of explaining the etymology of some lexical items in the Ewe language. He cites *agbeli* (*cassava*) and *adiba* (*pawpaw*) as lexicons that have been derived from such stories but he adds that ...*ame adeke medze si nyatoto siawo kpalawo fe ŋkɔ de nyaa wo ŋu o...* (Kove, *ibid*: 22) meaning *nobody knows the composers of these nyatoto*. The stories, according to him, are therefore attributed to hunters and

elder-hood that are likely to create these stories out of their life and vocational experiences. It is noted that these stories are still relevant in explaining the etymology of Ewe words such as sweet potato (*nago/nagote*) and pepper (*atadi*).

The interpretations of the owners or users of a text are important to its discussion; therefore, comments from interviewees will also be relevant in explaining *nyatoto*. It became evident during fieldwork that from the socio-cultural point of view *nyatoto* sometimes assumes a negative connotation. In such usage, *nyatoto* means leaking information and its 'doer' is designated as *nyatotola*. A tale-teller or a gossip is therefore described as *nyatotola* among some Eweme and Tɔ̃ɔ̃ people. Even though *tó* is acceptable in Standard Ewe to mean *say*, comments such as *etoa nya (you tell/say words)* could be made about a gossip, someone who is garrulous or one who leaks information. The variant of *nyatotola* is *nyadɔ̃ewɔla (professional word doer/maker)*, *nusitsala (mouth/lip trader)* or *nyapaɖila, (word-labourer)*. The power and potent quality of spoken word is also evident in *nyatoto*; thus, to say, to start or to pound something (each in their duplicated forms) may signify a continuous manifestation of the activity. For example, *pounding of words* may also connote the effect of pain and hurt that is brought about as a result of the activity of *nyatotola* for which reason a *nyatotola* is considered a social deviant and the behaviour undesirable. We can surmise that societal abhorrence for such a conduct and the difficulty in identifying a tale-tell are responsible for lack of visible referents for *nyatoto*.

Another dimension from the field on *nyatoto* is that the genre comprises funny statements that are fashionable but ‘disappear’ within a very short time. Some informants stated thus: *nyatoto ya vaa ko gadzo le xeyixi kpoe de ko megbe* meaning, *as for nyatoto it comes and goes in a very short time*. This presupposes that it does not out-last its immediate space as we will soon find with *nyadodo*.

We can then conclude from the above that even though there are different views among the Ewe on the nature of *nyatoto* there appears to be unanimity on the fact that it has no known referent or author and so its attribution is generalised. One cannot also deny the fact that it has some community and individual relevance for the people since it is a source of generating new forms of lexical items in the language and a medium that is available to the people to interrogate the behaviour of their members. *Nyatoto* can therefore be considered as a means of social control.

Another oral form that is very similar to *nyadodo* and is of great interest to most researchers is *Iododo* (*proverb*). As indicated above, Ewe proverbs seem to be the most ubiquitous of verbal art forms of the people since proverbs freely interact with other genres. It is similar to what Finnegan (1970: 391) states concerning the Bantus where *mwambi* (story, riddle, or proverb) interacts with *ganda olugero* (a saying, a story, a proverb and a parable). Yankah (2014, 1989) also provides other examples among the Kasena of Ghana where there exist two proverb traditions, *Sinsera*, which ‘refers to any memorable statement whose utterance is followed by authorship

acknowledgement. The other type is *fenatu mema a. Sinsera* and *fenatu mema a* are similar to *nyadodo* and *lododo* respectively among the Ewe.

Fieldwork on this present study has shown that almost all figurative or idiomatic expressions are mostly considered proverbial by the Ewe. It is not surprising therefore that comments such as *edo lo (s/he has performed a proverb)* from interviewees were used to describe the nature of *nyadodo* as well. For example, Lance Apawudza from Kpando considers *nyadodo* texts as *elo wònye wodo, elabe ele nane fiaa mi* meaning, *it is a proverb that is said, because it is teaching us something*. An octogenarian informant, Mama Xanu Bedzra of Aṅlogā, expressed a similar idea by explaining *nyadodo* as: *eli ko abe ale yi wo dona lo ene, vɔa woheto vovo (it is just like how they perform a proverb but it is different)*. It is the view of this researcher that the differences that the interviewees refer to imply or allude to some extent the distinctive structure of *nyadodo*. Some proverbs from Dzobo's (1973) work that share some similarities with some *nyadodo* texts in their content and community value are cited below to support the fluidity of *lododo* as well as the distinctiveness of *nyadodo* as a genre. The proverbs are cited first, followed by their *nyadodo* equivalences.

1. (a) *Ku ŋukpe nyo wu agbe ŋukpe / To die is better to live in shame* (Dzobo, *ibid*: proverb #396)
(b) *Aṅku Kofi be yebe xe yeazu ŋukpetɔ ta yeazu fetɔ. / Aṅku Kofi says, he says that rather than being a disgraceful person he would be a debtor. (nyadodo #7)*

2. (a) *Ne wobe dadi fe mefi nu fodji hā menye afiwoe nakpæ o / No matter how dirty the anus of the cat is it is not for mice to see it.* (Dzobo, *ibid*: proverb #66)
- (b) *Go Kɔmla be avu kankoo kple akpataku briwe meso o. / Go Kɔmla says a young male dog is not comparable to an aged female hyena.* (*nyadodo*, #27)
3. (a) *Abɔbɔ makumaku fe go meklɔa ze o/ The shell of a live snail does not clean a pot* (Dzobo, *ibid*: proverb #124)
- (b) *Kɔtse Kɔku be petro metɔ agawu o, deko woafia / Kɔtse Kɔku says petrol is not used to fry bean cake; it will only burn* (*nyadodo*#12).

There is a clear manifestation of content and thematic similarities that the examples of proverb and *nyadodo* above share. In example 1 both texts express two lines of action—living in shame and how to avoid it. The meaning of shame and its effect on the individual are presented in both. Both texts therefore espouse the moral choice between honour and the life of shame. In the second example, we realise the Ewe value of respect for old age and social stratification according to competence and natural capabilities evident in both *nyadodo* and *lododo* (proverb).

The third example is not different in thematic relationship as far as *lododo* (proverb) and *nyadodo* are concerned. Both emphasise correct usage or appropriateness of resources and action. The shell of a snail is used as a scourer but it cannot be possible when the snail is still in the shell; in the same

way, we use oil to fry bean cake and not petrol even though both are oil base. So, all the texts reflect similarity in both the manifest and hidden qualities; thus displaying aesthetic qualities as well as similar functions in the socio-cultural lives or community values of the Ewe. The *lododo* (proverb) is regarded as an important heritage that has a metaphoric expression ‘generally dealing with common sense truths that suit concrete situations of everyday life’ (Kwesi George, 2006:8); we can say the same about *nyadodo* also. The creation and transformation of an artistic form into a collective heritage does not therefore lie with *lododo* (proverbs) only. *Nyadodo* also has content which can be metaphoric; it has meaning, form and ontological relevance to the world of the Ewe. It is on account of this that it will be acceptable to expand Dzobo’s (1973:12) declaration that ‘the Ewe language and culture are at their depth made up of proverbs whose proper understanding leads to the soul of the Ewes’ to include *nyadodo* as well. The other important emphasis is that form, content, aesthetic and utilitarian qualities do not seem to be adequate in resolving the problem of delineation of artistic forms. For example, terseness of expression of the proverb, its poetic quality and application to a wide variety of situations and subject matter such as authority, power, death, marriage, love, oppression among others are all possible in *nyadodo* of the Ewe. *Nyadodo* like *lododo* (proverb) texts, Tɔgbe Keh XII of Gbi Uegbe in the Volta Region explains, can also be employed to advise and rebuke, create laughter, give depth and elegance through tropes such as simile, metaphor, personification and allusion.

In delineating the function of proverbs, Kwesi George (2006) is of the view that the proverb is a process of thinking and any time a proverb is enunciated it enacts a 'multiple reference to the world' (p9). *Nyadodo* also exhibits similar qualities as will be noted in Chapter Five of this report. Both artistic forms (*Iododo* and *nyadodo*) act as a vehicle that carries and expresses the 'within' of the Ewe people and both forms can be imprinted with unique qualities of an individual thought process. Both can be considered fragments of speech since they are part of the language of the Ewe; both have literal meanings and are formulated in a way that would help recollection or memorisation. Recollection is necessary since embedded in these texts are fragments of knowledge of practical use and reasoning that are organised by means of tropes a process that Kwesi George (ibid) describes as the melting point of popular wisdom and practical reasoning.

The discussion so far shows that there are marked similarities among oral artistic forms of non-literate societies in general and the Ewe in particular. We must note however that these similarities in form, content, aesthetic and functional values of the various oral art forms notwithstanding, each of them is considered unique by its users. Consequently, *nyadodo*, *nyatoto* and *Iododo* (proverb) are distinctively labelled as individual artistic forms by the Ewe. The fact that the Ewe have different terminologies for the three supports the argument that there is always an incommunicable quality that tells a people to recognise a genre as uniquely different. This means that each community has a tacit way of assessing, delineating their literary items, determining authors, quality and relevance of their artistic work (Muleka, 2014; Dundes, 1980; Bauman; 1977).

The whole idea of the interaction of genres and the need to rely on folk interpretation in the study of oral art forms is further exemplified in the discussion on *eyidi*... a female oral genre among the Abe of Cote d' Ivoire (Sutherland-Addy and Diaw, 2005). It is noted in that exposition that *eyidi*... takes the form of a proverb given its heightened language and importance as a channel of stating moral messages; however, the genre is regarded as unique and labelled differently among the Abe of Cote d' Ivoire. Similarly, among the Cuna, traditions are considered unique but they also share social as well as certain linguistic items. The oral artistic form, *Ikala* for example, shares similarities at the phonological, syntactic and semantic levels with other forms but each including *Ikala* is considered and marked differently (Sherzer, 1977). This researcher therefore agrees with Simmon Battestini that 'every culture possesses the capacity to generate texts, which it uses to produce the types and quantities it feels it needs, both functionally and aesthetically' (cited in Sutherland-Addy and Diaw, 2005: 8). The Ewe has *lododo* (proverb), *nyatoto* and *halo* (songs of insult) for example, which may exhibit similar functional and aesthetic values but the people find it necessary to generate another genre, *nyadodo*.

In explaining the 'criss-crossing' behaviour of oral genres, we could consider the relevance of Leech's (1973) suggestion that a genre that 'strays' into another one should be treated as an artistic device that heightens curiosity and attention. It is possible then for one to consider forms like appellatives, riddles, innuendos and proverbs in a libation text or *nyadodo* for example, as performing aesthetic functions. Also, Omatsola's (2013) explanation that literary aesthetics of the traditional lore are endowed with highly sophisticated

rhetorical signs such as proverbs, songs, metaphor, riddles, punning, elaborate parallelism and idiophones attests to the intergenricity of oral art forms generally and specifically those of the Ewe. It is worth noting that Omatsola's examples of rhetorical signs such as **songs, riddles, and proverbs** (emphases mine) are forms the Ewe consider as unique genre types as well. One would therefore appreciate the conclusion that transfer of form or techniques and whole genres into other types is a natural phenomenon or principle of language and verbal art forms of the Ewe in particular and non-literate societies in general (Anyidoho, 1997; Avorgbedor, 1990).

What then makes *nyadodo* different or distinctive? The 'incommunicable quality' and 'overlap' characteristics notwithstanding, *nyadodo* draws on a specific resource that determines its own mode of existence among the Ewe. The outstanding feature is that *nyadodo* texts are prefixed with referents who are human beings. Kove (1998) informs that in performing *nyadodo* ...*woyɔa nyaa gblɔla ŋuko kpena de nyaa ŋu godoo* [emphasis added] meaning, *they add the name of the one who says/speaks the word to it at all times*. In Ewe, *godoo* (*at all times*) may sometimes carry the semantic implication of compulsion or definitiveness. Kove underscores this compulsion and definitiveness in the Ewe proverb: *Adela fe ŋko mevɔna le adelā ŋu o*, literally meaning, *the name of the hunter does not vanish from the game he hunts*. To wit it suggests that the way a hunter is forever remembered by the type of animals or games he hunts, his skills; so shall a human being be immortalised by his or her deeds, including iconic statements he has originated. It must be

stressed here again that the Ewe *lododo* (*proverb*) can possibly exhibit similar content but in contrast does not follow the form of referencing as exhibited in *nyadodo*. *Lododo* (proverbs) may only follow what Dzobo (2006) refers to as the ‘Spokesman Technique’ where both animate and inanimate objects are used as enunciators of morals and thus assume referent status in the structural arrangement of proverbs. The ‘Spokesman’ technique is similar to what is generally referred to as attribution of Wellerism as exemplified in the following:

- a. *Gbɔ be glā nɔ anyi kpo de wògblɔa ame nya / The goat says the mouth that is inactive gossips.*
- b. *Aɖiba be yeme nyia ame tutɔ vi le dzomeɖoli o / The pawpaw says he does not feed other people’s children during the dry season.*
- c. *Lilī be degbɔdegbɔ wotua xɔ / The wasp says it is going and coming that builds a house.*

One would notice that the proverbs above are prefixed with the NP *Gbɔ* (*Goat*), *Aɖiba*, (*Pawpaw*) and *Lilī* (*Wasp*). The NPs comprise nouns that are not humans and therefore in reality have not said those words. As discussed earlier, the words are attributed to them because of their dominant role as enunciators of morals in the proverbs; hence, their designation as ‘Spokesmen.’

In cases where humans are referents to proverbs they are elders (*tsitsiawo*), comprising both the living and the dead who are acknowledged as possessing the skill of careful observation over a period of time and

reflection on the ordinary situations/events of life (Dzobo, 1973; Torgah, 2006). Investigations have not shown any case where a *nyadodo* text takes a 'Spokesman' or *tsitsiawo* (elders) as its referent.

We must understand the importance of the definitive names that reference *nyadodo* as offering us the opportunity to sometimes have an insight into the Ewe culture, philosophy, environment, religion and language. Ewe names are not arbitrary and whatever their type and form, they have deep socio-cultural and ethno-pragmatic relevance to the Ewe. Their presence in oral literary forms of the Ewe play a very significant role in character delineation as well as driving home thematic and aetiological relevance of texts. The Ewe believe that the mental and social behaviour of a person corresponds with the name. For example, the hero in most Ewe folktales is *(a)yiyi/adzaye/kitsikpoe* (spider) which has the trickster idiosyncrasies that contribute to the narrative performance and help in stating the values of the Ewe people. The mention of *(a)yiyi/adzaye/kitsikpoe* readily brings to the fore the individuating character of a trickster or swindler who nevertheless is most of the time apprehended and punished. *Fɔnɔ*, the wife of *(a)yiyi* (spider), is the character who together with the children bears the brunt of the husband *(a)yiyi's* abuses. *Fɔnɔ*, which literally means *mother of suffering* may therefore foreground the idea of suffering and life struggles that females experience in a patriachal space.

Similarly, the NP of *nyadodo* texts may heighten the aesthetic and functional quality of the texts as will be revealed in the chapter on analysis of tropes. The general physical, sociological and psychological dispositions of

referents in *nyadodo*, it is observed, are embedded in the names and sometimes support the aesthetic quality and meaning derivation in the texts. Even though this will form a major part of the discussion in the chapter on tropes, for the sake of clarification, an example is cited here. *Nyadodo* text #6 *Aṅku Kofi be yebe kpovuvu meziḡ ḡe kpovuvu [ḡuti]o; nedo gede ko anyigba ke /Aṅku Kofi says he says a broken fence does not lean on another broken one; if one snaps both will go straight to the floor* is commonly performed among Have people in Eweme. It was revealed during fieldwork that the referent, Aṅku Kofi, was physically challenged in one leg and was quite poor. When he attained the age of marriage, his parents according to the social practice, prevailed on him to marry. The only snag here was that the betrothed had a similar handicap and of similar social status like Aṅku Kofi. For this reason he rejected the offer not even with the threat of loss of sonship and the tag of disrespect from his parents. When the pressure became unbearable, Aṅku Kofi respectfully but decisively expressed his sentiments in the *nyadodo* text above. It is evident that the referent's physical and financial challenges will add to the objectification of the text and also imply the importance of the link between text and context. The basic form of *nyadodo* is therefore linked with the referent types.

Syntactic Elements in *Nyadodo*

It is important that we pay attention to the way language is structured in texts for the following reasons: first, it will show that the texts have a 'life' of their own, away from the socio-cultural context and life stories. Due to the emphasis on the relevance of context oriented frames in interpreting oral texts

it may appear as if the text has no life of its own if elements of language are ignored (Yankah, 1995). It will also help to underscore the individuating quality that the texts carry; thus, making them somewhat definitive in nature, endorse and concretise author imprint. Another reason is that, it will guide our attempt to provide a typology of authors based on variables such as gender, social status and geographic space.

Generally, performance of *nyadodo* texts follows a well structured syntactic arrangement that is to a large extent unique with the genre. It has a subject, a verb, and a verb complement introduced by *be*, as the complementizer. This is schematically presented as:

$$S \rightarrow NP + be + Verb \text{ Complements}$$

The verb *be* is quite critical in Ewe syntax; especially, in reported speech. In Ewe one can begin a reported speech in a number of ways including: *egblɔ bena...*, (*s/he says that...*) *ebia bena...* (*s/he asks that...*), *ede se bena...* (*s/he commanded that...*), and *edo ɣli bena...* (*s/he exclaimed that...*), depending on the structure of the direct speech (Obianim, 1975:65). It should be noted that the main verb *gblɔ* (*say*) is omitted in many Ewe sentences, especially reported speeches. The complementizer *be* assumes the position of the main verb to double as both the verb and the complementizer. The deep structure of such sentences is therefore:

NP + (*gblɔ*) + be + Verb complement (where *gblɔ*, *the main verb*, becomes an optional element in the surface structure. The realisation of *be* as a verb complement only makes sense in light of the deep structure which reflects the verb.

An example is Ama *be* meyi mava.

 Ama *gblɔ be* meyi mava.

We realise a similar structural process in the following examples of *nyadodo*.

a. *Agbalē Sunday +be + Gē kpe* → (NP)+ (verb) + (statement)

b. *Agbalē Sunday +gblɔ (verb) + be + Gē kpe*

(*Agbalē Sunday says Accra is huge*) #4

The main verb *gblɔ*, (*say*) may be omitted but *be* (*say*) remains constant to the extent that in even interrogative forms where *bia* (*ask*) *be* may seem more appropriate to be added *bia* (*ask*) is omitted but *be* is still maintained. This situation may not therefore wholly support Obianim's (1975:65) explanation that *ne Numegbe la nye biabia la, ekema woadze egome bena 'ebia bena...'*, that is if a direct speech is interrogative and it is being reported, it is mandatory that the structure is begun with *ebia bena* (*s/he asked that*). For example, the Ewe Bible, which is known to be one of the earliest compositions of Standard Ewe, reports interrogative speech that deviates from Obianim's view. In Genesis 22:7 it is reported that Isaac says ...*eye wògblɔ [...] bena* (emphasis mine) *kpɔ ɖa, dzo kple nake enye esi; ke afika alē le miatsɔ ame nui?* In this example, *gblɔ...bena* (*say that*) is used instead of *bia bena* (*asks that*). However, in the *The Good News Ewe Bible* (2010), the same text is rendered as ...*Isak biae be kpɔ ɖa dzoe nye esi, nake hã nye esi. Mede kuku, alēvi si miatsɔ ame nui la ya ɖe?* It is noted that *bia be* (*asks that*) as suggested by Obianim is employed here. It is therefore relevant to conclude

from the examples that both *gblɔ be* (*says that*) and *bia be* (*asks that*) are possible in process of reporting speeches. It is also clear that in the examples *be* remains constant.

Nyadodo texts in general display the structure where *gblɔ* is normally dropped. The interrogative types follow the structure where *be* is used instead of *bia be* (*ask that*) as we find in the interrogative *nyadodo* text, *Alavanyo Tata be wonya numɔku woazɔ afe akua? / Alavanyo Tata says do you know how you will walk before dying?* The syntactical arrangement in the Ewe language also permits the following: *Alavanyo Tata bia be wonya numɔku woazɔ afe akua? / Alavanyo Tata asks that do you know how you will walk before dying?*

The use of *be* can indicate or interpret a behaviour of a person when speaking to a third person. In that case reporting a second person's statement takes place. In other cases the use of *be* may represent a view or an observation about a person. For example,

1. *Kofi be womegakpɔ ye o / Kofi said they should not look at him.*
2. *Kofi be yebe womegakpɔ ye o / Kofi said he said they should not look at him.*

In example 1, it may be that Kofi performed an action which implies the statement so he might not have made the statement or it could be a reported speech. But in example 2, the possibility of Kofi performing the statement verbally is made stronger through the words, *be yebe*. The Ewe poet,

Akpalu, employs this type in most of his songs *Agoha* to emphasise authorship imprint of his statements. In line 8 of his song: *Akpalu dzi vuu hā menye naneke o*, he says, *Vinɔkɔ be dɔ kawoe yemewɔ kpɔ o* (*Vinɔkɔ says what type of work have I not done before*). The form, *be...ye...* makes Akpalu the owner of the statement, not a reporter since he is singing the song himself. He uses *be* and *Vinɔkɔ* (a name Akpalu often uses for himself in his songs) and *ye* as reflexive of self. Similarly, in his song, *Tue wonye...* meaning, they are guns, (Obianim, 1975:74), Akpalu used the concluding line to the thematic concern in the song; lonesomeness and total disappointment with family members who do not provide him with the necessary support thus: *Akpalu be, ne yekpɔ wo yeadze na wo* (*Akpalu says, if I see them I will stay far from them*). The NP (Akpalu) and its pronoun (I) are confirmed and emphasised in *be* and *ye*.

The point that is being stressed is that in Ewe, *be* does not only signify an observation, point of view or an indirect statement; thus, tempting us to underestimate the authorship status of the NPs of statements. For this reason, we will agree that in the following examples, the NPs are emphasised as the originators of their individual *nyadodo* texts.

1. *Aŋku Kofi be yebe xe yeazu ŋukpetɔ ta yeazu fetɔ. #7*

Aŋku Kofi says he says rather than he being a disgraceful person he will be a debtor.

2. *Kpeleŋe be yebe yemasubɔ Mawu vɔ, agasubɔ mawudɔla tse o #74.*

Kpeleje says he says he will not finish serving God and go to serve angels too

The verb *be* is therefore an important means of validating a statement or achieving credibility among the Ewe. For example, the question *Ame kae be be xe yeazu nukpeto ta yeazu feto? / Who says rather than he being a disgraceful person he will be a debtor* seeks the veracity of the statement by asking for its originator. The answer would then be *Anku Kofi ye be ...or Anku Kofi-e be... / It Anku Kofi who says....*

Ricouer (1985) in his discussion on the relationship between time and the process of narration points out that it is not necessary to judge the 'truthfulness' of a statement based on the criterion of it being reported or an observation since not even eye witnesses' testimonies can make a past event or a reported event real. He explains further that it is true that during a performance of a text, it is understood that there is an originator whose place is being taken by another person. Ricouer refers to this process as 'standing-for' or 'taking-the-place-of' in a performance. According to him, 'standing-for' or 'taking-the-place-of' means '...the reduction to the Same, the recognition of Otherness, and the analogization of apprehension' (p157). This means that the inventor or originator and the discoverer who is the performer or the 'reporter' become so intertwined and blended that it is difficult to distinguish one from the other.

Ricouer's view above can explain performance of folktales, proverbs and indeed most oral forms of the Ewe where there is difficulty in delineating their originators. There may be elements of reported speech or observation

underlying the statements in narrating these artistic forms to the extent that we can say that the performers 'stand for' or 'take-the-place-of' the real originators. However, this may not wholly apply to *nyadodo* texts since aside exophoric evidences, the linguistic processes we have discussed above allow for author validation. Above all, since *be* is critical in authenticating a statement, we can say that the referents to whom the statements are attributed are their originators.

It is necessary to show that the status of referents as the original composers is culturally determined. For example, Yankah (1989) reports that among the Akan, apart from the indigenous copyright system of registering a new proverb with a proverb custodian, the claim of originality and authorship of proverbs is linguistically reflected in two major formulaic expressions that predicate the texts. These are the *Source* and *Factivity* formulae. The NP in the *Source* formula does not include specific referents; it comprises elders, ancestors and impersonal pronouns that are not specific to a particular person. In other instances the formula may be +NP where the referent is a specific human being, animal or plant. For example,

1. *The elders spoke the proverb that...*
2. *The tortoise says that...*
3. *Such and such a person spoke the proverb that...* (Yankah, *ibid*: 163)

In the *Factivity* formula, the NP comprises the pronoun *you* + the factive verb *know*, *remember* (+imperative) or *forget* (-neg) + complementizer (that) + proverb. For example,

You know that... or *Dont forget that...* (Yankah, *ibid*: 164)

All these are ways in which the Akan language is employed to validate or emphasise authenticity and novelty of their proverbs. Even though, there may not be the registration of *nyadodo* texts to stamp authorship claim, the *Source* formula is quite similar to *nyadodo* texts among the Ewe where the NP includes specific individual human beings or groups whose authorship is embedded in the structure of the texts. The strength of *nyadodo* as an effective rhetorical text as it is with the proverb is linked to its authority in the referents.

The NP in *nyadodo* is not gender specific and not limited to any privileged group. It comprises humans of all categories and status—the farmer, litigant, pedestrian, driver—who instinctively respond to crises by reinforcing, embellishing and transforming, creating and recreating the nuances of traditional speech. The category that has not been found in the data to be composers is children. Since all humans are potential authors of *nyadodo*, Kove (1998) classifies the texts as *esi ame aɖewo gbɔ wòzua nya gbã ɖi wonɔa gbɔgbɔm eye wofe ŋkɔ nɔa eɖu* meaning, *the type that has been spoken by some people and it spreads among people and the name of the person is attached*. The Ewe expression *ame aɖewo* (*some people, some persons*) supports the view that the composers of *nyadodo* are varied and many and all of them are delineated as originators through the use of the verb *be* (*say*).

Another syntactic observation about the NP in *nyadodo* is that the names of places in the NP do not appear alone. They always move with specifiers that add more information to the nature of the noun in question. The

data show that place names are either followed by a morpheme that suggests a place of origin or an adjective that describes the nature of the subject. The first example of this structure is NP → N + *ḍee*.

The *ḍee* suggests where one comes or originates from. The *ḍee* could be regarded as an elliptical form of the Ewe phrase, *ame aḍe ye* (*it is somebody/someone who*) emphasising an idea of indeterminacy of the author and thus attributable to anyone in the community. This is also an effective means of verbal indirection as discussed in the section on indirection. Kove (1989) describes these types as *Esi ame aḍewo gblɔ gake womeyɔna wofe ŋkɔ o*. (*The type that has been spoken by some persons but their names are not mentioned*). The content or the full stories that engendered these types of *nyadodo* texts, it has been discovered, are either embarrassing or profane. Even though the towns could readily be identified, the specificity of the NP in the geographic space could be challenging, if not impossible. Since the person could for example be an eminent person in the society their identity must be clothed or covered in *ḍee*. The following are some examples.

1. *Kpando ḍee be ŋlɔkpe ŋu ko wòate. / Kpando person says it is the buttocks that will be tired. #3*
2. *Peki ḍee be aalimee mi tsa da. / Peki person says it is your hip; throw it. #9*

Health Status and *Nyadodo* Texts

One unique example of the basic structural form that this researcher finds intriguing and exciting is the type whose individual referents are not mentally healthy. It has been observed from field work and data that these texts are humorous but poignant and witty. One could compare these NPs with the comic characters in Shakespeare's drama *Julius Caesar* or *Macbeth*. For example in the dialogue between the characters Cobbler, Marullus and Flavius in Act 1: Scene 1 of *Julius Caesar* Marullus asked the Cobbler... But *what trade art thou?* The Cobbler answered sarcastically and humouredly, *A trade, sir, that I hope I may use with a safe conscience, / which is indeed, sir, a mender of bad soles.* His answer, especially the part that makes reference to mending bad soles is quite intriguing. The pun in *soles* is ironical and has great dramatic effect. Similarly, the response of the drunken Porter about hell and the people who go there in Act II: Sc. III of *Macbeth* is full of ironies that are serious comments on events in the drama. The two characters, Cobbler and Potter, even though are not mentally ill they are common people and of low social status; yet, in their humorous acts they make very philosophical comments about life.

The chief of Gbi Uegbe, Təgbe Keh XII, has a similar view about *nyadodo* texts composed by the mentally challenged—*aḍavakuwo* (*lunatics*). He remarks quite interestingly, '*megadja kɔ le aḍavakuwo nu o, woado ŋukpe wo; woanɔ aḍava nu wɔ gake nunya sɔŋ le me*' meaning, *do not joke with mad persons, they will*

disgrace/embarrass you; there is a lot of wisdom in their mad behaviour.

Examples of this structure include the following:

1. *Kpando davakuɔ* (place+mental ill-health) *be, bobooboi edo le Mawu ŋu. / Kpando lunatic says 'bobooboi' God has a lot of work to do. #33*
2. *Keta tsukunɔ* (place+mental ill-health) *be edzɔ de Yesu kple atsiafu dome./ Keta lunatic says it is between Jesus and the sea. #85*

The following is the only example of *nyadodo* text referenced by someone who is physically unwell. *Avate Xɔdrɔ* (place+physical health) *be ne yeku ko dɔ awu tagbatsutsuwo. / Avate Bed-ridden says when s/he dies houseflies will be hungry #48.* Our discussion so far has emphasised features of the NP in *nyadodo* texts to underscore the genre's specific features and author types. Even though it has been mentioned that *nyadodo* texts have no regular structural arrangement in the verb complement, one can identify interesting patterns that have been revealed here.

Manipulation of the Basic Structure

The structural arrangement of *nyadodo* texts as discussed above shows a basic positioning of the NP which is mostly at the initial position of the statement. The point has also been made that *nyadodo* has almost an unalterable structure. However, during field work some few instances of

nyadodo performance indicated that sometimes some of the texts can be manipulated for various reasons. We shall look at some of these texts and what type of manipulation they can undergo.

The first instance is when the NP that prefixes the statement is dropped. An interlocutor in the performance of *nyadodo* can omit the referent that another participant in that context may add. The example below was recorded during an interaction between two people at a funeral. The two interactants were apparently discussing the dressing of some young ladies to the funeral.

IA: ...*ekewoe* (...*these ones*) #36

IB: *Abra Kototsie + doo + sigbe* (*It is Abra Kototsi who says that*).

The first interactant (IA) obviously dropped the the NP (*Abra Kototsi*) and the verb *be* (*say*) which the second interactant (IB) quickly provided. IB also changed the usual verb *be* (*say*) to its Eweme variant *do* and added the habitual particle /*d*/. Upon inquiry, it was explained thus: *menye yesiayi wodo wo petee o; gbedewoe woateju atso dzi ko woanye atsa de ko ne wole nu foo* meaning, *it is not every time that you say all; sometimes one can just cut it as a kind of style*. The *style* here would mean suspense or what Yankah (1989) explained as 'arousing the collaborative expectancy... (p.168). In the example above, it is expected that the two discussants would be further excited to get more involved since suspense is heightened. Aside this explanation, we can also say that IA's inability to remember the referent's name instantly or his lack of knowledge of it could be a possible reason for the omission of the NP. IB thus helped in

1. *Gbagblavudza be amemaxanu wo me (xaa nu de nu) o./*
Gbagblavudza says one who does not worry; you do not
worry for him. #100
2. *Davōdzi be kōtuga me doa 'sigbe o. / Davōdzi says you do*
not depend on court fines to go set up a business. #70
3. *Kofī Ansa be ŋati be vōe deke me le o. / Kofī Ansa says*
there is no bad/ugly nose. #39
4. *Elefume be ahatso me nō axadodro me o. / Elefume says a*
lie does not reside in the armpit. #55

/ma...o/
5. *Letebi Kōmla be ne nua ma (nyo) o ko, de wōagblē de dzi. /*
Letebi Kōmla says if the thing will not be good, it will only
worsen. #54
6. *Dzambo be xexeme dze abi, evuvu ma (gaku) o. / Dzambo*
says the world has ulcer, it is chipped away; it cannot heal.
#32

/a (+?) / It must be noted that the question mark is represented here for
clarity. In performance of nyadodo the question marker is only heard.
7. *Akubia be egbœ du (woa) a? / Akubia says has a goat eaten*
you? #65
8. *Tsali be ekae ka (wo) !? / Tsali says which one concerns*
you? #66

In some circumstances as indicated earlier positive *nyadodo* texts are transformed into negative statements. The following texts for example underwent some interesting transformations which were recorded during fieldwork. The first was about two friends who argued about the habit of drinking alcohol. The particular *nyadodo* that was reorganised was *Mawuli be wometsɔa akpetesi kuna vu o; ɖe wono ne / Mawuli says akpetesi is not used to fuel a vehicle, it is drunk #91*. Context of performance was a drinking spot where Interactant A (IA) who was obviously not happy about the drinking habit of the friend (IB) protested not only against the quantity of *akpetesi* (a very potent locally distilled gin) the friend was taking but also the frequency. The friend, Interactant B (IB), who also felt being harassed, snapped back:

IB: *Te ɖa le gbɔnye; ɖe wotsɔ 'kpetesi kuna vua? / Get away from me; do they use akpetesi to drive a vehicle?*

IA: *Menya be ɖe wonone; gake megava gloa? / I know that they drink it but is it not becoming too much?*

The above interaction reveals a few interesting things for comment. In the first place, there is an example of elaboration *Te ɖa le gbɔnye* (*Get away from me*) which Interactant B (IB) added. Secondly, IB has also dropped the logical ending of the 'original' *nyadodo* text, *ɖe wonone / it is drunk*.

IB's response is clearly sarcastic, meaning, 'are you not wise or intelligent enough to know the natural usage of things, that we drink *akpetesi*?' So, IB the wiser one would leave the rest of the deductions to his friend to do which the friend quickly provided thus: *ɖe wonone*. Once the truism was established,

IB felt vindicated and it was no surprise he went ahead to enjoy the drink to the annoyance of the friend, IA. The response thus drives home the incessant /continual protest against the drinking habit of IB as well as evoking the strong emotion and counter protest we find in IB's response. The transformations contributed to the exciting argument and animation of the discourse between the two which a straightforward positive statement of the *nyadodo* may not have evoked.

The second example took place at a meeting of Have Citizens Association in Have in the Volta Region of Ghana. The text which underwent some reorganisation was #40 *Dzangbonɔ be edzie wɔɔ nu. / Dzangbonɔ says it is courage that does things*. The discussion was on resource mobilisation for development projects in the traditional area. A member suggested that individual members should be levied an amount of one hundred Ghana cedis (Gh¢100.00) every month. While some members thought this was rather too steep and unrealistic, others applauded the suggestion and pressed for its adoption and implementation. This generated a heated argument. In the midst of continued argument to arrive at a concensus, a lady member exclaimed: *Miadzɔe loo; menye dzie wɔɔ nu oa? / We shall contribute it loo; is it not with courage that you do things?* Surprisingly, another member immediately corroborated the realism and appropriateness of the statement by adding the referent thus: *Dzangbonɔe doɔ sigbe (Dzangbonɔ says so)*. Immediately, one may think the statement was to encourage members to pay the amount and thereby resolve a dicy situation. However, the non-linguistic communicative strategies that accompanied the performance

and the reaction of those in favour of the suggestion made it clear that the lady was being sarcastic. She really was against the proposal. Thus, she instead fuelled emotions and aggravated an already heated atmosphere.

The third example which occurred in one of my interview sessions in Ho is cited for a unique reason. The text in its 'natural' form is structurally negative but it was further manipulated and transformed into a shorter and more concrete negative form. The full form of the text is *Ganda be devisinu menye devifokpa me (sɔa me) o. / Ganda says what is in the hands of a child is not a child's footwear that cannot fit people #105.*

During the interview, which was under a tree, the interviewee saw a boy of about eight years chewing sugar cane. The interviewee playfully asked the boy to give him some of the sugar cane but the young boy was not willing to do so. An adult friend of the interviewee who was also at the scene jokingly reprimanded the interviewee thus: *ta si fu de na devie; nu tukuie ke tse nagaxɔ du le devie sia? (Stop worrying the child; this small thing too you want to take from the child to eat?).* In his defence, the interviewee said: *Devisinu, devifokpa ya? / what a child has, is it a child's footwear?* The discourse ended with everybody laughing; obviously agreeing with him.

We realise from the above example that the transformation was quite elaborate. In the first place the referent (NP) and the verb *be* were dropped. Then, the illocutionary devices of negation *menye*, and *me (sɔa me) o* in the complement were also dropped. In their place, the performer rendered it in the question form using the word *ya* which is the shorter form of *ye mahã* in

Ewe. The word *ya* functions as a focus marker thereby adding an emphatic quality to the text. Its context also demands a question mark and a High-Low tone (Atakpa, 1997: 46). All these together make the statement shorter and brought closer to us the tenor *devisinu* (*what a child has*) and the vehicle *devifokpa* (*footwear*). The repetition of *devi* (child) in the metaphor creates a rhythmic effect that adds to the aesthetic quality of the text. The short question form makes the statement more crispy and with the relatively high tone of the question mark we can appreciate better the jocular mood of the interlocutors, the time available to them (since the interviewee was engaged at that time he has to be brief) and the drama as a whole. The communication is thus greatly animated.

These examples therefore show that there is the possibility of 'changing' some parts of *nyadodo* texts. These structural dynamics notwithstanding, some aspects such as the referent (NP) of *nyadodo* texts remain relatively close to the 'original' performance. Manipulation in oral literary texts is not peculiar to *nyadodo* texts and this may account for verbal art of Africa being described as communal and evanescent since there is the opportunity for reorganisation or 'refurbishment'. It is also necessary to point out the fact that care is taken to maintain the desired meaning that the text espouses no matter how varied the meanings may be. We may rather recognise the manipulation of *nyadodo* texts as an effective way of deepening our understanding of the text and also bringing to the fore the creative capability of the performers who are conversant with their socio-cultural contexts and formalities of speaking.

Apart from interrogative types of *nyadodo* texts, there is the indication of *nyadodo* texts that are formulated on conditionality of situations. For example, *Asrāvō be yegblōm womesem na ye o, ne ŋua ke ko womese ge.* / *Asrāvō says he speaks but they don't understand him, when the day breaks they will understand him* #90. The clause, *ne ŋua ke ko womese ge* in the example below also expresses conditionality. The import of whatever the referent wishes to put across will remain unclear until day breaks.

Data have also revealed a case of *nyadodo* text that has been composed in a foreign language. One of such is the text (#80) attributed to Tɔgbui Dɔku thus: *Tɔgbe Dɔku be I see' / Tɔgbe Dɔku says I see'*. This is not an occurrence that is peculiar to *nyadodo*, since some oral forms of the Ewe, such as their appellatives, surrogate forms (horn and drum languages), and songs are either wholly or partly in other Ghanaian languages. The occurrence of the *nyadodo* text in English, it has been found, does not necessarily exhibit knowledge of the English language. It also goes beyond a surface meaning of sense perception to the idea of deep insight into an issue.

Similarly, there is an example of *nyadodo* text where the statement after the verb is made up of just two words but this time in the Ewe language as follows: #122 *Agbeve be ayoo hee / Agbeve says 'ayoo hee'*. Here again, the expression may mean acceptance and understanding but may connote a sense of future ramifications of an action. Indeed, the performance context, extra-linguistic features, vowel elongation and tone are important in

delineating the various meanings of *ayoo hee* and *I see*. In such cases these two statements may suggest a present compromise and understanding but with a scarstic undertone.

Before we conclude on this chapter, it is important to make a few comments on Kove's typology of *nyadodo*. It is observed that his categorisation of *nyadodo* texts has been largely corroborated by the analysis so far in this present research. However, there are two of his classifications that must be commented on. These are:

1. *Esiwo wokpa do lāwo fe wāna ŋu* (Those that are composed around the behaviour of animals)
2. *Esiwo le ayodefe fe nānāme me* (Those that are playful in manner)

These, in the view of the present researcher, do not really exhibit any specific referent type or form different from what has been discussed above. Instead, the two can be explained from the type of content that these texts exhibit. Humour and behavioural patterns of animals have been found to be major vehicles that carry important messages about the referents and their communities.

Conclusion

All in all, this chapter on the structure and content of *nyadodo* shows that *nyadodo* shares some qualities with other oral artistic forms of the Ewe; especially, *nyatoto* and *lododo*. However, the community, the genre structure and form project *nyadodo* as distinct. *Nyadodo* texts are similar to these oral forms in recording performance contexts such as its scene, setting, characters and their words. This notwithstanding, particularisation of the genre

in terms of its etymology, its form, and the indigenous considerations, as shown in the discussion so far require that we consider *nyadodo* as different and recognise it as such in this study. Also *nyadodo* (unlike *eyidi...* of the Abe for example) is not sung; the texts can be realised in short simple or multiple sentences that can be sometimes truncated.

It has also been pointed out that *nyadodo* texts display varying forms of the NP that follow some morphological and syntactic processes of the Ewe language. The linguistic details have been analysed to show their relevance to the uniqueness of the genre. It is also evident that the structural arrangement is simple but almost rigid with the presence of the referent (NP) at the initial position of the statement. As a text, it has an aesthetic and social relevance that is capable of taking us into the heart and world of the composers and users.

Finally, it is evident that despite the rigidity in form, *nyadodo* texts can undergo some transformations to heighten their aesthetic and functional importance. The texts can be truncated or elaborated but it will maintain its meaning and relevance to the people.

CHAPTER FOUR

NYADODO TEXTS IN CONTEXT

Introduction

In the previous chapter, form and content have been discussed in order to particularise *nyadodo* as another oral literary form of the Ewe. Context as an important frame in the study of oral literary forms in particular has been emphasised; especially, in the case of *nyadodo* texts especially where data is mainly oral. This chapter will therefore be engaged with issues concerning the interplay of referents, text, texture and context in the composition of *nyadodo* texts.

Composers of *Nyadodo*

It has been discussed in the introductory chapter of this report that one of the major misgivings about oral artistic forms of Africa is its lack of individual author/originator. The artistic forms are thus labelled with a communal tag. The point has also been made that *nyadodo* could be investigated from the authorship point of view in order to provide a concrete support for individual artistry of oral artistic forms. The relevance of context to interpretation of oral texts and meaning derivation has been explicated in the review of related literature. The discussion in this segment will thus focus on the relationship between context—life stories (what I refer to as ‘little stories’), social events and language of the texts—and composition of *nyadodo*. Life stories, social events will together provide us with a confirmation of authorship for this important oral form of the Ewe. But before

this is done a brief presentation is made on the spread of composition of *nyadodo* by individual referents.

Nyadodo is dynamic and the composers as has been indicated in the previous chapters are all manner of people who use the texts to raise questions about their existence and make statements about their social relations. These referents could thus become the living memory of the Ewe; people who have restored events in their entirety (Hampate Bâ, 1995). This means that compositions of these referents encapsulate the entire experiences of individuals and their communities which can be accessed through studies such as this present one.

Unlike some oral art forms of Africa, for example, *eyidi...* of the Abe of Ivory Coast where their composers (women) can become professional artists, data have shown that even though some referents have composed more than one *nyadodo* text, they may not be regarded as professionals in its strict sense. Data show that the highest number of individual composition is three (3) as shown below:

Referent	Frequency
1. Kendo	3
2. Agbeli Yawoe	3
3. Anku Kofi	3
4. Dugoe	3
5. Pati	2
6. Paakuna	2
7. Mawule	2

8. Davɔdzi	2
9. Ape Kɔku	2
10. Kumasi	2
11. Alavanyo Tata	2

Referents can be classified under the following groups: female, male, lunatic and unit / group of a community; however, it is worth stating that this classification is not absolute, since there is an obvious fluidity. For example, members in the category of lunatic definitely will include both male and female composers. Similarly, those classified as a unit/group of community will include males and females. Data however shows an interesting but not surprising occurrence where out of a hundred and forty- two (143) texts about 103 are composed by males. The rest of *nyadodo* texts are distributed among females, lunatics, unit or sections of a community and those we can categorise as neutral because the NP in these texts is difficult to identify and classify. For example,

1. **Maame** be menye aɖusi ta yeagbe fu gba o. / *Maame says sa bleeding gum will not stop her from cracking bones.* #16
2. **Avate Xɔdrɔ** be ne yeku ko dɔ awu tagbatsutsuwo / *Avate the bed-ridden says when s/he dies houseflies will be hungry.* #48

The NP in examples 1 and 2 are **Maame** and **Avate Xɔdrɔ** respectively. In example 1 the referent *Maame* could be either a male or a female. Similarly, **Avate Xɔdrɔ**, in example 2 could refer to a sick male or

female. The examination of the interaction between text and context is explained with some *nyadodo* texts below.

Female Compositions

It has been discussed that women especially use their daily life activities in oral forms as a screen to speak; to comment on life and interrogate happenings in their socio-cultural space. The female referent Paakunɔ for example seems to metaphorically engage her *stomach* (*dɔme*) to question people in her *nyadodo*: *nyee dɔme le nya bɪaa ame (...my stomach is interrogating/questioning people)* (#21). The emphasis on *nyee* which is done through a combination of the possessive *nye* and the emphatic *ye* bringing to the fore the individuating element in the text. Among the Ewe, the stomach (*dɔme/fome*) is used as a metaphor to connote an impenetrable space that may harbour good and evil which are inaccessible to others. For example, the stomach of humans is compared to a gun thus: *ame dɔme tu mee (the stomach of a person is like the inside of a gun)*; the metaphor suggests something that is dark, sinister, difficult to access but dangerous. We may say Paakunɔ wishes to vent her gall but something may be preventing her from doing so. Her stomach (*dɔmɛ*) therefore will keep the complaints and inhibitions.

Even though *nyadodo* performance or use is open to all, most informants, including males, associate the performance of some texts more to females than to males. One of such is the *nyadodo* by Adzovɪnɔ that says: *mayia (let me go/pass)*. The expression *mayia (let me go/pass)* from

interviewees is used in a scarstic way by women especially who may want to comment on something or get involved in an event but are afraid to do so for many obvious reasons. The sarcasm is really stressed when the text is performed accompanied with gestures such as slapping the hip or pushing the mouth to show disgust and frustration. The text may also be an avenue for its performer to stress the socio-cultural inhibitions that a female must endure to ironically earn the accolade *nyɔnu nyuie* (*a good woman*). The equivalence of *mayia* in Ewe includes expressions such as *nye dahevi* (*me, a child of a poor person*) by women. The woman is 'poor' not because she lacks money or material wealth; the social inhibitions she faces and her required reticence because of her 'low' social status make her poor. Indeed the woman in a number of Ewe sayings is portrayed as wealthy enough to buy a gun but it will be a man who will keep and fire it.

The above notwithstanding, some *nyadodo* texts reveal that women can break out from their inhibited space sometimes to express candor and forthrightness where it matters. The woman will be encouraged by Dzanɔgbonɔ's *nyadodo* ...edzie *wɔɔ nu* (*it is courage that does things*) (#40) and Abiwu Ama's *nyadodo* text (#38) ...*ne 'yɔ Ku be Efo tse awu wò, yɔe be Ku nàvo!* (*Even if you call death Brother, it will kill you; call it Death and be free*) illustrates the point. Abiwu Ama's composition has an important socio-cultural relevance and individual value that need to be commented on here. As a natural phenomenon, death is explained and considered variously in the oral genres of the people. In some Ewe dirges for example, death is portrayed as a dreadful trap and thus referred

to in the appellative *azāgidi*; death is regarded as no respecter of people and so metaphorically referred to as *agblenukpui* (*the short/small hoe*) that can get rid of all types of weed no matter where the weeds are; death is also described as *dzonumagbemedekokpe* (*the bead that will fit everybody's neck*). Death is also sometimes regarded as a welcomed visitor who must carry messages to departed relations. However, no matter the perception of its nature and scope, death is feared and regarded as a wicked destroyer, a killer and a curse because it causes pain through separation. Death is thus the implacable enemy of humans; so, it is also described by the Akan in such statements as 'When Death wants you and you call him father, it will take you; if you call him mother it will take you' (Asare Opoku, 1978: 134). For this reason it is among the delicate concepts that is tabooed and required to be expressed in euphemisms by the Ewe.

Therefore, the *nyadodo* text by Abiwu Ama suggests her frankness and resolution to break such a taboo if only it will free her from a constraint. The female desires to be heard, not only seen; she desires not to be reticent even in the midst of men. Abiwu Ama would wish to contribute to a discourse that concerns her existence but which social institutions would restrict her from doing. She has no option than to break the rules or the taboos. She thus refuses to be euphemistic, breaking all speech protocols and calls for unmasking death by calling it by its real name, Death and not Brother. This, we note in the defiant outburst and frustration that are strongly expressed in *...yæ be Ku nāvō!* (*...call him Death and be free!*). She is aware that referring to Death in an endearing or blood relational name like *Efo* (*Brother*)

will not make Death to spare her. A spade must be called a spade by any body regardless of gender differences and social status.

It is also clear from data that even though there are no major variations in the type of Ewe values that are embedded in the compositions of the various referents, female *nyadodo* texts seem to emanate from their traditional roles and responsibilities. The compositions of females thus express issues related to child birth, motherhood, marriage and commerce. The following *nyadodo* texts #22, #29, #34 and #72 explicate female perception of various aspects of life. Texts #34 and #72 reveal women's views on childbirth and the type of relationship that must exist between a child and the mother. The female composer Kro Yawe, out of her experiences in childbirth, is of the strong conviction that *evi nabu nɔɔ (a child must obey the mother)* (#34). There is emphasis on respect for mother even though the composer is aware that male and female are involved in the procreation process. Apart from carrying the pregnancy with all its joys and uncertainties, the female in the Ewe traditional setting as it may be in most African cultures is saddled with the heavy responsible of bringing up the child to be culturally acceptable and useful. A woman who is not successful in this is evaluated a failure and will not fit into the good woman (*nyɔnu nyuie*) category of Ewe women. Her children will be described as *enɔɔ /dadaa mekplae o (the mother has not trained him/her)*. According to Golomeke (1998) when a child is described as *dzimakpla (born but not bred/uncouth)*, *kplamase (trained but incorrigible)* or *etrɔ megbe de dze (s/he has turned his/her back*

to *salt*) it means that child is devoid of proper training, an indictment on the quality of parenthood in general but motherhood in particular.

That is why another woman composer, Hólū Yawe, will be surprised and concerned about a mother who does not exhibit the traditional desirable qualities of a mother in the text #72 ...*eviwonowe loo!* (*Children's mothers loo!*). The emotive values of surprise, concern and sympathy are carried through the emphatic particle /e/ that begins and ends the word *eviwonow e* as well as the word *loo!*

Marriage is an important institution which is closely related to childbearing. It is also an evaluative measure of the worth of a woman among the Ewe. Thus to earn respect and the accolade *nyonu nyuie* (*good woman*) from the public, one must not only have children and be a good mother, one must also marry. The metaphoric relevance of the texts will be part of the discussion in Chapter Five of this report but a text will be cited here to reveal the Ewe woman's response to it. Akosinokpɔ's *nyadodo* #49 says *gbɔ konɔ menye gbɔ tre o / Akosinokpɔ says a barren goat is not a spinster goat* underscores the interaction between marriage and childbearing. But the woman in the above text is emphasising the point that the value of the woman (the *goat*), does not end at producing children. Some of the accusations and humiliations women experience in respect of bearing children are being attacked in this text. A woman can marry and not have children and she must be allowed to do so the text seems to endorse. Her worth as a human being is not limited to child-birth.

There are few *nyadodo* texts that are linked to commercial activities that women engage in or are conversant with. They include: *Tagā Mansa be nu nyuie mevɔ le Ablotsi o, ame koe kuɔ le gbɔ / Tagā Mansa says good things do not get finished Abroad, it is only human beings that die and leave the things # 22)* and *Akɔsiadzānɔ be ekakra menye edɔdɔ o / Akɔsiadzānɔ says asking for it to be bought is not the same as ordering for it # 29.*

Male Compositions

Texts composed by males seem to cut across a wider range of Ewe individual and community norms and values. They are so diverse that it will be difficult to categorise them; however, there is evidence that *nyadodo* compositions by males are derived from vocations that are traditionally male specific. They are cash crop farming and palm-wine tapping as presented in the following texts.

1. *Matias be koko mafumafu dada yenya yata yekpɔ ga / Matias says it is because he knows how to sell wet cocoa that is why he is rich (# 25).*
2. *Ape Kɔku be ne aha ku ahakpamɔ netɔɔ gbe. / Ape Kɔku says once the palm-wine tree is dead; the wine-path will become bushy. #73*

There are indications that male compositions also espouse themes that suggest pride in self, total independence (#35) and engaging in activities that would enhance their stature in the society. Male compositions therefore reveal

the essence of money/wealth (*nyadodo* texts #11, #75, #79, and #94) as an important source of respect and fulfilment of their social and family obligations. Closely related to the above is the theme of hard work and ingenuity as important ingredients to a successful life (#28, #102). Some *nyadodo* texts that are attributed to males are tied to experiences that are gender specific in the Ewe socio-cultural context. For example, even though, both males and females are likely to drink alcoholic beverages and be promiscuous, the Ewe frown on women who engage in any of these habits. Therefore, it is not surprising that some male compositions emanate from experiences of drinking alcohol as revealed in texts #91, #124 and #125. Text #104 exemplifies male composition that is related to the habit of ‘womanizing.’ These themes, one would notice, are locked in the traditional Ewe gender categorisation and characteristics.

As indicated in the discussion on the form and structure of *nyadodo* texts, some of the most interesting and humourous texts are referenced by lunatics. It is revealing that their compositions are closely linked to their special idiosyncracies such as ‘aimless’ walking; speaking taboo words especially those regarding intimate body parts. *Nyadodo* texts #53, #59, #92 and #115 below are examples.

3. *Xɔxɔe ɖavakuɔ be wometsɔɔ ɲlɔmenya ɖia kɔ o. / Xɔxɔe lunatic says you don't joke with issues of the vagina* (#53).

The word *ɲlɔme* (*vagina*) in the example above is an intimate part of the female which is mostly masked in euphemisms such as *mamagã* (*big grandmother*). If one must use it or any such profanity, speech frames such

as *taflatse* (*excuse my language*) should precede the statement; otherwise one may be considered indecent, vulgar or not cultured. A mentally challenged person could flout any of these norms without suffering any sanctions. Another text that exhibits the unique characteristic of the lunatic is *Afife tsukunɔ be aɖavadedze nyo, gake afɔ yi le eɣuti la koe de fu./ Afife lunatic says to be a lunatic is good; but the only problem with it is the walking* (#60). A major and a common characteristic of mentally challenged persons revealed here is that they walk the length and breadth of a town or across towns and villages. The phrase *afɔ yi le eɣuti...* emphasises the incessant and almost aimless walking the mentally challenged engage in.

Another idiosyncrasy of the lunatic is associated with their habitat. It is evident that lunatics make market places as a place of abode. It is out of this context that the following *nyadodo* text has been composed, *Aklɔbɔ be Akatsisia melolo na ye kple Avɔkuɖi o. / Aklɔbɔ says the Akatsi market is not big enough for him and Avɔkuɖi* (# 92). The space being referred to here is the Akatsi market in the Aɲlɔ traditional area. Data have also revealed that *nyadodo* texts referenced by groups or segments of a community are connected with parts of the human body as exemplified in the text: *Maame be futɔ f'a va panie le ɲlɔme. / Maame says an enemy's penis is a needle in the vagina.* # 117

In the contexts of the texts above, *ava* (*penis*) is an intimate part of a male that performs very important functions. As will be analysed later in

Chapter Five, these types are not only physiologically important; they are also great sources of trope that carry aspects of Ewe world view. Now we shall take a look at how context interacts with *nyadodo* composition. This will be structured along the model employed by Yankah (1989) in the study of Akan proverbs but with slight modifications regarding the designations of the types.

Exophoric Evidence and *Nyadodo* Compositions

The link between literary works and life experiences has been stressed; contextualisation as a social practice and its performative character has also received elucidation. This means that the pain, joy and fear of referents that are expressed in the *nyadodo* texts are linked with the referents' reaction to their life situations to produce this artistic form. Besides the proof of the existence of individual authorship of oral literary texts among the Ewe that this segment of the report will provide, the discussion will also explicate and concretise the importance of life stories / experiences in the composition of *nyadodo* texts. The contexts are categorised according to referents and their involvement in the contexts that engendered the text.

Real Originators

Fieldwork information shows that referents in this group are those who have really verbally originated specific *nyadodo* texts. The informants describe these types as *eya nɔtɔe gbɔɔe/doe*; meaning, s/he said or composed it herself or himself. To demonstrate the veracity of their comments, the interviewees provided anecdotes or located these texts within what I refer to as 'little story' contexts. A similar criterion was shown by Yankah (1989) as an important yard stick in delineating individual authors for

Akan proverbs. Yankah refers to this as the situation where a speaker knows nobody else apart from the source to have ever used the text (Yankah, 1989). The following *nyadodo* texts and anecdotes or 'little stories' which evoked their compositions are cited here to drive home the point. The stories include those that have been narrated by some referents themselves, close relations such as children and community members to confirm and establish authorship. As explained earlier in the section on data generating strategies, these have been corroborated by other members of the community.

a. Referent: *Adzaṇudɔ*

Nyadodo: Adzaṇudɔ be yee xà Aba /Adzaṇudɔ says he has bothered Aba (#1).

Story: This was narrated by the eldest son of Tɔgbɛ Aba and confirmed by Efo Yao Kissiedu and Emma Tegba. They confirmed the referent, Adzaṇudɔ, as the author of the statement thus: Adzaṇudɔ and Aba were both Have citizens who were among those that travelled to and settled in Kadjebi Kɔfɛ to engage in cocoa farming. The two were rich and prosperous; they did not only share boundaries but were very great friends who were interested in the success of each other. They displayed this good neighbourliness and brotherliness by looking after each other's farm in particular any time any of them had to travel back home. It happened that one day Aba travelled home for a long period of time. Adzaṇudɔ after inspecting and realising that his 'brother's' cocoa farm was weedy, decided to hire labourers to clear the farm of weeds. A few days after weeding the farm, Aba returned

and right away visited his farm. Contrary to the expected profound gratitude/appreciation that Adzɔɔudɔ deserved, Aba was rather angry since he was displeased with the quality of weeding Adzɔɔudɔ had supervised to be done on his farm. Aba exhibited this displeasure by asking Adzɔɔudɔ whether he Aba had asked Adzɔɔudɔ to do any of such favour for him. Adzɔɔudɔ, in a very quiet but sad tone remarked, *enyee xa Aba*, meaning I am to be blamed for doing such a favour for Aba.

b. Referent: Agbalɛ Sunday

Nyadodo: *Agbalɛ Sunday be Gɛ kpɛ /Agbalɛ Sunday says Accra is huge (#4).*

Story: The referent, *Agbalɛ Sunday* travelled from his village to Accra to purchase some personal items. He put all the money he had for the shopping securely in a bag, and hung it over his left shoulder. He tried to be confident and 'civilised' since he had been warned that if he showed any sign of village life it would give him away as vulnerable, 'a Johny Just Come'. The unfortunate however happened; the bag was cut and he was robbed of all his money. He managed to get back home through the generosity of some market women. He could never understand how he of all people, the 'village champion' could fall victim to the activities of pickpockets. What baffled him the most was how the pickpockets managed to remove all the money from the bag with such speed and dexterity. He felt so ashamed, embarrassed and out of the world that he could not respond to the

“woe zo” (welcome) from his children, wife and neighbours. It was obvious to members of his family and neighbours that all was not well with Sunday. After so many questions and coaxing, Sunday, with a lot of effort, weakly and painfully said to those who had gathered in his house, *Gē kpè* meaning, *Accra is huge*.

c. Referent: Alavanyo Tata (texts c. i. & c.ii.)

i. *Nyadodo: Alavanyo Tata be afɔ nye deka le Korlebu loo. / Alavanyo Tata says one of my legs is left at Korlebu.*

Story: *Alavanyo Tata was a huge and strong man but he was on the periphery of society. He got his daily bread as a porter but disaster struck when one of his legs was amputated at Korlebu hospital as a result of diabetes complications. He went from one town to the other singing very sorrowful songs that aroused the sympathy of people who gave him food and money. His favourite song was:*

<i>Nye ya mele afɔ deka dzi</i>	<i>I am on one leg</i>
<i>woya wole afɔ ve dzi</i>	<i>you are on two legs</i>
<i>wòkpom le koko</i>	<i>you see me and you laugh</i>
<i>ayoo, Mawue na</i>	<i>alright, it is God who has made it so</i>
<i>ayoo, Mawue na</i>	<i>alright, it is God who has made it so</i>

Another feature of Alavanyo Tata’s performance was to scream a complaint about the loss of his leg thus: ‘*Afɔ nye deka tsi Korlebu; midii nam loo!*’ which means *one of my legs is left at*

Korlebu; look for it for me 'lool!' The nyadodo in example c.i was engendered by this event.

ii. Nyadodo #15: Alavanyo Tata be wonya numaku woazo afe akua? / Alavanyo Tata says do you know how you will walk before you die?

A common practice of Alavanyo Tata was to pause either in the middle of a song or at the end of it to ask, especially, inquisitive and curious eyes, the rhetorical question: wonya numaku woazo afe akua?/ do you know how you will walk before you die?

This is the context of the nyadodo example (c.i.).

d. Referent: Akosiadzānɔ

Nyadodo: Akosiadzānɔ be ekakra menyɛ dɔdɔ o / Akosiadzānɔ says asking for it to be bought is not the same as ordering it (#29).

Story: The referent Akosiadzānɔ was a trader in cloth and other essentials. She usually went to Accra for her goods and sold the items in surrounding markets such as Kpeve, Logba, and sometimes Ho. As is the practice, many asked her to buy them items from the market. However, it was not common for all who asked for these items to give her money. These people nevertheless hoped for the fulfilment of their request. She managed to get the items for some of these people, but she realised this was affecting her business. One day, she could not buy the items for some who asked for them but did not give her money. When any of these came to ask for their item, she responded politely but

firmly, *ekakra menye dodo o*. This means, just asking for it to be bought is not the same as ordering it. Ordering (giving money) shows more commitment.

e. Referent: *Abiwu Kwami*

Nyadodo: Abiwu Kwami be obukubuku, ofendrefendre / Abiwu Kwami says obukubuku, ofendrefendre (# 31).

Story: *Abiwu Kwami was a renowned tsiami (linguist) to the chief of Have Etoe. During arbitration, the traditional court observed to their annoyance and displeasure that a witness was incoherent and crooked in his submissions. The displeasure was expressed in murmurs. Abiwu Kwami, before passing on a message to the witness, remarked derisively with the onomatopoeia: obukubuku, ofendrefendre.*

f. Referent: *Kpando davakuɔ*

Nyadodo: Kpando davakuɔ be bobooboi edo le Mawu nu nuta / Kpando lunatic says 'bobooboi' God has a lot of work (#33).

Story: *Kpando davakuɔ refers to a particular madman that resided in Kpando, a town in Eweme of the Volta Region. He was known to have made the market his home. On one of the very busy market days, he stood in the part of the market that was most crowded and screamed in typical Kpando dialect, bobooboi edo le Mawu nu nuta, ela wu ameyi le wo pete vo kafi awum. This means God has quite a task to execute. He has to kill all the people in the market before killing him the madman. The truncated form of this nyadodo, which is above, is rather common among the Ewe.*

g. Referent: *Kro Yawe*

Nyadodo: *Kro Yawe be evi nabu na. / Kro Yawe says a child must obey the mother. #34*

Story: She narrated the context for the above nyadodo text as emanating from very traumatising labour in child birth that she experienced. In the middle of one of such excruciating labour pains, she overheard the daughter of her neighbour misbehaving towards the mother by using very foul language. Kro Yawe amidst sobs, painfully cried, 'Eii! se da, enyoo?; de wodzie vi wòbuɔ na.' Literally meaning, Eii! Listen to that, is it good? A child must obey the mother. She told me that the traditional midwives at the scene, especially the one called Mama Fofonɔ broadcast the statement and to date the statement is attributed to her.

h. Referent: *Abiwu Ama*

Nyadodo: *Abiwu Ama be ne 'yɔ Ku be Efo tse awu wò, yɛe be Ku nàvo / Abiwu Ama says even if you call death Bother, he will kill you; call him Death and be free (#38).*

Story: The referent was a woman whose full name was Abiwu Ama Lena but was popularly known and called Abiwuma. She is described as a hardworking woman, affable but forthright and one of the few women who could stand up to men. The people described her as *nyɔnu sese, mevɔ na ame o, enya fe nkume wodoa*. Literally, she was a strong woman, who did not fear people; she spoke the face

*inhospitable and an enemy of progress. They saw the invitation as an opportunity not only to show-case their artistic prowess but to also enjoy more of the goodies including alcoholic beverages that the visitors had constantly lavished on the people. They thus honoured the invitation. Unfortunately, except for the sick, children and the aged who initially thought they missed the fun, almost all the citizens were shipped away as slaves. The reality of the situation dawned on the people rather too late. Davɔdzi, hearing about the unfortunate situation, remarked with some cynicism, nye nya medzea Atɔkɔtɔwo ŋu o, yata wɔle alea do, to show that if he had been taken seriously by the people of Atɔkɔ the story would have been different; they would have been safe. (Incidentally, the event forms the major plot in Kwakuvi Azasu's novel, *The Invitation*).*

j. Referent: Ape Kɔku

Nyadodo: Ape Kɔku be ne aha ku ahakpamɔ netɔɔ gbe. Ape Kɔku says once the palm-wine tree is dead; the wine-path will become bushy. #73

Story: The referent of this nyadodo was a very tall, dark, handsome and fairly prosperous young man. Apart from these qualities, Ape Kɔku, the referent, was also a great singer and "dzenɔ" (cantor) for the "Gabada" drumming group in his town. Despite these qualities and envious status in his community, he never had a successful marriage. He had many concubines. Then the worst happened when he was struck with an ailment through which he lost his voice; the

sickness further rendered him almost a destitute. None of the concubines, not even the women he had children with and could call wives were there for him. He became the responsibility of the family. Ape Kòku, in one of his sad moments lamented his condition and dejectedly said, *Nyatefee ne aha ku ahakpamò ne toò gbe* (It is true that once the palm-wine tree is dead, the path becomes bushy).

k. Referent: Agbozume fiafi

Nyadodo: Agbozume fiafi be xeyi wòhedzò xoxo ðe. / Agbozume thief says it has happened already (#87).

Story: The referent was a thief that was arrested, charged and sentenced. He was handcuffed and as the policemen started walking him towards the prison, the thief realised that he was to be taken through the big Agbozume market. Unfortunately, that day was the market day. He asked the policeman if indeed he was going to be walked through the market. When the officer responded in the affirmative, the thief sadly said, *xeyi wòhedzò xoxo ðe* (it has happened already).

l. Referent: Aklobò

Nyadodo: Aklobò be Akatsisia melolo na ye kple Avòkuđi o / Aklobò says the Akatsi market is not big enough for him and Avòkuđi. # 92

Story: Akatsi is one of the important towns in the Aṅlò traditional area. It is noted for its busy market that draws people from within and

outside Ghana. *Aklɔbɔ*, the referent in the *nyadodo* text, was the only lunatic who made the market place his home at that time. He got his daily bread from the market and he enjoyed this monopoly until the sudden arrival of a new lunatic, *Avɔkuɖi*. *Aklɔbɔ* felt threatened by this intruder, as he got into *Aklɔbɔ*'s way each time. In his frustration, *Aklɔbɔ* the referent in a rage bellowed, *Akatsisia melolo na nye kple Avɔkuɖi o*; meaning, the Akatsi market is not big enough to accommodate me and *Avɔkuɖi*. He desired absolute territorial monopoly and comfort hence the *nyadodo*.

m. Referent: **Edzam**

Nyadodo: Edzam be Edzam fe nu me le vo na Bom tɔ / Edzam says Edzam's mouth is different from Bom's mouth (# 97).

Story: *The referent's son, Bom, was dating a lady that he hoped to marry. His relationship with the lady was common knowledge to the father and the community as a whole. However, in quite an unclear happening, Edzam, the father, ended up in a serious relationship with the lady to the dismay and annoyance of the community members and the son Bom in particular. When Edzam was confronted by members of the family and friends on his conduct vis a vis the socio-cultural values of his people, he retorted: Edzam be nu me le vo na Bom tɔ. / Edzam's mouth is different from Bom's mouth.*

- n. Referent: *Keta tsukunɔ*

Nyadodo: Keta tsukunɔ be wɔ ɣutsu ya, nanee newɔ. / Keta lunatic says you this man, it is something you have done (#108).

Story: The physical setting of this nyadodo is the Catholic Church in Keta. The referent is a madman from Keta on one of his usual roaming round came to the huge and imposing chapel building in Keta. Upon seeing the crucified Jesus on the cross, he stood and fixed his gaze on the crucified Jesus and a few minutes later he shook his head and with a wry smile, he pointed his finger to the crucifix and exclaimed, wɔ ɣutsu ya, nanee newɔ / you this man, it is something you have done.

- o. Referent: **Simon**

Nyadodo: Simon be ame bubu fe afɔdzi de wɔnya kpɔa? / Simon says is it pleasant to watch somebody else's shit/faeces (#110)?

Story: The geographic setting was Hohoe. To keep the community clean, the elders of the town warned citizens to desist from defecating in the open. Anybody who flouted the order was to be severely punished by the chief. One day Simon went against the order and was arrested by the youth and taken to the Chief's palace. He denied the allegation so the elders asked the youth to take him to where he had defaecated to see the shit himself as proof of his culpability. Sensing

Story: *The referent is a woman who has some physical challenges; especially in the legs. This made her movement quite difficult and pathetic. She has children but not married to any of the men. There was a man who had similar challenges to those of the referent, Tinε. In fact he limped so badly in the leg that one could say his condition was worse than that of Tinε. In addition to the bad physical condition, the man was said to have come from a very poor family. When Tinε's hand was asked in marriage she refused but not offering any reasons initially. But when she seemed to be harassed she performed the nyadodo *nugbegblē eve menε tefe dεka o* which means *two bad things do not live at the same place in defence of her refusal.**

It must be stated that the above are not the only texts that fieldwork revealed as being composed out of specific circumstances. Some texts cannot be narrated here for ethical reasons. It is noted that these types involve eminent people who are venerated, while some are derived from experiences that the people refer to as *atam* that must not be brought into public domain. However, according to the wish and permission of some, the texts could be cited since their usage is public. The following are examples:

1. *Lume fia be menye agbalē dεke yanya o ta, ekeke Howusu do ko eya se yele. / Lume chief says since he is not educated whatever Howusu says he agrees with (#77).*

2. *Tɔgbi Sri be yewole dzea dom gake yefe ŋku le amlakoea dzi. / Tɔgbi Sri says they are chatting but his eyes are on the tax. (#76)*
3. *Kendo be nuɖe le yewo dzi wɔɔ, yeano vu ta me. / Kendo says something is happening to his heart, he wants to sit on top of a vehicle (#82).*

The role of the public or the community in the dissemination of oral literary texts is relevant and real to the dissemination of these *nyadodo* texts. Indeed, most of these *nyadodo* texts were originally performed not in the presence of a large crowd; the referents were either in a labour/delivery room with a midwife or two, on a sick bed or in a chat with just a few people and yet these few carried the statements out of their specific contexts to start the dissemination process. It is interesting to note that these ‘publishers’ are not described as *nyatolawo* or *nyadɔwɔlawo* as we saw earlier in the case of *nyatoto* in chapter three.

They Normally Say So

In addition to specific life events that have evoked some *nyadodo* texts, other texts follow the criterion where the referent is known to have displayed fondness for a particular statement/saying (Yankah, 1989). In contrast to the situation in the first category, it was difficult to locate the texts within ‘little stories’ in this second category of composers. Some of these are like proverbs (*lododo*) that may have been recreated and have metamorphosed into *nyadodo* where the statement is no longer ascribed to the elders,

'Spokesman' or an imaginary human but to a real individual. For example, the Ewe proverb: *Nyawuamee doa bometsila ame / Difficult (unmanageable) situations always make one look stupid*, sounds very much like the *nyadodo*: *Pati be nyawuamee nye veku dodoe. / Pati says difficult, (unmanageable) situations lead to the exposure of one's testicles* (#19). This situation may appear paradoxical since it is more common to ascribe individual artistic efforts to the community rather than the reverse. However, this irony goes to support the view that communities have unique methods in evaluating and delineating their artistic forms.

Informants explained and described referents of the texts in this category as *yee gblɔ nɛ koŋ* or *eya koŋue nuɔ / doɔ sigbe*; meaning, s/he in particular normally says so. These are therefore statements that the referents have used so frequently that the particular *nyadodo* texts are attributed to them. However, the informants showed clearly that these *nyadodo* texts have their starting points from life experiences in comments such as *nu yiwo dzɔna le agbeme gbe siaa gbe yee woe be wɔagblɔ nya ma* or *nu kewo dzɔɔ le agbeme ana be ame de nado nya de be yeadee afia*. These mean literally, *things which happen in life everyday have made him/her to say the word or things that are happening in life can make somebody say some word in order to express the experience*. The texts are therefore performed in particular contexts that have relevance in shaping the lives of the people and offering

their composers as well as the larger community a valuable channel to interrogate and evaluate their day to day social and cultural activities. The following illustrate the type:

1. *Abra Kototsi be ekewoe / Abra Kototsi says these ones (#36).*
2. *Kofi Dodo be etsie kuwo ko. / Kofi Dodo says these things only (#17).*
3. *Tu Kasi be ele wo gbo / Tu Kasi says it is up to them (#51).*
4. *Togbi Doku be I see / Togbi Doku says 'I see' (#80).*
5. *Eso be egie ko mele / Eso says this is where I am (#88).*
6. *Adzovino be mayia / Adzovino says let me go (# 2).*

They Used it Once

Another category of *nyadodo* text referents is where people know no other person but a particular referent to have ever used the text. These types also have not been posited within any known event or 'little story' in the lives of the referents or the community at large. Once again, the people described these types as *yee gblae kpɔ wova kaka* which literally means, *s/he was the one who once said it and it has come to spread* or *wobe eyae gblae gake eva kaka ame siaa ame vano gbɔgblɔm* meaning literally, *they say s/he has said it but it has spread for everybody to be saying*. The texts below follow this pattern.

1. *Larpe be nyawuame ta wotsoɔ kpɔxa gbɔ faa gava nɔ nɔ nye le xɔme / Larpe says it is matters-beyond-one that makes you*

- to start farting in a room, immediately after visiting the toilet (# 45).*
2. *Dzambo be xexeme dze abi, evuvu magaku o. / Dzambo says the world has ulcer, it is chipped away, it cannot heal (# 32).*
 3. *Mawule be ati wo koe. / Mawule says they will surely be fed up (#42).*
 4. *Dzam Kofi be ne meku o ko, adu nutsitsriwò wo petee. / Dzam Kofi says if you don't die you will eat all that you are allergic to (# 44).*

Words Are Put Into Their Mouths

Apart from the three categories exemplified above, the research has revealed another type that can be classified differently. The delineation of referents in this category is dependent on the idiosyncrasies, peculiar or unique disposition of the referents. It is similar to the 'Spokesman Technique' that has been associated with *nyadodo* (proverb) among the Ewe. The category is also similar to Yankah's (1989:162) Source formula of Akan proverbs where the referents include animals and plants who 'say' proverbs. But the difference in this case is that *nyadodo* texts are attributed to active human participants in the incidents that engendered the text and not non-humans. It is worth noting that most of these texts are those that have lunatics / the mentally challenged (*tsukunò / adavakuò*) as their referents. The statements/words have been 'put into their mouths'.

Nyadodo compositions by the *aɖavato* / *aɖavakuɔ* or *tsukunɔ* are all included in the texts categorised under lunatic referents. They have been placed in this category, first, because of their unique disposition and status as defined by the Ewe. Also, these are people who are usually regarded as not ‘normal’, incapable of making sense and therefore should not be taken seriously. Nevertheless, data show that their *nyadodo* embed the very interesting and insightful statements about life. The following text illustrates this unique quality: *Xɔxɔe ɖavakuɔ be wometsɔɔ ɲlɔmenya ɖia kɔ o. / Xɔxɔe lunatic says you don't joke with issues of the vagina* (#53).

The referent, *Xɔxɔe ɖavakuɔ*, came to be associated with this *nyadodo* because of the display of a particular demeanour that is characteristic of mad persons. He wore threadbare pants that obviously did not help cover his nakedness. As he walked the street of the town, he struggled albeit unsuccessfully to cover his nakedness by pulling the pants over his buttocks and genitalia.

Another example is expressed in text (#60) thus: *Afife tsukunɔ be aɖavadzede nyo, gake afɔ yi le eɲuti la koe de fu / Afife lunatic says to be a lunatic is good but the only problem with it is the walking*. This text has a similar explanation to the example above. The mentally challenged, *Afife tsukunɔ*, continually walked the streets of the town at a quick but regular speed. He sometimes interspersed the activity with jogging. This behaviour was constant and exhibited throughout the day resulting in exertion and profuse sweating.

Text # 68, *Akatsi tsukunɔ be yewo katã yewo ku tsu gake Yevugboma to ya gbome / Akatsi lunatic says they are all mad but the case of Yevugboma is extraordinary* compares the degree of mental illness of two persons, *Akatsi tsukunɔ* and *Yevugboma*. The two suffer similarly as far as mental ill-health is concerned but the case of the one from Akatsi seems to be less severe compared to that of *Yevugboma*. This comparison is based on how each exhibits the features of their condition.

Dialectal Evidence

Analyses so far point to the fact that evidence outside the text through specific life stories and general life experiences are important tools in delineating authors for *nyadodo* and linking artistic works to the world of their composers. However, aside these, linguistic evidence can guide not only the linguistic interpretation but also contribute to the semantic interpretation of the texts (Dilley, 2004). In the segment that follows then, *nyadodo* texts will be analysed to show how linguistic items can guide our interpretation and confirmation of author imprint. Before the analysis is done, a brief discussion on dialect will be done to underscore its relevance in author delineation and context categorisation of *nyadodo*.

A dialect is the subdivision of a particular language referring to varieties which are grammatically, lexically as well as phonologically different from other varieties (Chambers & Trudgill, 2004; Aikhenvald, 2000). The study of dialects as an aspect of linguistics stems from the perception that no particular language which is spoken by a large number of people within a relatively wide territory can have completely homogenous linguistics features

in terms of grammar, lexicon, and phonology (Chambers & Trudgill, *ibid*; Aikhenvald, *ibid*). There are therefore observable differences that could be expressed in the grammar, lexicon, and sound system of the language. These differences are often informed by variables such as geographical, regional, gender as well as social factors (McGregor, 2009; Atakpa, 1997). This implies that one could notice linguistic differences in the variety of language spoken from one village to another. These varieties are however connected to one another in mutual intelligibility.

Considering the questions that the research seeks to answer, the analysis will focus on variation in lexical items within the context of geographical dialects. By studying variations in specific lexical items in relation to geographical dialects, the research would be able to map out and match specific *nyadodo* texts to particular groups of Eweland. This will help in tracing where a particular *nyadodo* text could have originated from. Such analysis will further help in authenticating the origin and referents of selected *nyadodo* texts thus helping us to provide an answer to the question on who the composers of *nyadodo* are.

As has been discussed in the section on the research setting, this study is concerned with the variety of Ewe spoken in Ghana only. This variant has sub-dialects, which include, Aɲlɔ, Avenɔ, Tɔɲu, Waci, Kpele, Dzodze, Kpedze, Dodome, Ho, Awudome, Peki, Aɲfɔe, Sovie and Kpando (Ansre, 2000; Duthie, 1996; Ameka, 1991). Each of these sub-dialects expresses a high degree of linguistic variations in their phonological, morphological, syntactic, tonal and intonational, as well as in lexical structures.

Lexical items constitute the content words (lexemes) of a language and they have been identified as essential in the determination of author and geographic space of texts. Evidence of dialect specific lexemes was identified in the NP of texts as follows:

The first lexical item we shall discuss is *ɔavakuɔ* as highlighted in the following texts.

1. *Kpando ɔavakuɔ be... /Kpando lunatic says... (#33).*
2. *Xɔxɔe ɔavakuɔ be.../ Xɔxɔe lunatic says... (#53).*
3. *Sabaɖu ɔavakuɔ be... / Sabaɖu lunatic says... (#62).*

Among the Ewe, mental disorder or ill-health is generally referred to as *aɖava* (*insanity, madness*). According to the *Ewe Encyclopedic Dictionary of Health* (2011), the insane person is described as:

...ne ame aɖe fe susu meli nyuie o eye mewɔna nu ɖe ame to dzi o la.... Dɔléle sia nana be amea wɔa nu abe ɖe menya naneke o ene. Le kpɔɖeɖu me, ate ŋu afo ɖi; aɖe amama anɔ tsatsam le ablɔwo kple aɖukpowo dzi...
(p4).

This literally means:

...if somebody's brain is not well and s/he does not behave the way people are supposed to....This sickness makes the one to behave as if s/he does not know anything. For example, s/he can be dirty; naked and roaming about on streets and on dunghills....

This means any person whose behaviour does not meet the socio-cultural standards of the Ewe could be described as mentally ill. Indeed,

among the Ewe, any deviation of a person from the norm will elicit such metaphoric comments as *mele ŋu o*, (*you are not awake*), *wo gamɔ da*, (*your trap has snapped*) or *ele te deka bla* (*you are tying a tuber of yam*). The dialectal variants of *adavato* include *tsukunɔ moyeto*, and *dzeavedzito*. Each of these however shows slight differences in degree of mental ill-health. A person is considered a *moyeto* if s/he has partial or slight mental ill-health. S/he is sometimes described as suffering from *adava lalɛ* (literally, *madness thin*) or *mogbegblɛ* (*bad face*), *mofuflui* (*face that is not steady*); a person who does not attach any seriousness to his actions. This person is a 'normal' human being but his behaviour does not measure up to societal expectations. We see such persons at social gatherings such as funerals and festivals; they are also found at drinking bars and are mostly uninvited guests at serious gatherings. Some of their basic characteristics include dancing (off beat most of the time), singing out of tune, making scathing remarks and generally acting out of context.

The *dzeavedzi* is the equivalence of the English term lunacy. It is a periodic mental disorder that a person suffers only with the appearance and certain positions of the full moon. The person's behaviour is sporadic and sometimes described as *dzinu dze dzi* (*the moon has fallen on him/her*).

Tsu or *adava* is described as the worst level of mental illness and it is believed among the Ewe that this stage is very difficult to manage. It must be stressed that this categorisation notwithstanding, the Ewe people refer to any behaviour that is not in consonance with societal expectations as *adavadzedze*

or *tsukuku*. In the data we find *tsukunɔ* and *aɔavakuɔ* used in the following *nyadodo* texts:

1. *Akatsi tsukunɔ be yetutu mefia xoxo hafi de afɔdzia be ne yetso ko ye ŋɔ nakɔ. / Akatsi lunatic says he cleaned himself before easing himself so that when he is done his front will be clear (# 59).*
2. *Keta tsukunɔ be gbeyigbe wɔtsiwo katā fe game nasɔ ko, gbemagbe yefe aɔava hā vɔvɔ ge. / Keta lunatic says the day all watches will indicate the same time that is the day he will be cured of his lunacy (#89).*
3. *Kpando aɔavakuɔ be bobooboi edɔ le Mawu ŋu. / Kpando lunatic says 'bobooboi' that God has a lot of work to do (# 33).*
4. *Xɔxɔe aɔavakuɔ be wometsɔɔ ŋlɔmenya dia kɔ o. / Xɔxɔe lunatic says you don't joke with issues of the vagina (# 53).*

Generally, the lexemes *aɔavakuɔ* and *tsukunɔ* are unique to specific geographic dialectal locations. The speakers of Eweme sub-dialect of Ewe will commonly use *aɔavakuɔ* or *aɔavato* rather than *tsukunɔ* which the Aŋlɔ and Tɔŋu sub-dialect speakers may use more often. We may assume that the realisation of these words in the data suggests that the user of the word belongs to the dialect or, at least, the word is used within that linguistic context. It also follows that the lexical items may help in tracing the spatial origin of the particular *nyadodo* in reference. It provokes questions such as,

‘does the name of the place mentioned in the *nyadodo* fall within the geographical location of the users of the Eweme variant of Ewe as the lexical item suggest?’ From the following examples, we observe the following:

Examples 1 and 2 associate the item *tsukunɔ* with Akatsi and Keta (towns in the Aɔlɔ traditional area), whereas, examples 3 and 4 associate it with Kpando and Xɔxɔe (Hohoe) in Eweme. Since both towns, Kpando and Xɔxɔe (Hohoe), express madness with the same lexical item, which is directly in contrast with what happens in the case of *tsukunɔ*, we can conclude that both towns (Kpando and Hohoe) use a particular variant of the Ewe language typically called Eweme. According to the Eweme dialect sub-classification that Ansre, (2000: 24) provides, Kpando dialect belongs to the Kpando-Ve cluster that comprises Akpini, Ve, Leklebi and Liati while Xɔxɔe (Hohoe) belongs to the Gbi-Awudome cluster that is composed of Gbi-Nyigbe (Peki), Awudome, Kpalime Tsate, and Bame. It is clear that the two towns (Kpando and Xɔxɔe) do not belong to the same dialect sub-groups. However, there is field evidence that both use the dialectal form *ɖavakuɔ* for mental ill-health like almost all the Eweme speakers of the Ewe language.

Thus, together with the author categorisation that has been discussed earlier, and linguistic evidence from the complement/statetment of *nyadodo* texts that we will analyse presently, we can support the claim that these texts have been created or originated by the referents from varying but specific geographic spaces.

Linguistic Evidence

The data have not shown any unique syntactic patterning in the verb complement for *nyadodo* however, there are examples of dialectal units that can point to the geographic space, gender and social group of *nyadodo* composers. The term *mefi*, (buttocks) in the complement of text #59 (*Akatsi tsukunɔ be yetutu mefia...*) above is mostly used by the south-eastern speakers of Ewe commonly referred to as the Aɲlɔ. The word *mefi*, which in this context can be glossed as anus in English, will normally be presented by Eweme people in dialectal variants such as *ɲlɔme, gbime or kpetefe* (Ansre, 2000: 25). Thus, *mefi*, being a typical Aɲlɔ word could serve as further evidence to support the fact that the *nyadodo* example originated from the speakers of the Aɲlɔ dialect. In the following examples we will find linguistic items in the complement that are typical of Eweme variants of Ewe.

1. *De Gaulle be do sigbe nezu fe. / De Gaulle says, say it and let it become a fine (#8).*
2. *Kofi Ansa be ɲati be vɔe deke mele o. / Kofi Ansa says there is no bad/ugly nose (#39).*
3. *Peki deɛ be aalimeɛ mi tsa da. / Peki person says it is your hip; throw it (#9).*
4. *Kpando deɛ be mako o tse, adu ladze. / Kpando person says even if you don't want to laugh, your teeth will show (# 10).*

Examples 1 and 2 present a very interesting situation. The NPs, **De Gaulle** and **Kofi Ansa** are nouns that do not clearly reveal the geographic context of the

referent since these are names that are common to all the linguistic groups of Ewe. However, in the complement of the texts we find the lexical item *ɲati* (*nose*) and the phrase *do sigbe* (*say that*) which are typical of the Eweme speakers. The Anlo would render these as *ɲoti* or *ɲotsi* and *gblɔ nenema* for *do sigbe*.

The phrase in examples 3... *tɔa da* (*throw it*) and the contrastive connector...*tse* (*but*) are Eweme variants of Standard Ewe ...*tso da* and ...*hã* respectively. The verb phrase *tɔa da* is typical of Gbi-Awudome cluster of Eweme speakers which includes Peki (Ansre, 2000) while the verb imperative in ...*tse*, *aɖu ladze* is an example of what Kpando speakers of Eweme dialect will offer in their everyday informal interactions. The Anlo group may say *tsoe da/tso da* for *tɔa da* and *hã, aɖu dzedze ge* for *tse, aɖu ladze*. The imperative *la—dze* (*will by all means show*) has been substituted for ...*dzedze ge*. We can therefore place the texts below in a particular geographic space of the Ewe.

The linguistic units are highlighted in the statements/complements for easy reference.

1. *Sakpo be ne ezu ganya ko miесе ge. / Sakpo says when it is a case of money we will hear it (#75). Anlo*
2. *Agbozume fiafi be xeyi wɔhedzɔ xo de. / Agbozume thief says but it has happened already (#87). Anlo*
3. *Eso be egie ko mele. / Eso says this is where I am (#88).*

Tɔɲu

In the above...*miese ge*, ...*xeyi wòhedzò xo de*, are both dialectal expressions that are associated more with the Ewe of southeastern Ghana referred to generally as Aɲlɔ. A performer of the text from Eweme is likely to say *miasee/mianesee*, (*we will hear it*) *eke wodzò xoxo de* (*since it has happened already*) respectively. Similarly, the phrase ...*egie ko mele* (*it is here I am*) which is Tɔɲu will be expressed as ...*efie ko mele* (*it is here I am*) by most speakers of the Eweme dialect. The NPs *Agbozume fiafi* and *Eso* in the texts together with the linguistic units in the statement, once again can point to the geographic origin of the texts. We can therefore conclude that there is enough evidence in the linguistic units of both the NP (the referent) and the statements, which can support our effort in mapping out the geographic setting or context of a *nyadodo* text in particular and oral literary texts in general. It will also therefore be possible to arrive at probable originators of these oral texts.

Apart from using grammatical units to support context and authorship claim, some *nyadodo* texts reveal lexical items that are gender specific. It has been noted that naming among the Ewe is quite complex and also espouse the people's world view and socio-cultural context. While some names may not easily be marked according to gender specificity, there are some which carry with it their gender types. For example, among the Ewe, the *dzidzinu xexlɛfianko* (*naming according to number*) *Mansa* is given to a baby-girl who comes immediately after two girls in succession. Its male equivalence is *Mensa* (Osei-Tutu, 2002: 118). A girl may be called *Mensa* only when the

name has become the family name (surname). The following *nyadodo* texts are examples.

1. *Tagā Mansa be nu nyuie mevɔ le Ablotsi o, ame koe kuɔ le gbɔ. / Tagā Mansa says good things do no get finished Abroad, it is human beings who die and leave the things (#22).*
2. *Gidisu Mensa be ame ɲutɔ be ɲkume aɗaɲu nɔɔ wozɔɔ kpeme. / Gidisu Mensa says it is the aesthetic in the face of the individual that makes him/her to walk in stone (#106).*

The NPs *Tagā Mansa* and *Gidisu Mensa* cannot be categorised as female or male respectively by their noun components alone since **Tagā** and **Gidisu** may be family names that are not gender specific. What therefore distinguishes example 1 as a female referent is **Mansa** while **Mensa** specifies male in the second example.

Gender delineation is also evidenced in the birth day names (*dzigberɲkɔwo*). It must be noted that these names are not family names. Texts that depict male authorship have nouns such as **Kɔsi** (male born on Sunday), **Kɔɗzo** (male born on Monday), **Kɔmla** (male born on Tuesday), **Kɔku** (male born on Wednesday), **Kofi** (male born on Friday), **Kwami** (male born on Saturday), while **Yawa** (female born on Thursday but sometimes in rapid speech also rendered as **Yawe**) and **Ama** (female born on Saturday) portray female composers. The texts below exhibit male authorship through birthday names.

1. *Tu Kɔsi be ele wo gbɔ. / Tu Kɔsi says it is up to them (#51).*
2. *Tu Kɔdzo be wòkpɔ nyawoe ke. / Tu Kɔdzo says you see these are the issues (#50).*
3. *Letebi Kɔmla be ne nua manyo ko, de wòagblè de dzi. / Letebi Kɔmla says if the thing will not be good, it will only worsen (#54).*
4. *Ape Kɔku be yemexie ame deke be nkume yie Gɛ o. / Ape Kɔku says he does not borrow anybody's face to travel with to Accra (#24).*

It is worth noting that the above male birthday names have their female equivalents as **Akɔsia / Kɔsiwɔ** (female born on Sunday), **Adzo/ Adzowɔ/ Adzoyo** (female born on Monday), **Abla/Abrā** (female born on Tuesday), **Akuwɔ/Akuyo** (female born on Wednesday), **Afi** (female born on Friday), **Ama/Ami/Ameyo** (female born on Saturday) represented in the data. The texts below are examples that have revealed female referent by birthday names.

1. *Hɔlū Yawe be ewiwonɔwe loo. / Hɔlū Yawe says mothers! (#72)*
2. *Abiwu Ama be ne 'yɔ Ku be Efo tse awu wɔ, yɔe be Ku nàvo. /Abiwu Ama says even if you call death Brother, he will kill you; call him Death and be free (#38).*

Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the research question that seeks to identify the composers of *nyadodo* texts and also to show the relationship between their life experiences as contexts generating *nyadodo* texts. It has been noted that there is a close affinity between the composition of literary texts and life in general; but in particular, life stories of composers are indispensable in the creative process of *nyadodo*. The analysis has also indicated that *nyadodo* texts have linguistic elements in the verb complement that can guide delineation and classification of origin and originators. We can conclude finally that *nyadodo* as a genre has exhibited the connectivity among text, texture and context all of which are necessary to genre interpretation (Dundes, 1980).

CHAPTER FIVE

TROPES IN *NYADODO* TEXTS

Introduction

In the previous chapter we examined the relevance of life stories in the composition of *nyadodo* texts. We also identified relevant linguistic items and discussed how these support specific life contexts in delineating and particularising the different authors of *nyadodo*. In the present chapter, we will be engaged with how words are organised in *nyadodo* texts for aesthetic function and the varying meanings that tropes provide in relation to some specific thought and world view of the Ewe. Analysis would be done within the frame of rhetorical-sociolinguistic analytical tool that has been coined by this researcher of selected *nyadodo* texts.

Tropes in *Nyadodo* Texts

The point has been made about the importance of tropes in enabling us to pay a more critical attention to a text and thus exploring the varied but important layers of meaning in a particular text. In essence, tropes act as a medium through which we discover a fresh view of life which is hidden in our “automated” everyday life (Acquah, 2012). Generally, *nyadodo* texts at first sight may appear so simple and basic that they may seem not to demand any literary analysis; however, it is worth noting that their literariness really manifests when used in proper contexts. The tropes will therefore be posited in Ewe socio-cultural contexts to help meaning derivation and understanding what the texts reveal about the Ewe.

In line with Di Yanni's (2002) analytic stages of artistic forms, *nyadodo* texts will be interpreted by observing tropes in the texts, the details, their connectivity and their possible meanings and how these are linked to the context of production. It must be pointed out that just as putting fine boarders among oral forms is daunting, so it is with meaning and thematic categorisation of oral texts. Yankah's (1989: 153) description of the multiplicity of meaning of Akan proverbs as *ebe des engyina faako, etu* (*The proverb does not stay at one place, it flies*) is applicable to *nyadodo* texts; we could therefore say that, *nyadodo des engyina faako, etu* (*nyadodo does not stay at one place, it flies*). Nevertheless, analysis of the selected texts has been organised broadly under thematic similarities taking into consideration the different types of tropes, their sources of derivation and the specific perspective of Ewe world they foreground. The most identified tropes that will be discussed are metaphor, personification, synecdoche, metonymy, hyperbole, irony, onomatopoeia, name and ideophone.

Metaphor

The trope that manifests most in the texts is metaphor. Its preponderance in the present data goes to support the view by some literary critics that metaphor is the 'mother' of all tropes and the most important of the five principal tropes—simile, metonymy, personification, and synecdoche (Murfin & Ray, 2003). While the device has been considered by some critics such as Cohen (1978) as lacking seriousness, frivolous and not connected to facts, other literary scholars such as Lakoff (1993), Fiurama (1995), Lakoff &

Johnson (2003) emphasise the aesthetic and functional relevance of metaphor to a text.

Just as the essence of metaphor is varied so it is with its definition. Murfin and Supryia (2003:260) for example explain metaphor as 'a trope that associates two distinct things; the representation of one thing by another'. The image, concept or activity that is used to represent something else is the vehicle while the thing being represented is the tenor. They further explain that in a single text, multiple and different *Vehicles* or different concepts and activities can be employed to represent the *Tenor*; such an occurrence is a mixed metaphor. They also distinguish between a direct metaphor and implied metaphor. In their explanation, a direct metaphor specifies both the tenor and vehicle in a metaphoric statement but in the case of an implied metaphor as the term suggests, only the vehicle is directly mentioned. The tenor is implied by the context of the statement. Leech (1973:151) on his part considers metaphor as 'hinging on the transfer of meaning where the figurative meaning is derived from the literal meaning....' Shuk-ling & Foong (2015) in their study of metaphor in electoral discourse of Hong Kong, explain the trope as 'a figure of speech that describe the characteristics of one entity, usually rather abstract in nature, in terms of certain attributes of another usually more tangible entity' (p.31). Metaphor is thus considered as a device that assists the individual to comprehend a complex issue using a familiar one. The explanation provided by Acquah (2012) seems to encapsulate all the important elements of metaphor that have been suggested above. Acquah explains metaphor thus:

This is a compressed analogy which involves a transfer of meaning from the word that properly possesses it to another word which belongs to some shared category of meaning.

...it is the substitution of a figurative expression for a literal or proper one based on a semblance or an analogy (p.102).

These explanations clearly show that metaphor has an element of indirection, surprise, disbelief, and 'pretence' and it also exhibits dissimilarity in similarity which Acquah (ibid) rightly refers to as an element of 'double-bind.' The device is also capable of revealing hidden truths for which reason Aristotle considers it as producing knowledge when we find ourselves 'midway between the unintelligible and the commonplace' (Acquah, 2012: 103).

According to Conceptual Metaphor Theorists (CMT), metaphor is a 'cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system' (Lakoff, 1993: 203). The main feature in this theory is analogy or mapping of one conceptual domain onto another. The domains are the *Source* and *Target* (Afreh, 2013: 123). For example, life and love are concepts whose understanding or meaning can be mapped onto the idea of a journey as we find expressed in many oral artistic forms of the Ewe. Among the Ewe, death is sometimes described in terms of making a journey to the land of the ancestors that is *eyi tɔgbeawo gbɔ* (*S/he has travelled to the grandfathers place*) or *Agume draiva kɔe dzoe* (*Agume driver has taken him/her away*) where *Agume* is a metaphorical representation of death. It is also common to refer to the whole idea of living in comments as *agbe mɔ zɔzɔ mele bɔbɔe o* (*the journey of life is not easy*). In these examples, the domain of Death and Life is the *Target*; these are mapped onto the concept of *Journey* which is the *Source*. In respect of this, we can consider metaphor as a linguistic mapping from a

Source domain to a *Target* domain. Death and Life are related to physical experiences but the Ewe conceptualisation of the two phenomena in terms of a journey, for example, influences the way the Ewe talk about them. Life as a journey expresses all the elements of journey-making: travellers, impediments, a destination and distance (Afreh, 2013). The *Target* domain is therefore the abstract subject that is being described, while the *Source* domain holds the more familiar or tangible metaphor that is perceived in some ways to resemble the target (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The CMT theory also emphasises the point that metaphor can be employed as an analogy that extends the meanings of concepts that we cannot feel or touch (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 1999). Indeed, everyday human experiences are full of abstracts that we try to conceptualise and foreground by ‘analogically extending conceptual structure from richer, experience-based domains to structure our understanding of relatively more abstract domains’ (Afreh, 2013: 122).

The domains of the *Target* and *Source* in CMT are similar to the Tenor / Vehicle explanation in the definitions by Murfin & Supriya (2003:260). The Tenor like the *Target* is what is being represented while the Vehicle and the *Target* represent the activity or the image that is used to represent something else. The concept of analogy and mapping is therefore present in the two explanations that are offered. These features are not different from those that are highlighted by proponents such as Turner (2006) of the Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT). This theory emphasises the multi-directional nature of four or more spaces and the mental process of conceptual integration or blending what arises by connecting and compressing different mental spaces. What this seems to explain about metaphor is that elements that are not

naturally compatible are transformed to unique structures that are plausible to the mind (Shuk-ling & Foong, *ibid*).

We can conclude therefore that metaphor states one thing (concept or activity) but invites us to understand it from a system that it operates. The system here will refer to the relationships that exist among the correspondences. It is a trope that is capable of providing varying interpretations since what it entails is underspecified. This shows that a metaphoric text can be negotiated among different interactants in a discourse. It can produce knowledge about a people's collective consciousness since the natural and physical environment of a people shapes their language.

Afreh's (2013) conclusion in her study of Space-to-time metaphors in Akan on the importance of a people's environment to metaphor creation, usage and meaning derivation is critical to trope analysis in the present research on *nyadodo*. She explains that since speakers of a language are 'attuned to things and phenomena that are characteristic of their habitat [...] they make use of these things and phenomena for the metaphorical comprehension and creation of their conceptual universe' (p.123). The development and conceptualisation of Ewe concepts or phenomena such as death, love, order, actions and their consequences, as well as time and space as would be revealed in the analysis will exhibit an interaction between the nature of their experience of the world and their culture. This view also emphasises and supports the role context plays in the interpretation of tropes in general; contrary to the view of some scholars on metaphor interpretation. The view by some proponents of Conceptual Metaphor Theory that since primary metaphors especially are simple and are related to experiences and

concepts that are common to all people they cannot be unique to a culture (Afreh, 2013). However, it has been amply demonstrated that primary metaphor which has been stressed as being universal can be as culturally determined as a complex metaphor is and this is as a result of the dynamic process of meaning-extension and the socio-physical experience (Afreh, *ibid*). Metaphor in specific and in general trope cognition and interpretation can therefore be said to be culture specific as will be demonstrated in the present analysis of *nyadodo* texts of the Ewe.

The elements of metaphor as discussed above are not peculiar to Akan or written languages. For example, in Ewe aesthetic view, metaphoric expressions are both direct and implied; direct metaphors are marked by structural expressions such as the following: *Mezu...* (*I have become...*), *Ezu...* (*It/he/she has become...*), *Menye* (*I am*) and *Nye...* (*I...*). Data show that metaphor is derived from many occurrences of everyday life of the Ewe and they express some of their existential and cosmogonic views. Analysis of metaphor will thus take into consideration metaphoric sources, the varied meanings they provide and their importance in concretising concepts in the world of the Ewe. The analysis will support cognitive linguists view that metaphors in particular or tropes in general elicit more than one meaning depending on the context (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, 1999) and that like the proverb *nyadodo* flies (Yankah, 1989). In the analysis, the presence of the particular structural type of metaphor that a text exhibit will be identified insofar as it supports the aesthetic and functional values of the text.

One recognisable source of metaphor in the data is the body parts of humans. Images about the use of these body parts such as the tooth, genitalia,

head, nose, and face on the surface are simply for specific natural usages. But they are complex metaphors since the texts are embedded with concepts that are culture-specific. The first of these concepts we shall consider is actions and their corresponding consequences. In *nyadodo* text #9, *Peki dee be aalimee mi tsa da!* (*Peki person says it is your hip; throw it!*), the hip (*alime*) is troped upon. Even though the Ewe will refer to the mid portion of most creatures, living and non-living as *alime*, the context of its usage here refers to that of human beings. *Alime (the hip)* has both aesthetic and functional values; it provides support to all humans no matter their social status. A weak hip either through illness or accident is of great concern and worry to the victim and relations. The hip can be 'thrown' or 'shaken' while walking, during dance performances, and during sexual activities. Throwing of *alime (the hip)* can elicit admiration or condemnation depending on variables such as gender, age, social status, intensity of the throw as well as context. For example, a male who throws his *alime (the hip)* may be given a feminine tag which may have a negative connotation among the Ewe. He may be considered a weakling or a morally depraved person (in recent times a homosexual). It is expected that a male would be rigid at the hip. On the other hand, a female must be supple at the hip and she is 'allowed' to throw her hip more than the male, but she must also do so in a socially acceptable manner and context. A daughter may thus be advised to desist from *alimedada (throwing the hip)* since this may mean she is unnecessarily 'advertising' herself to men. It was explained during fieldwork that even during the act of love-making where *alimedada (throwing the hip)* may

be required and desirable, it is not normally expected that a woman would throw her hip excessively since she may be morally evaluated as *nyonu gbeblē* (a bad woman) or a *hotedito* (a prostitute). This explanation shows the relevance of context in the analysis of oral artistic forms and *nyadodo* in particular.

Sometimes, however, some ignore these possible societal prohibitions with regard to the wanton use of the hip. In the *nyadodo* text under consideration, there is evidence that suggests that anyone who throws the hip irresponsibly must also bear the consequences thereof. The consequences may include evaluative comments such as *ēgblē* (you are spoilt/a whore) or *ele dadaa* (you are being proud). The use of the possessive marker /a/ and topicalizer /e/ in *a-(alime)-e* shows emphasis. The vowel /a/ does not only emphasise ownership of the hip but also through vowel quality of free production and elongation, the concept of persistence or continuity in the activity is stressed. The free flow of air in the articulation of the vowel sound /a/ also suggests a continuous length of time in advising against the behaviour, habit, attitude or action. Through the alveolar affricate /ts/ in *tša* and the voiced dental plosive sound /d/ in *da* together with the exclamatory mark // the degree and intensity of the throwing of the hip are concretised. Additionally, the strong emotional state of anger, resentment and frustration embedded in the trope are forcefully brought to us through these linguistic items. The image of a recalcitrant person who persists in a habit despite a strong disapproval is thus made concrete.

The statement, *aalimee mi tsa da!* (it is *YOUR* hip; throw it) metaphorically then refers to any untoward behaviour that is frowned on but not discontinued by any person. It is true that the hip belongs to the individual as presented in the initial sound /a/ in *aalime* but the hip must be used within the social rules and norms that are set to guide the proper conduct of the Ewe. The moral values of the Ewe people demand that the individual must eschew selfishness in the interest of the community as a whole (Gyekye, 1996). The metaphor also points to communal ‘policing’ of required standards of behaviour among the Ewe. This text may therefore be used to show distaste, for example, for a young person’s (females in particular, the researcher was told) refusal to heed the continuous and persistent advice of parents or adults in matters of moral concern. The consequences of such behaviour are implied in *tsa da!* That is taking full responsibility for being notorious and recalcitrant; the Anlo will express the consequences as *nano nu ayɔ* (*face it to its logical end*). The text therefore exhibits analogy between the Ewe concepts of the hip and throwing of things; the Ewe conceptualisation of the body part, the hip, is thus foregrounded in the various meanings that *da* (throw) suggests. In the present context of use the concept of ‘throwing’ is perceived as a reckless activity and therefore the performance of this *nyadodo* text may suggest a negative reward and also portend an unpleasant future for the individual. It is worth revealing that the metaphor does not specify its tenor and vehicle in an obvious manner. The vehicle *alime* (*hip*) is understood in the general context of Ewe community norms and individual value systems.

Nyadodo text #53 which is attributed to a lunatic says that ... *wometsɔɔ ɲlɔmenya ɖia kɔ o* (*you don't joke with issues of the vagina*) is derived from a very intimate part of the female body. Even though *ɲlɔme* can refer to both the anus and the vagina especially among the Gbi cluster of Eweme speakers of Ewe where this text emanates, fieldwork shows that in the context of this particular *nyadodo ɲlɔme* is the vagina. Once again a complex metaphor form where context is necessary in its understanding is realised in this case. Among the Ewe intimate parts of the body such as the anus, vagina, penis and concepts such as death are tabooed and therefore treated in utmost decency and awe. For example, to avert social rebuke for direct reference to these parts in a discourse, a speaker is required to *trɔ asi le nya ɲuti* (*turn your hand around the word*) or *de ba mo na nya la* (*put mud on the face of the word*) that is to employ euphemism instead. Euphemism therefore acts as a filter that purifies and aims at decorum and politeness (Yankah, 1991). The sexual organ of the female is thus sometimes euphemistically referred to as *mamagā* (*big/great grandmother*) or *nyɔnume* (*inside of woman*) while the penis is labelled as *agane/dzidegbe* (*scorpion*), *amegā* (*big man*), *ga* (*iron/metal*), *kpo* (*club*) or simply *ɲutsu* (*man*). Among the Ewe as it may be in most Ghanaian cultures, it is inestimably embarrassing and shameful to see the private part of a person, especially a woman inadvertently or otherwise. It is not surprising that women, no matter the age or social standing, are enjoined to consciously cover their private parts.

This, according to Tɔgbui Doklo Akumsa VI, chief of Adume-Avenɔfedo, explains why in most Ewe communities women are debarred from or cautioned against their involvement in certain activities and vocations. Wrestling and *kente* weaving for example until recently, used to be the preserve of men. Wrestling requires display of agility of the limbs; swift movement or throwing of the legs which may result in the exposure of the genitals. Similarly, since the appropriate posture in weaving *kente* is for one to spread the legs, the exposure of the private parts is highly possible. Unlike women, men wear pair of shorts or trousers that covers their private parts.

The discussion above underscores the importance of surprise and disbelief as essential elements in a metaphor. It endorses the view that metaphor and indeed most tropes display a mock violation of cultural and societal norms and values. This is because intimate parts of the body are ‘taboo’ expressions which cannot be ordinarily mapped onto *kɔɖiɖi* (*playing*) or *kɔɖinya* (*playing matter*). But over here, the metaphor invites us to see this ‘strange’ association as foregrounding an important Ewe community value of decency and circumspection. The lexical item *ɲlɔmenya* is a representation of intimate, private/personal issues that must not be wantonly exposed or made privy to others. Indeed, this particular *nyadodo* was performed during the interview with Tɔgbɛ Keh XII of Gbi Wegbe of Eweme when the researcher tried seeking information on historical contexts of some *nyadodo* texts. When it became obvious that the interaction was becoming too inquisitorial and undesired, Tɔgbɛ Keh cautioned the researcher with the *nyadodo*: ...wometsɔɔ *ɲlɔmenya ɖia kɔ o* (*you don't joke with*

issues of the vagina). He went on to explain its metaphoric underpinning and also stressed its social or community relevance. It is a warning against getting too much involved in private matters of people because the consequences of entangling oneself in that type of web could be grave. The negation structure of the text *wome...o* also emphasises the need for circumspection when it comes to dealing with matters of other people.

This idea is carried on in another *nyadodo* (#115) where the referent Kpando *davakuɔ* warns that... *ame keke foa si le yebe ɲlɔme ɲu, Dagadu fe afeme ke yewoadoe se le* (*if anybody jokes with her vagina, they will both end up in Dagadu's house*). Dagadu is the title for the Paramountcy of Kpando Traditional Area. It is among the powerful and influential traditional areas in the Volta Region of Ghana. To be taken to his house/palace (*afeme*) means being arraigned before the highest and most powerful authority in the traditional area. This is necessary because of the seriousness of the offence—joking (*foa si*) with somebody's privacy (*ɲlɔme*). We are invited by the trope then to appreciate the gravity of the offence and therefore the level at which redress will be sought. The use of the high tonal inflection in the word *ké* may be indicative of the long distance to the chief's palace but it emphasises more, the hierarchical level at which the case will be handled. The complainant or the offended will ignore all the lower levels of authority such as the sub-chiefs, clan and family heads and go directly to the Paramount Chief, Dagadu. The obvious implication is that stiffer punishment will be meted out to the culprit at this level.

Closely related to the above is the body trope in *nyadodo* #117 which says, *Maame be futɔ fe ava panie le ɲlɔme* (*Maame says an enemy's penis is a needle in the vagina*). In the text, the analogy is made more explicit by situating *ɲlɔme* (*the vagina*) in its natural relationship with the penis (*ava*). The concept of the penis as a useful organ in procreation and provision of emotional satisfaction for both male and female is mapped onto the vagina. There is an implicit reference to the emotional satisfaction a woman derives from sexual relationships even though the act is equally critical in providing a socio-cultural need—a child—for the woman.

These benefits notwithstanding, the metaphor in the text suggests that it is not every man's penis that can provide the expected or desired satisfaction at all times. This is carried by the vehicle *panie le ɲlɔme* (*it is a needle in the vagina*) and the tenor *futɔ f'ava* (*the enemy's penis*). The needle can be of great benefit; but also a source of pain depending on the context in which it is used. The analogy here in the context of sexual gratification and procreation, displays an incongruity that stresses a degree of pain and dissatisfaction. The pain becomes even more unbearable because it is inflicted by an enemy.

The modifier *futɔ* (*enemy*) renders the trope characteristically ambiguous; it is possible to consider the woman also as the enemy whose possession is the penis as expressed in the phrase *futɔ f'ava* (*the enemy's penis*). It stands to reason that the hate in the woman for whatever reasons will not provide her with the necessary conducive emotional environment to derive the required benefits. In such a situation no matter the sexual prowess

of the man or the quality of the sexual activity, the woman will not be appreciative of it. The metaphor foregrounds how egoistic elements such as hate may erode benefits that can accrue from intimate relationships to the individual, a group or the community as a whole. Examples of how family feuds or political differences have eroded great achievements, relational practices among members to explain the import of the metaphor. Achievements or successes of individuals are not recognised; no matter how conspicuous or essential these efforts are because of animosities. The Ewe can also use another saying, *Koklo fe nya medzɔna le avakowo de o* (*The case of the fowl is never right in the land of the hawk*) to show the relationship between two enemies the fowl and the hawk.

It is not the penis only that has been troped upon; its close associate, the testicle (*veku*) has also been employed as a metaphor to drive home an important Ewe concept of life and its vicissitudes. In *nyadodo* #19 the referent presents a worrisome situation in the text: ...*nyawuamee nye veku dodoe* (...*it is circumstance beyond one that results in the exposure of the testicle*). The target word *nyawuamee* is mapped onto the source domain *veku dodoe* (*testicle that is exposed*). The exposure of the testicle will seem as if one is not conversant enough with Ewe societal norms or one lacks the capacity to understand the implications of such an action. Ironically, situations in the physical world such as incapacitation, poverty and relational inadequacies and other vexations of life can make one helpless and compelled to expose the testicle (*veku*). The trope element *veku dodoe* (*exposed testicle*) therefore foregrounds difficult and unmanageable situations

(*nyawuamee*) that would make one appear stupid or feel like a fool. The compulsion to behave in a particular way is emphasised through the emphatic *ye* that is represented in its short form *l'e* in *nyawuamee*. The Ewe proverb *nyawuamee doa bometsila ame* (*circumstance beyond one makes one stupid / a fool*) is similar in its metaphoric thrust to the *nyadodo* text under discussion. In such uncontrollable and desperate situations, the efforts of the individual to keep his head above water would prove futile and frustrating. Ironically, this metaphor is used to comfort, to reassure and to help a victim of such circumstances to keep a level headed posture. One needs to do so because according to *nyadodo* text #10: *Kpando dee be mako o tse, adu ladze* (*Kpando person says even if you don't want to laugh, the teeth will show*).

Laughing is an important expression of emotion that has relevance to the individual and the community as a whole. To the community it is a relational practice whose absence may connote a crack in its socialisation system. However, laughing must be aroused by some stimuli such as pleasant circumstances; one cannot go about laughing outside an appropriate context. In the text however norms of logic is violated because the person must laugh without the corresponding context or stimulus. When this happens, it means the individual is under some compulsion. The text seems to point to the fact that there will surely be trying moments in one's life that will compel one to pretend or act against logic. The pretence and compulsion are represented in *tse adu ladze* (*but the teeth will show*). The metaphor is similar to the

usual smile that accompanies the services of flight attendants which is normally described as the 'air hostess smiles.'

Another referent, *Laɔɔɛ*, seems to unify all the possible meanings that the metaphor in the texts above in his *nyadodo*, *nyawuame taa wotsoo kpɔxa gbɔ fãã gavanɔ ɔnyɛ le xɔmɛ* (*Matters-Beyond-One makes you to start farting in a room immediately after visiting the toilet*) (#45). The concept of defecating and where it must be done are locked up in the word, *kpɔxa* which is used by the Eweme people mostly for human waste or the lavatory. Here again we realise that norms of logic has been violated and this is implied in *gavanɔ ɔnyɛ le xɔmɛ* (...start farting in a room). In the traditional Ewe setting, farting is normally associated with the readiness of the body to excrete waste; therefore, one is advised to go to the lavatory immediately one starts farting. It is also associated with bad odour and that creates an embarrassing image. It is worth noting the fact that in most cases farting is not deliberate so the context may also not be appropriate. But once one visits *kpɔxa* (*the lavatory*) it is not expected that one would soon fart moreso in a room (*xɔmɛ*). But this logic is broken in the face of compelling life situations *nyawuame* (*the-matter-beyond one*). Therefore, the concept of farting, defaecating and what they mean are locked in the Ewe belief of the limitations of man in getting rid of 'smelly embarrassments' such as poverty, that one is bound to face in *kodzogbe*, the physical world (Fiagbedzi, 2005). It further emphasises the compulsion to behave in ways that are outside the norm because of prevailing circumstances.

It is worth noting that the texts which sound rather bawdy or 'raw' are composed by indeterminate authors such as *maame (somebody)*, units or groups in the community or those that are mentally challenged. This supports the view referred to earlier that protecting the image of one another is a communal responsibility. There is also a tacit metaphoric implication in the unmasking of these tabooed intimate parts or behaviour in the sense that they point to the realism of aspects of life.

Metaphor is also realised from other body parts that are not so intimate and are not considered to be dealing with sexual matters. These include the teeth, nose, head, face, and hair among others. These trope elements also reveal Ewe views on the need for one to take responsibility for whatever action one engages in. The Ewe saying, *nu si wode kotokumee wogaɖena tsoa eme (what you put into the pocket is what you bring out)* (Dzobo, 2006:10) supports the philosophical undertone of the concept that we will identify in these troped elements. Sometimes individuals, not necessarily out of dire necessity, may decide to take certain actions or persist in their habit/attitude though fully aware of the consequences. *Nyadodo* text #16 attributed to Maame says, *menye aɖusi ta yeagbe fu gba o (Maame says a bleeding gum will not stop her from cracking bones)*. We can discover the stubborn determination of the referent in the negation structure, *menye aɖusi ta yeagbe fu gba o*. The trope elements, *aɖusi* or *aɖuvee* is used especially by the Eweme speakers of Ewe for gingivitis or bleeding gum disease. It is a sickness that is normally associated with excruciating pain that is mostly aggravated by chewing hard

substances like bone (*fu*) and drinking cold liquids. Since the gum is inflamed, severe irritation is experienced whenever brushing or flossing of the teeth is done. Consequently, those that have the condition find it difficult to clean their mouth and they tend to experience bad oral odour. It therefore stands to reason that anyone who has this challenge would help herself or himself by avoiding meat-on-bone products, chilled liquids or anything that will trigger or aggravate the pain. To the contrary and quite surprisingly, the referent in this *nyadodo* is determined to do otherwise. The question one may ask is why the obstinacy? The answer lies in the possible satisfaction that may be derived from the bone. Apart from the provision of calcium, bone-marrow is a delicacy to some and such people could gnaw at a really hard bone to get to the marrow.

Metaphorically *adusi* draws attention to difficult, painful and even life threatening challenges that may confront an individual. In the Ewe world view the individual lives life striving to realise their potential in this mundane or physical world called *kodzogbe* (*poverty-savannah*) (Fiagbedzi, 2005). Even though the Ewe people consider their world as orderly, they also know that it can be disorganized at times through mishaps such as ill-health (such as *adusi*) and poverty. Life may be dry and harsh, seemingly empty, as implied in the fricative /f/ in *fu* (*bone*) or heavy with problems as symbolically represented in the voiced labial-velar stop /gb/ in the verb *gbagba* (*crack+crack*). Nevertheless, it is necessary for one to sometimes confront these challenges or bear them stoically. The heaviness of the task, the frequency and the degree of effort that is needed to get to the marrow (*the*

benefit) in the bone (*fu*) is therefore emphasised in the voiced quality of *gba* and its reduplication in *gbagba*. Together, *fu* (*bone*) and *gba + gba* emphasise the deep resolve to continue in a habit to hold on to something despite its corresponding heavy consequences.

This implied meaning is also exhibited in Amewosi's resolve to fight no matter the consequences in *nyadodo* #26 thus: ...*menye kɔkɔ fu anyi ta yeagbe vu wɔɔ* (*it is not because of being thrown down she will stop fighting*). Fighting implies the readiness of one to bear pain, humiliation and sometimes to live with indelible scars; but every one who engages in a fight does so with a motive, a driving force, or a motivation. In this present text, fighting carries a meaning that goes beyond the literal physical conflict to the strong determination to contend for recognition, self assertion, dignity and freedom from social constraints. The metaphor may be emphasising the value of individual enhancement self actualisation in the face of inconveniences. So, instead of the Ewe sayings, *Menye vɔvɔ na ŋku ta magbe ta du o* (*It is not because of fear of the eye I will not eat the head*) for example, *nyadodo* texts #16 and #26 about cracking bones and fighting respectively can be employed to show determination and persistence in the face of dire consequences.

It is worth stressing again the point that, even though the use of this *nyadodo* and indeed all others is not limited to any particular segment of the society one notes with interest that the referent to text #26 is a female (see author categorisation in Chapter Four). The text therefore supports the view that oral forms in general and *nyadodo* texts in particular are important

channels through which the vulnerable and muted segments such as women of Ewe society interrogate and challenge some inhibiting socio-cultural practices. For example, the resolve of a female to fight against inhibitions such as reticence is very much present in the metaphor being analysed here.

The idea of actions and their consequences is expressed in text #108 as well. Keta tsukunɔ is credited with the statement: ...wɔ̄ *ɲutsu ya nanee newɔ̄* (*you this man, it is something you have done*). The text emanates from the large crucifix of Jesus Christ which caught the attention and wonder of the referent. The lunatic may be overwhelmed with the huge cross, the horrible and agonising details of crucifixion of somebody with such an acclaimed power, status (the beloved son of God) and innocence as stressed by Christians. The referent could not understand how anybody with such credentials could suffer that kind of inhumane treatment or brutality. The illogicality of what the mentally challenged man saw thus resulted in his total conviction that ...wɔ̄ *ɲutsu ya nanee newɔ̄* (*you this man, it is something you have done*). Jesus should have committed an unpardonable offence. The English maxims, 'there is no smoke without fire' and 'you reap what you sow' rightly explain and support the metaphoric thrust in the *nyadodo* text of this referent. His conviction and the humour thereof are stressed in *nanee*. The word *nane* without the emphatic /ye/ or its short form /e/ or the phrase *anya wɔ̄* (*you might have done*) in place of *nanee newɔ̄* (*it is something you have done*) would have expressed some level of doubt; thereby minimising the sense of absolute conviction the original text expresses. The absolute conviction must be understood in the general Ewe

concept of individual behaviour and their enthusiasm in the pursuance of their ambition. The idea that is being stressed is that exercising caution is important otherwise in the end one's actions may turn to hurt one's own interest.

All the texts above manifest the Ewe view that acting thoughtlessly or without recourse to community norms and values may attract consequences that can affect the individual and the group as a whole. Communal life does not preclude individual values but the Ewe conceptualise community life as comprising the individual who is directly involved in social and moral roles and responsibilities that s/he must fulfill. Any person who engages in undesirable acts must be made to bear the full responsibility. The Ewe proverb: *gb̄ de ame fe nu gb̄ mefaa ta fe avi o* (*the goat that goes to spoil somebody's item in their house should not cry about its head*) encapsulates the message in the *nyadodo*. To wit, a culprit must have no other person to blame for his or her actions. An individual could be reminded about this fact through *nyadodo* text #110 thus: *...ame bubu fe af̄dzi de w̄nya kp̄na? / ...is it pleasant to look at somebody else's shit/faeces?*

From the spiritual view point, it is believed by the Ewe that an enemy could use the human excreta of his neighbour to cause sickness, misfortune or even death. The health, social and spiritual hazards that are associated with faeces therefore make it necessary for the Ewe to mask anything connected to faeces in euphemistic expressions. Thus, *m̄ kpoe dzi* (*the short road*), *amedefe* (*where humans go*), or *gbeme* (*the bush*) or *fia d̄d̄m* (*the chief has sent me*) are employed in most cases to mask anything related to

human excreta. Invectives that embed human waste, for example, *menye mi de nuwo me* (*I shit inside your mouth*) are highly abhorred and sanctioned.

To ask somebody else therefore to look at the shit of another person is not ordinarily acceptable. The metaphor in *ame bubu fe afɔdzi* (*somebody else's shit/faeces*) is concretised by the word *afɔdzi*. It symbolises any nasty or unacceptable behaviour that the community frowns on. The idea here is that the individual must be made to bear the consequences of engaging in any of these and not another person; for in the Ewe view, *glā tutɔ meɔua nu, glā tutɔ vāna o* (*the jaw that is not eating must not move instead of the one that is eating*). The interrogative form of the *nyadodo* really seeks to question the reversal of a community value and norm of the Ewe. It is important to note that the concept of communal values is very much present and strong enough to make the community take up the shame of an individual as we have seen in Chapter Four where referent delineation of *nyadodo* texts has been discussed. The achievements, failure success and wellbeing of the community depend on how well the individual lives (Gyekye, 1996). However, the analyses so far show that in some critical situations innocent family members, friends or the whole community must not be made to suffer for the impropriety of an individual or a group. For in the Ewe world view, despite the communal feeling, man as an individual has a personal will, an identity, that makes him unique as expressed in the proverb, *sabala le nogoo hā mɔ le eme* (*even though the onion is rounded there are spaces in it*). It is only logical and fair in the context of Ewe

norms and values that whoever takes an action detrimental to societal cohesion and survival must be held responsible. This is succinctly represented in *nyadodo* #129 that *Abalo be amenovi kuku nyo wu ame nuto / Abalo says the death of a friend/sibling is better than the death of oneself*. The metaphoric implication is carried by the word *amenovi* (*friend/sibling*) in contrast to *ame nuto* (*oneself*). As indicated earlier, among the Ewe, man is not an island to himself or herself; therefore, they must play their individual roles to maintain the continuous existence of the community. Ethical egoism (Gyekye, 1996) or the interest of the individual must be subsumed under the ethics of the community. However, the metaphor *amenovi kuku nyo wu ame nuto* (*the death of a friend/sibling is better than the death of oneself*) is applicable to situations where the natural instinct of self protection overrides the welfare of another person, no matter the closeness of the relationship. In that case the display of 'selfishness' would seem to be acceptable to the Ewe.

Apart from metaphor derived from body parts to underscore the essence of being responsible, the consumption of meat products have been troped upon as exemplified in texts #16 and #37. The Ewe also regard meat as an essential source of protein and as critical in the growth and development of humans; however, its use in *nyadodo* texts also connotes actions and their corresponding consequences. The referent Aba cautions in a popular *nyadodo* that: *...ne èle lã dami quu, do nku kpedœ tse dzi* (*if you are eating fatty meat remember also cough-sickness*) (#37). This text emanates from the environment of Eweme people where apart from domestic animals such as

birds, goats, pigs and sheep, game is hunted to provide protein. Sometimes, meat can be cooked and consumed without the usual accompanying carbohydrate meal; a practice that is referred to as *dzokpiti* or *dzokpo* by some Eweme communities. Indeed, sometimes, the quality of meal one takes is measured by the fatty content of meat served. Meat from any of the sources mentioned above can be fatty; referred to as *lā dami* in the text. The abuse of fatty meat is commonly acknowledged as posing serious threats to one's health and the text draws attention to *kpedæ* (*cough-sickness*) as one of those consequences of excessive consumption of fatty meat products.

Kpe is explained in *Ewe Encyclopedic Dictionary of Health* (2011) as a sickness that involves the difficulty in clearing the chest of sputum. The condition is also characterised by persistent and irritating cough that sounds *kpxəkpəxə*. There are different types of *kpedæ* such as *dzaŋkræ* (*whooping cough*), *kpevɔ/yɔmekpe* (*tuberculosis*), *kpefufui/kpefle* (*dry cough*). All these types of cough, apart from their health implications, have social and financial implications. It is commonly known that those who suffer persistent cough whether dry or wet feel embarrassed and are shunned by society. Indeed the Ewe terms *kpevɔ* (*evil cough*) or *yɔmekpe* (*grave cough*) for tuberculosis emphasise the life threatening nature of the disease, *kpedæ*.

It is in light of the above that the metaphoric relevance of the text is discussed. *Lā dami* (*fatty meat*) connotes very attractive and enticing life choices. The attendant consequences of any of these choices is foregrounded in *kpedæ* (*cough sickness*). Whether one would contract *dzaŋkræ*

(*whooping cough*), *kpeɔvɔ/yɔmekpe* (*tuberculosis*), or *kpeɔfufui/kpeɔfle* (*dry cough*), is totally an individual's decision. The idea here is not about total abstinence from eating meat; it is rather its excessive, continuous and thoughtless consumption. This is realised in the final vowel /-u/ in *ɔuu*. The /u/ is really a prolongation that takes the place of the progressive/continuous marker /m/ in Standard Ewe. It will render the first part of the text as ...ne *ɛle lā dami ɔum*, (*if you continuously eat fatty meat*). The gravity of the warning is reiterated in the word *tse* (*also*); to stress the need for one to match one's actions with the consequences therein and then take a decision. But whatever decision one takes is an individual one; the responsibility of the community is to remind or caution one about the repercussions through various means such as performance of a *nyadodo*.

It may seem the Ewe is so communal that individuality is completely absent. That may not be the case, since there are *nyadodo* texts to show that the Ewe also believe that the individual has an identity and s/he is real; therefore, '[their] individuality cannot be diminished by membership in a human community' (Gyekye, 1996:47). This is expressed in *nyadodo* #130 thus: *Dzam Kofi be ne yebe avɔ vu, meka ame 'ɔdeke o; ele yekple gblele dome / Dzam Kofi says if his cloth is torn, it is not the business of anybody; it is between him and the harmattan*. The metaphor is implied in the relationship between torn cloth (*avɔ vuvu*) and the hamarttan season (*gblele*). The essence of cloth (*avɔ*) is marched with conditions such as chilly, windy and dry weather that characterise *gblele* or

pepi (*the hamarttan*). These harsh conditions obligate the individual to cover himself with a thick whole piece of cloth not a torn/tattered one. It is also expected that a community that appreciates and extols values of generosity and sympathy would sympathise with a victim of the *hamarttan*. But the victim may employ the metaphor as a strategy to ward off gossips, *nyadɔewɔlawo* (*tale-tells*) whose intention may be to deride the victim, but not to really help him out of his predicament. The torn cloth (*avɔ vuvu*) and the *hamarttan* (*gblele/pepi*) represent life's vicissitudes. Even in these trying and challenging moments it may be better to keep to oneself, explains Mama Semanu Atubra of Have. The metaphor would thus be employed, she further explains, to stress the importance of private life of the individual and to warn against unnecessary involvement in other people's affairs. The trope, we may conclude, espouses an individual's desire to live a full life devoid of 'interference' in a community where there is always a tacit measuring of quality of character against its values. The proverb, *te maliati, kae blans* (*the yam shoot that will not climb up the yam stake gets itself entangled by wild vines*) (Dzobo, 2006: 23) sums up the idea.

Apart from the Ewe view on actions and their consequences which have been profusely expressed in *nyadodo* texts, the essence of the value of contentment is present in the data. The metaphors which represent this value are the types that can be referred to as synecdochic (Hanson, 1980). In the data, they are derived from parts of the body as exemplified in texts #24, #35, #39, and #98 to underscore various concepts, norms, individual and community values. Ape Kɔku's composition (#24) ...*yemexie ame deke*

be nkume yie Gɛ o (*he does not borrow anybody's face to travel to Accra*) is an example. The face (*nkume*) is the same as *mò* especially among the Anlo Ewe. The importance of face in the socio-cultural life of the Ewe is evidenced in its literal and metaphoric use in many of their artistic forms such as proverbs, songs, invectives and carvings, among others. The face can be derided, it can be praised, feared and it can be a source of power among others. The Ewe proverbs, *Ame fe nkume toe, menya liana o* (*The face of a human being is a hill, it is not easy to climb*), *Mo nyo meɖea du o* (*A beautiful face does not save a town*) and *Ijkume que wotoa ge do* (*You grow beard according to the shape of your face*) all have both artistic, socio-cultural and individual values to the Ewe. The face and the practice of borrowing foreground a deep Ewe social or relational relevance.

Because of circumstances such as lack of the desired quality or quantity for a need, one may be compelled to borrow (*ɔe nu*). Borrowing (*nyɔɔɔe*) and lending (*nudodo*) are thus permissible and indeed they are values that are encouraged among members of the Ewe community for social cohesion unless they are excessively done. It is also true that one cannot borrow every thing; for example the face as implied in the *nyadodo*: *...yemexie ame deke be nkume yie Gɛ o* (*...he does not borrow anybody's face to travel with to Accra*) implies that the face can neither be borrowed nor given out. The trope therefore foregrounds the Ewe thought that *ati keke le ame si eyae wotsɔa foa da* (*the stick that you have*

is what you use in hitting a snake). The representation is made more concrete through the link of the face with *Gɛ* (Accra), the destination to which the referent's face is travelling. Why Accra? Its importance as the seat of government and commercial nerve center of Ghana is greatly acknowledged. The general perception also is that Accra is the most beautiful city and considered as a place where the quality of life is high. Accra (*Gɛ*), for many, is therefore a place of contentment and prosperity; a place where the best emanates. Sometimes, there is also a deliberate attempt to classify those who have settled in or travelled to Accra as of higher and better social status than those in the rural areas. So, it is not surprising that today, there is a huge migration of people from the rural areas, including those from Ewe communities, of Ghana to Accra. All these enhance the metaphoric import of the text.

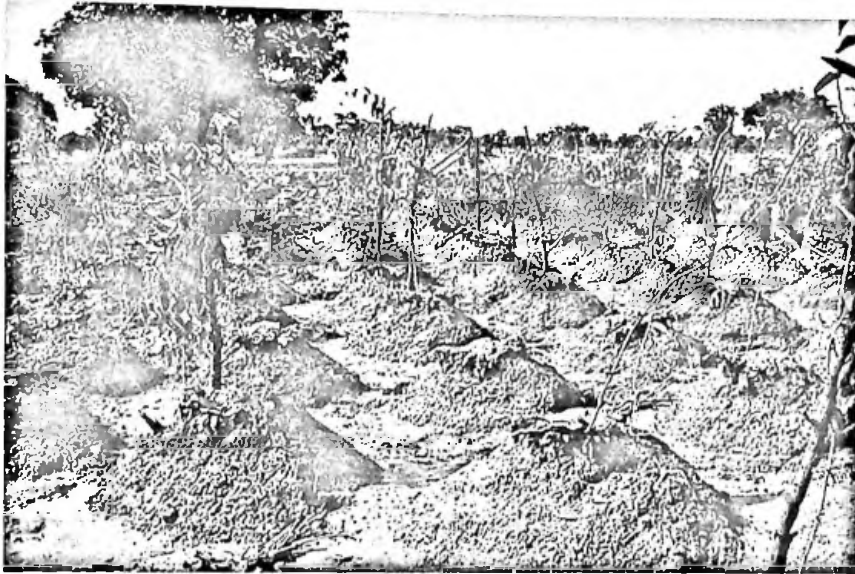
The importance of Accra therefore makes it imperative for anybody travelling there to present his or her best. Indeed, it is not uncommon for people to borrow items such as clothings, vehicle or money for example, to travel to Accra either to do business or to be part of its social life. Putting together the various activities that take place in Accra and its sheer population seem to be the reasons the referent Agbalɛ Sunday exclaims in *nyadodo* #4: *Gɛ kpɛ! (Accra is huge!)*.

One can borrow items to travel with to Accra but not the face as has been indicated. This is because the face is intimately attached to everybody's body; whether ugly or beautiful it is uniquely the possession of the individual and that is what s/he must take everywhere, including Accra. The metaphor of not borrowing the face of another person to Accra is to describe and concretise

the need for people to be content with and proud about what they have, for as the Ewe saying goes, *ame ηutæ yɔna efe akplékæ be akpléko* (*it is you yourself who will call the tiny 'akplé as big 'akplé*). Acceptance of self and the need for everybody to appreciate their individual capability and not to aspire after things that are naturally out of reach is the social value that is clearly and strongly marked in the metaphor. This *nyadodo* is therefore relevant in any context where there is envy, dissatisfaction, greed, pretence and low self esteem. All these are echoed also in the *nyadodo* text by Kofi Ansa as analysed below.

In *nyadodo* #39, Kofi Ansa, the referent, says *ηati be vɔe deke mele o*. (*Kofi Ansa says there is no bad/ugly nose*). The nose (*ηati*) like the face may have a natural usage but in the text above it is presented as a synecdochic metaphor which has both aesthetic and functional values for the Ewe. This protuberance (*ηati*) of any creature comes in varying sizes, lengths, width and intensity of beauty but none of these would normally compromise its primary function of breathing. In fact, the daughter of the referent, seventy-year old Babynɔ, revealed during an interview that her father, Kofi Ansa, usually performed this text where there is any sign of self-pity, low self esteem and a feeling of rejection. Kofi Ansa, the referent, and the users of this *nyadodo* for that matter would warn, caution or encourage through the performance of this particular text. Once the nose (*ηati*) is able to sustain the life of its owner, then irrespective of its beauty or defect it is worth having and cannot be said to be ugly or bad. The Ewe saying: *agbaka gɔglɔ meglɔ te o* (*the crooked inter-mound lanes do not make the yam crooked*)

stresses the idea in the metaphor. *Agbaka* is a set of fifty mounds of yam and between each of these set of mounds is a lane. These lanes are not always straight since there is no conscious effort to measure. Despite the crookedness of the lanes, the yams grow naturally straight down in the mounds.



Agbaka gɔglɔ meglɔ te o (the crooked inter-mound lanes do not make the yam also crooked)

In the same way, the worth of whatever is intricately linked to the very existence of the individual must not be evaluated on the basis of its aesthetic worth alone but more on its purpose. The moral value of contentment with what one is naturally endowed with for the sustenance of life is being presented here. In the same way the size, length or beauty of the nose (*ɲati*) should not mute its primary function and purpose. The trope, according to Tɔgbui Doklo Akumsa VI represents the usefulness of all human beings. The visibly weak and ugly have their worth as expressed in text #48 *Avate xɔdrɔ be ne yeku ko dɔ awu tagbatsutsuwo (Avate sore ridden patient says when s/he dies houseflies will be hungry)*. A popular

Borborbor song of the Ewe which goes thus: *Atia de menye, nyeme tsea ku o; gake medo vovli na nye fometwo* (I am a kind of tree, even though I don't bear fruits, I provide shade for my family members) also supports the fact that the value of self worth is prevalent among the Ewe and it undergirds aspects of their existence.

From the nose we move to another important part of the human body that has been troped—*adu* (the tooth) in text #98. Tagbo says, *yemeto adu de ame adeke fe bli nu o* (he developed teeth, not because of anybody's corn). As exemplified in earlier discussions, the teeth have natural uses such as functioning as the part responsible for biting and chewing. It is also used as a measure for beauty and age. In the text, *adu* (tooth) is mapped onto *bli* (corn) (also known as *kpeli* among the Eweme) is a grain that provides a variety of dishes including *wakple*, *abolo*, *ɔpkunu*, *dzemkple/akpledzē* and snacks such as *kpelitɔtɔe/zɔklale*, *kaklo*, and *kaklē* for the Ewe. Corn is also used for beverages like *aliha* which is served on all occasions. According to Dovlo (1997) it is the most used cereal among the Ewe and its relevance to the people is realised not only in its wide cultivation but also as a source of commercial activity among the people, and for religious purposes. Corn (*bli*) whether for food or as a source of wealth connotes life. The thrust of the metaphor is that of self-sufficiency and independence; a situation the Anlo Ewe will describe as *su go su*. The metaphor also exhibits a sense of pride and the value of deep satisfaction that must characterise the life of an individual. The Ewe would normally

encourage the individual in that regard through the performance of statements like *womeḍoa ŋku ḍe ametsusi fe ḍake ŋu o; ḍo ḍe wowua ame* (you do not rely on the meal of a co-wife; you will end up starving). Depend on your own endowments, seems to be the message.

Similarly, the text *Mama Nyoame be ḍmemakakpo, bángédé tse vivi na / Mama Nyoame says the stomach is not searched, 'bángédé' is also delicious* #126. The metaphoric thrust is revealed in *ḍmemakakpo* (the stomach is not searched) and *bángédé*. One of the favourite meals of the Ewe is 'amḍ 'kple' which is made from portions of cassava and corn dough or corn flour and cassava dough. *Bángédé* is a type of 'aklpe' that is made from purely cassava dough and commonly eaten with hot fresh pepper sauce. The meal which is similar to the type Eweme people call *gbedukpo* (refuse- to- eat- it -and- see) is common to some segments of Tɔŋu people. The researcher was informed that since *bángédé* is all starch, it is not considered highly nutritious. She explains further that out of lack, deprivation or sheer hunger *bángédé* may be eaten without any form of protein. Preparing and eating this type of *akple* is therefore not to satisfy an 'aesthetic' need; it may not taste delicious or appear inviting but it will provide a necessity of life, food. The Eweme term it as *gbedukpo* (refuse- to- eat- it- and- see) to underscore the idea of necessity in eating such a meal— it is a choice between life and death and once the individual chooses life then *bángédé* will become symbolically a delicious meal.

The metaphor, of the stomach not being searched, *dɔmemakakpɔ* stresses the need to do what is necessary for survival. Indeed, nobody literally searches through stomachs of people to find out the quality or quantity of what they have eaten. The point being stressed is that everybody will normally answer YES to the question: ‘Have you eaten?’ The stomach is not visible to ‘public’ eyes which will condemn or ridicule what has been deposited in it. Therefore, *dɔmemakakpɔ* is symbolic of whatever acceptable effort one is able to engage in to cover one’s shame. The moral value of appreciating the little one does to sustain life is foregrounded in the text. This is an important character trait that makes one a ‘human being’ among the Ewe. Tɔgbe Azieku explained that this text is suitable in encouraging those who regard their professions or vocations as demeaning to consider the seemingly inconsequential but critical benefit that they derive from such professions. No matter the quality of work, once it provides the individual with life sustenance, then it is worth describing as *evivi* (*it is tasty/delicious*). A common Ewe saying which encapsulates all the above is *wotona afi aɖe hã ɖona afe* (*you can pass somewhere to get home*), meaning wherever you pass to get home is not as crucial as getting home finally. It must be stressed that all these possible means and ways to life must be sanctioned by community moral values and norms.

There are *nyadodo* texts that explicate the Ewe belief in the natural order of things and what to do to ensure that they follow that plan in order to live a meaningful life. *Nyadodo* texts #12, #52, #54, #89, and #91 express this view about the Ewe people. In text #12 for example, Kɔtse Kɔku says

petro metɔ agawu o, deko wɔafia (...petrol is not used to fry cow-pea paste, it will only burn). The metaphor is derived from a traditional food, *agawu* (cow-pea paste) which is also known as *kose* or *aklā*. *Agawu* can be taken any time of the day as a snack or it can be added to *akatsa/ koko* (maize porridge) for breakfast (Dovlo, 1997). *Agawu* is made from cowpea cake and fried in oils such as coconut oil, kernel oil or recently in other types of plain /cooking oil on the market. It is not common to fry *agawu* in palm oil.

Edible oil may resemble petrol in colour and function; therefore, the uninformed may take one for the other if care is not taken. In fact the traditional Ewe lexeme for petrol and oily substances including edible oil is *ami*. Edible oil is also used to produce heat but petrol is more volatile and considered more dangerous than cooking oil, especially when exposed to naked fire. This shows that their natural functions cannot be substituted if one must achieve the expected result. Petrol is obviously purposely designed for a particular type of function—motor fuel; therefore, even though it is ‘oil’ (*ami*) it has its specific environment in which to operate. The point of contrast that is evidence here is the inedibility and inflammability of petrol. The highly inflammable nature of petrol makes it more dangerous than cooking oil as far as their interaction with fire is concerned. Ironically, fire must interact with cooking oil when frying *agawu*; without fire, the end result of the cow-pea paste will be something else. The use of petrol (deliberate or inadvertent) to fry *agawu* will end up in the negative reward, *deko wɔafia* (it will just burn). Both texts drive home an important value, orderliness, which is

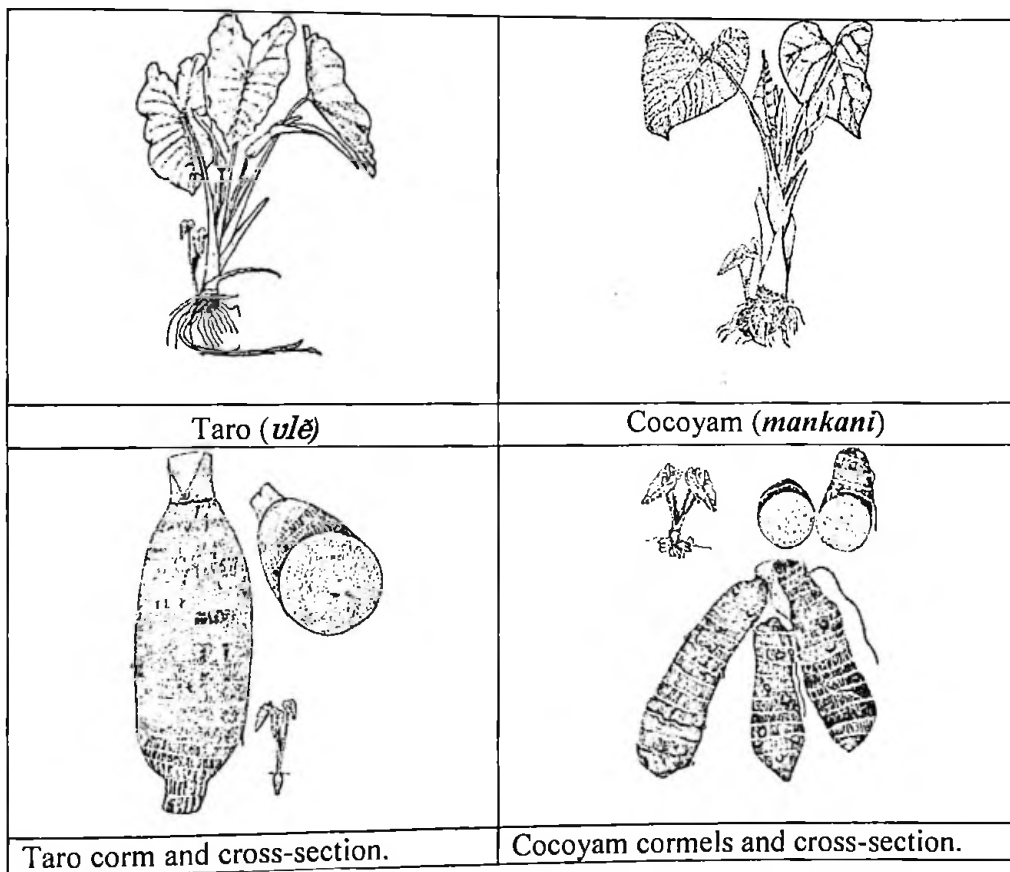
required of the individual to emphasise in all spheres of life if they want to succeed.

Togbe Anyigbanu's *nyadodo* that ... *yeaku afee ulē anyo fufu* (*it is only after his death that the taro will be okay for fufu*) (#52) is another metaphor that the Ewe use to foreground maintenance of the natural order of things. The trope is derived from the foodstuff (*ulē*) and meal (*fufu*) that the Eweme group of Ewe especially use. Fufu is a favourite meal that is made from roots, tubers, and corms such as cassava, yam, cocoyam and green/unripe plantain. These can be individually or in appropriate combinations be pounded into fufu; however, it must be pointed out that the starch content in these carbohydrates contributes immensely to the right texture and quality of fufu. Without the right consistency and starch content, fufu meal is described by the Ewe with the ideophonic word *flotofloto* or *wōbiwōbi* (*loose and not compact/bound*).

The metaphor is struck between the regular cocoyam (*mankani*) and the taro (*ulē* among the Ewe; *brōbe* or *kooko* among the Akan). Like the cocoyam (*mankani*), *ulē* can be boiled, fried or used for meals such as farm-house pottage (*dablu*) but the taro, (*ulē*) is not suitable for fufu (Doku, 1967). This is because taro does not contain enough starch content that is required for a good fufu meal. Any one who goes against this natural order will produce fufu *flotofloto* or *wōbiwōbi* (*loose and not compact/bound*).

The metaphor of *ulē* is again stressing the impossibility of reversing certain natural order and functions of things. To compel things or people to function differently from their natural capability may produce negative results

that could even become life threatening. The impossibility of this line of action is stressed in the words *yeaku afee (only after his death)* which means a situation that can happen over the dead body of the referent. Mama Semanu Atubra explains that the text highlights Ewe belief in individual destiny which is expressed in names like *Nunana* (Gift) which connotes a predestined and irreversible view. One must therefore accept what destiny offers.



Source: Lebot, V. (2009).

Tɔgbe Anyigbanu be yeaku afee ulē anyo fufu / Tɔgbe Anyigbanu says it is only after his death that the taro will be good for fufu (#52).

A mentally challenged person has composed an interesting *nyadodo* to illustrate the concept of impossibilities in *nyadodo* #89: ... *gbeyigbe watsiwo katā fe game nasɔ ko, gbemagbee yef̄ adava hā vɔvɔ ge*

(the day all watches will indicate similar time at the same time that is the day his mental ill-health will be gone). Here, accuracy of time is compared with the cure of mental sickness. Watches or clocks are inventions that have gained a much more usage over the Ewe indigenous ways of computing time. Watches come in varying sizes, colour, designs and quality but one thing that the mentally challenged person has noticed is that strictly speaking, it is impossible, presently, for any two or more watches or clocks no matter their common features (such as cost and quality) to be accurate with time; especially when manually set. There will always be some differences however minimal.

The veracity of the impossible phenomenon is emphasised in the second part of the metaphor where it is linked to the cure of the mentally challenged person. In the discussion on referent types in Chapter Four, it was pointed out that *tsukuku/adava* is normally regarded as a serious ill-health and quite difficult to cure. We must also see the seriousness of the message in the importance of being freed from such an embarrassing and disgraceful condition. No mentally ill person would wish to remain in that condition forever; so, to stress freedom from that condition as dependent on an obvious impossible happening is really interesting but also insightful. The metaphor invites us to understand the Ewe concept of individual differences, their capabilities and individual shortcomings just like watches that are never precise in announcing time. We may therefore conclude that what is necessary is for us to be conscious of these differences and accept them as part of life.

Yawotse Anani's *nyadodo...ame keke ye aku koe aku / ...the person who will die, will die* #125 explicates the concept of destiny and

the individuating traits in humans. Knowledge of the specific context of this text is briefly given here to aid understanding of the import of the message. Yaotse Anani had very bad knocked knees that made it difficult for him to walk with ease. This notwithstanding, he almost on daily basis drank himself to stupor. His stock-in-trade was to walk right in the middle of the busy and major road in the town, most of the time giving little or no attention to vehicular movement. Sometimes, vehicles had to dangerously manoeuvre in order to avoid any tragedy. This was a source of worry to the citizenry; especially, family members who cautioned or reprimanded Yaotse Anani. He would in jest but assuredly respond, '*I jerk myself, ame keke ye aku koe aku / I jerk myself; the person who will die, will die.*' True to his words, some of those who reprimanded him, who were thought to live a better and healthier life died much earlier than Yawotse.

The text is performed to drive home the Ewe concept of time; its relation to man and his activities in the physical world. Conceptualisation of time is thus closely linked to destiny; what happens to an individual is predetermined, the individual has very little or no power over what happens at any time. Death as noted earlier is inevitable and when it will be experienced by any individual is predetermined according to the world view of the Ewe. The word *koe* (*only*) adds depth to the idea of destiny. The metaphor is used to admonish individuals not to generalise since each member of the community is unique and in the Ewe world view, they play different roles. One can discern from the *nyadodo* a tone of a bluff which may suggest the idea of one throwing caution to the wind; but it also shows the strong belief in and dependence on destiny.

Dugoe's *nyadodo, ...fademe metuɔ ehawo o / ...what is planted later cannot catch up with the earlier ones* #134 also espouses a similar idea about destiny and its importance to the Ewe. The metaphor is derived from planting of seeds during farming. The tenor *fademe* refers to seeds that are replanted due to bad weather conditions or activities of rodents that might have caused their 'death.' For example, sometimes a maize farmer can lose some seeds due to torrential rains that occur immediately after planting. The practice will therefore result in having two groups of planted seeds—*fademe* and those that have survived the torrents, *ehawo*.

All things being equal, the growth of the *fademe* group of seeds will be hampered and will not be able to catch up with their counterparts. The metaphor seeks to drive home the concept of differences in the prosperity and progress of each individual. Once again we realise an aspect of Ewe world view of destiny (*dzogbese*) which orders the lives of each individual. The struggles in *kodzogbe (poverty savannah)* can hamper the progress of an individual and even though there may be the chance for the individual to restart, the Ewe believe that sometimes it is just impossible to catch up with those that have had smoother circumstances or beginnings. One may start a business, a project at the same time with colleagues; one may even access similar resources but one may become a *fademe* because of unforeseen circumstances. One's colleagues, *ehawo*, will definitely be ahead. The metaphor highlights the Ewe saying, *ame do ngo menya tuna o* (one who is ahead cannot be caught up with).

Acceptance of the natural order of things and impossibilities of life is a value that the Ewe express through *nyadodo* texts but they also believe in the efforts of humans in the acquisition of wealth or money. This value is expressed in *nyadodo* #79, *Dogã be gae nye dzo* (*Dogã says money is fire*). The value and importance of money or wealth to African communities general and to the Ewe in particular cannot be overemphasised. Among the Ewe, as it is among other communities in Ghana, money is the source of power, fame, respect, a luxurious life and generally, a means for a person to move up the social ladder. Poverty is considered a curse; so, everything possible is done to avoid being put in the categorised as poor. The comparison of money to fire (*dzo*) is thus relevant. Figuratively, money connotes splendour, power and vivacity just as how fire physically brings warmth and brightness to humans. Acquisition of money or wealth is thus important to the Ewe because it is expected that those who have money will be empowered to contribute to the welfare of the family, community and humanity at large. The Ewe proverb *Fue nã lã ñu wònya kpõna* (*It is the fur that makes the animal look beautiful* (Dzobo, 2006: 112) expresses a similar message.

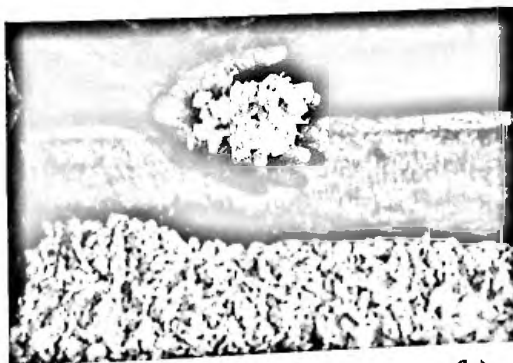
Just as money is *fire* to humans so is salt (*edze*) to them as presented in the text *Kõku Do be edzee nye ame / Kõku Do says salt is man* (#20). Generally, among the Ewe, salt (*edze*) symbolically represents food; thus, it is not uncommon to hear complaints such as *egbe kata nyemede dze nu me o* (*the whole of today I have not put salt in my mouth*), meaning s/he has not eaten throughout the day. Just like fire in the previous discussion

on wealth, *edze* is important to man in many ways; it energises and preserves. There is therefore a strong relationship between the tenor *edze* (*salt*) and the vehicle *ame* (*man*). Another meaning that the trope offers is that just as fire can be destructive, similarly money may provide one with power to destroy others.

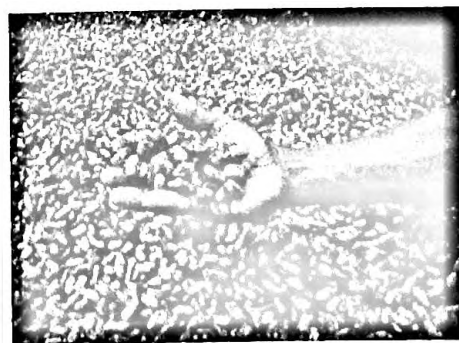
As noted above, there is evidence that can be found in *nyadodo* texts indicating the desire of the Ewe to acquire wealth for various reasons. However, there are also some principles that underly wealth acquisition. For example, hardwork, innovation and ingenuity are hallmarks to wealth acquisition. *Nyadodo* (#25), *Matias be koko mafumafu dada yanya yata yekpo ga do.* / (*Matias says it is because he knows how to sell wet cocoa that is why he is rich*) presents the value of being smart in business in order to acquire wealth. The trope element is derived from a particular cash crop, cocoa, farming that the Eweme people engage in. The men especially travel to cocoa growing areas such as Kadjebi, Asatu, Ahamansu in Ghana and sometimes to neighbouring countries such as Togo to cultivate large acres of cocoa. Through hardwork some of them have become very rich and influential. A critical look at the metaphor will reveal the value of smartness, ingenuity and doing what it takes at the right time to derive maximum benefit. Cocoa is usually sold and bought after it has been dried thoroughly; but sometimes, as fieldwork revealed, demand could be so high that it may become necessary and more profitable to sell half-dried cocoa beans. This way, the cocoa farmer is relieved of the drudgery and the long waiting that are associated with drying cocoa beans. The tedious processes in

drying cocoa beans are therefore transferred to the buyer so that the farmer could turn attention to the cultivation of more or doing other things.

Even though what the text manifests may seem to suggest dishonesty and therefore against the ethics of the Ewe, interviewees emphasised the positive posture that the text emphasises. They argue that since cheating is a behaviour that is reprimanded by the Ewe, it will not be common for anyone to boast about such a trait. Rather, what the text symbolises is that any time one is able to exhibit some sort of smartness and a sense of initiative or ingenuity that will inure to his or her benefit, that person can be said to be selling wet cocoa beans. Efo Emma Kottoh of Have quoted *nyadodo* #119 which says *Tɔgbe Kwami be ne susu maade abla o ko, afo ya kpe fu (...if the brain will not be fast then the legs will suffer)* to support the view on the positive meaning of the trope and therefore as an appropriate metaphor in motivating people towards action and thinking outside the box. The metaphor can thus be employed by those who have acquired wealth or achieved any laudable feat through smart but genuine means to register their exceptionality and pride.



Wet Cocoa beans (*Koko mafumafu*)



Dry Cocoa beans (*Koko fufu*)

stones or gravel on one's way. Nevertheless, the individual is expected to be successful in their endeavour; but this will depend on their efforts and the ingenious strategies they adopt or adapt to either avoid those rough sides of life or confront them. This is what *ame ɣuta fe ɣkume aɗaɣu nɔɔ* (*the art in one's face*) represents. Our conceptualisation of the artistic process is thus mapped onto life. The creative process involves patience, great thinking and a continual endeavour to achieve near perfection. These are some individual and community values that are demanded if one desires to be successful in life as expressed in the proverb: *Aɗaɣuwɔlae tsoa ati dzɔdzɔe le sreve titina* (*It is the wise and tactful person who can cut a straight twig in a patch of thorns*).

One of the elements of communal consciousness is that individual values must be exhibited to enhance community development. This means that the acknowledgement of individual resourcesfulness must be towards both self interest and communal growth. This value is expressed in the *nyadodo* text #135: *Dugoe be amatsi no le ame gbɔ mevɔɔ dɔ na ame o. / Dugoe says drinking medicine from somebody will not end your sickness*. Borrowing and lending as discussed earlier are acceptable practices in relational and communal activities of the Ewe. However, the unacceptability of borrowing over self development and self actualisation seem to be the central idea in the metaphor that is embedded in the text.

The metaphor of drinking medicine from another person, *amatsi no le ame gbɔ*, is mapped onto the cure of the ailments. One of the concerns in health care delivery recently is the abuse of medication, such as taking

medicine from people who are not experts/professionals. The obvious risk or consequence is that one may be take something which may not be appropriate and effective to the solution of the particular problem; therefore, the sickness (*dɔ*) will not be cured. Sometimes it may result in worse complications.

The metaphor is thus used to admonish and advise people who always depend on others to solve their problems. The value of self help or self direction is strongly emphasised in the metaphor. Ewe communal value of helping others is acceptable but the value of the individual relying on their own resources, strength and ingenuity to meet their needs is equally important. This idea of self help even in the acquisition of knowledge is also implied in the *nyadodo* #46 where the referent, Kpetse, states that *wometɔ na ame o, ame nɔtɔe nyaa / we do not tell people, one has to know it him/her self.*

Failure in life is considered a curse and thus not only wished away but confronted through pragmatic means. It is not surprising that there are genres such as *konyifahawo* (*songs of lamentation*) that the Ewe employ as a vent to express deep emotions about failure should it occur in their lives. The Ewe do not only need to devise strategies to combat these vicissitudes of life, they also need to encourage themselves, persevere and take bold steps to deal with such situations. *Nyadodo* #7, *Anku Kofi be yebe xe yeazu nɔkpetɔ ta yeazu fetɔ* (*Anku Kofi says he says rather than being a disgraceful person he will be a debtor*) comes handy in such trying moments. It is better to do something worthwhile or befitting even if it will mean dying than living a life of shame and disgrace *nɔkpetɔ*. One of the most difficult things

for most people is to borrow money from whatever source. But the feeling of shame, *ɲukpe*, which means the weighing down of the face (Dzobo, 2006) is a driving force for many to either push on or give up on life. The concept of *ɲukpe* connotes the inability of the individual who has failed in life, to go out into the public with his chest out. Such a person is always petrified of comments of the society since from the socio-cultural point of view he has failed not only himself; he has failed his family and society as well.

But in the text we are presented with the choice between *ɲukpetɔ* (*disgraceful person*) and *fetɔ* (*debtor*). Madam Georgina Abiti (popularly called Rhinenɔ), the wife of the referent, reported that her husband always insisted that even though borrowing in itself could be a difficult thing to do, it is more discreet than being unable to perform some socio-cultural and sometimes religious responsibilities that are a measure of masculinity among the Ewe. It is therefore more dignifying for him to borrow money to fulfil these social responsibilities such as receiving visitors, feeding a household, paying clan levies than being described shamefully by the community as *mènyè ɲutsu o* (*you are not a man*). Protecting the image and masculinity of the Ewe man is therefore at the core of their existence and this far outweighs their being labelled as a debtor. The Ewe endorse this idea in expressions such as *amenɔ agbe ɲuti efe nɔ na* (*it is the living who owes*).

Those who cannot be debtors resort to other means such as expressed in the *nyadodo* text: *Kumasi be amenɔgbe aɖibae; ne etee kpɔ woɖi nanyii* (*Kumasi says a living person is a pawpaw; if you feel it*

and it is ripe you eat it) (#101). The pawpaw (*adiba*) which is the vehicle in the metaphor is eaten either ripe or unripe as a snack. Apart from its visible signs such as orange, pink or red colouration, depending on the variety, one way to distinguish ripe pawpaw from the unripe is to feel the pawpaw with the fingers. When pawpaw fruit is really ripe, it is soft and easy to peel and eat; in fact, one may not always need a knife in such cases to open the ripe pawpaw. The vehicle, *adiba* and the tenor, a human being (*amenogbe*) provide an aspect of the socio-cultural view of the Ewe. In the same way that the pawpaw gives signs that manifest the state of being ripe, so it is with a person who could be manipulated or taken advantage of. Another fellow who is observant and smart could identify ‘soft spots’ of his or her victim and use it to great advantage. The trope is also used to warn people that it is not everybody that can be treated the same way; it is only the ‘ripe pawpaw’ types that can be manipulated.

One major means to wealth acquisition, success and good life is hardwork. This communal value of the Ewe is also an important index of the character of a person. A common Ewe proverb, *lā dū gbe yedea ami* (*it is the animal that grazes well that becomes fattened*) (Dzobo, 2006:98) shows the importance the Ewe attach to hardwork and success in life. In text #28 Kɔsi Kɔkɔ advises that *...da tukpɔ media asi o, edɔ wowɔ* (*...afro hair does not marry, it is work you must do*). The source of the trope in the text is linked to an important part of the body —the hair— which has both aesthetic and functional values for humans in general. The trope in the text is derived from a special type of hair style *da tukpɔ*. The hair

is deliberately kept to be dense, combed and shaped in a puffy rounded form. It is similar to the Afro style that was in vogue in the 1970's and even gaining currency lately. Even though the hairstyle was spotted by the youth in general—male and female—those who wore the style were considered trendy and enlightened. The importance of the metaphor of *da tukpɔ* is enhanced when compared with an important cultural institution of the Ewe, marriage. The institution of marriage is considered important and as such every normal adult is expected to marry. It elevates one in the society and makes a man for example, to attain the status of a responsible adult. The process of marriage involves a great deal of resources especially in a society that ideally regards the man as the head of a household and therefore the bread winner. While good looks could be an advantage for a suitor, the financial status of a man is crucial to a successful marriage. The responsibilities of a man before and after marriage far outweigh physical appearance. Thus, an Afro hairstyle may make a man trendy and dashing but the question is if that will be able to provide him with resources to pay for the dowry or meet all the necessary customary rights and then look after his family. The wearing of *da tukpɔ* therefore does not only connote the effort to acquire things that are fleeting and not lasting but also the desire of an individual to achieve greatness without the corresponding means (hardwork) to their achievement. For example, it is good to have children, houses, cars; it is good to desire to excel in any endeavour but all these must be supported with the means of achieving these goals in life.



Da tukpɔ media asi o, edɔ wowɔ / Afro hair does not marry, it is work you must do (#28).

Nyadodo #132 which states that *Gaxatse be ne yele nya tsi nawoe, megakpɔ yebe nkume o; golome gbɔ nyaa le / Gaxatse says when he is talking to you, do not look into his face; inside the pocket is where the matter lies* amply illustrates the role money plays in the life of the Ewe. The face is very important in all aspects of Ewe socialisation. Looking into the face during an interaction may connote different emotions, norms and values depending on the context. In the text above, the suggestion is that the outward looks are not as necessary as the content of the *pocket (golo me)*. The *pocket* represents money, what the Ewe informally sometimes refer to as *do da (send forth)*. If the pocket is not 'good' to support what one says or how one looks, then one may be considered weak. There is therefore the need for one to prepare adequately for life that is worth living. Uudidi fia in text #94 warns that *asigbalɔ medie Gɛ o (the empty hand does not go to Accra)* to underscore the value of money to the Ewe.

The tropes above also seem to emphasise the balance that must be struck between Ewe aesthetics and community values. Handsomeness goes

beyond the physical to the morally, socially and culturally beautiful as well (Fiagbedzi, 2005). One may wear the *Afro* to be abreast of time but without possessing and exhibiting the value of hardwork and resourcesfulness which are prerequisites to wealth acquisition, one would be told ...*da tukpɔ media asi o, edɔ wowɔ* (...*afro hair does not marry, it is work you must do*).

The absence of wealth can compel one to develop the undesired character trait of pretence as illustrated in the text: *Akotokpa be ga mele asiwo nebe nyɔnu nya mevivia yenu o. / Akotokpa says you don't have money so you say you don't like women #63*. The form of negation of the text enhances the metaphoric import. *Nyɔnu nya dodo* means flirting with a woman, a behaviour that is not so much applauded by the Ewe. Even during bachelorhood or when not married, a man is supposed to be discreet and to exhibit some decency as far as the number of ladies he dates. There is definitely a cost to being in a relationship with a woman let alone several of them at a time. It is a necessity that is enjoyed as indicated in *vivi* (*sweet*) but it carries with it some responsibilities that demand money (*ga*). When one lacks the resources for such engagements, the tendency is to pretend to be morally upright and condemn those involved in the practice, the text suggests. The metaphor therefore is a warning against pretence and it derides those who display that character trait. It also cautions against the tendency of giving flimsy excuses for incompetence. The Ewe proverb *Ahĩ a si dɔ nɔtsu gbegbe lae dzua mo lakpa nɛ* (*the girlfriend who*

Titsa Seniadza be egbeke woayo kaatu tsotso be wofa masee o tse elee gbɔ / Titsa Seniadza says the day they will call the broken liana Uncle but to no avail is coming (#128).

Foresightedness is another critical virtue that is extolled by the Ewe. A life without planning is considered not worth living. To be prepared means working hard. Some *nyadodo* texts are embedded with tropes that express this important value of the Ewe. In *nyadodo* #84 Kendo, the referent, says *yemenya gbenegbe woatsɔ yedɔ fia o, yeanyɔ vu ta me anyɔ apakamenanyɔ srɔ* (*Kendo says he doesn't know when he will be enstooled as a chief so he wants to sit on top of a vehicle to learn how to seat in a palanquin*) to illustrate the value of being prepared. The proverb, *Kpakpaxe be yemenya gbene fia ado se be ne woatsi tre de afɔ deka dzi o, yata yeanyɔ totɔ de afɔ deka dzi anyɔ srɔ* (*The duck says it does not know when the chief will come up with a law that everyone must stand on one leg, so it must start practising how to stand on its leg*) is similar to the *nyadodo* and emphasises its crucial role to the lives of the Ewe. The idea of foresightedness as an indispensable value of the Ewe is embedded in the trope on a regal activity, *apakamenanyɔ* (*sitting in a palanquin*). The palanquin (*apaka*) is regalia that connote power, splendour and authority. A chief can dance in a palanquin, jump and even engage in some 'acrobatic displays' in the palanquin (*apaka*); the dexterity with which a chief executes these activities is admired and applauded. However, a chief can exhibit his prowess only after learning

wodu (*Christoph Sowu says what you create is what you eat later*) may be used in similar contexts as explained above.

The idea of preparing for the future is valuable but the Ewe also emphasise the value of living within one's means as exemplified in text #70 *Davodzi be kotuga medoa 'sigba o* (*Davodzi says you do not depend on court fines to set up a business*). The troped element is taken from an aspect of judicature, the court which is borrowed as *kotu*. Its conciseness and appropriateness as a trope becomes active when seen in light of trading, *asigba* as well as the specific context that evoked the text (see Chapter Four). The law profession commands respect all over the world. An important source of this respect is their perceived enviable remuneration. However, the remuneration of the referent who was only a court clerk negates the perception which is held about the lucrateness of the law profession. The word *asigba* is derived from *asi* (*market*) and *agba* (*load*) which really refers to the size and magnitude of a business enterprise; especially, buying and selling. One needs an appreciable amount of capital to start, to own and operate a large and lucrative trading enterprise. But the exophoric as well as textual evidence implies that this cannot happen in some cases. The negation *me...o* structure in *medoa asigba o* (*does not set up a business*) supports the implied meaning of impossibility and deifficulty. It will be too ambitious and unwise to depend on meagre and unstable remuneration of a court clerk for an *asigba*. It stands to reason then, as the metaphor implies, that first, one must work within one's budget, for the Ewe as a people, consider simple life style, humility and cutting one's coat according to one's cloth important

values that the community desires from an individual. The second point is that even though ambition is an admirable trait, it must be posited within a realistic and stable frame and not on anything that is flickering, fleeting or unsustainable. Overestimation of one's means must be avoided because *exa bɔbɔe mekpɔa kpe o* (*the soft broom cannot sweep stones*). The metaphor is also sometimes used to caution, advise or reprimand people about lack of proper planning.

Data have shown that the Ewe formulate some *nyadodo* texts based on the fauna and flora in their environment and the activities thereof. An example of this is text #27 *Go Kɔmla be avu kankoo kple akpataku briwe meso o* (*Go Kɔmla says a youthful male dog is not comparable to an aged female hyena*). In this text a comparison is struck between *avu kankoo* (*a youthful male dog*) and *akpataku briwe* (*aged female hyena*). The text exhibits a mapping of the concept of male qualities (masculinity) onto that of (femininity) an aged female character. Among the Eweme people *kankoo* refers to a male youth. Even though maleness is generally marked by qualities such as freshness, agility, strength and virility, it is acknowledged that these characteristics are more pronounced in male youths. Because of this, they are sometimes described as *ɲutsu vu le lāmeawo* (*males with blood*) or those who have hot blood running through their body; they are expected therefore to exhibit bravery even in the face of imminent danger and generally to perform extraordinary feats. The tenor, *avu kankoo* (*a youthful male dog*) therefore possesses qualities that are similar to those of a male youth. The striking element in the metaphor is the

direct comparison between this youthful dog and *akpataku briwɛ* (the *aged female hyena*). The hyena (*akpataku* or *agbotoe*) and the dog (*avu*) share some characteristics. Both can run, kill and hunt and their outward features may make them look alike. In fact, the hyena (*akpataku*) is described by animal experts as a large dog-like species of animal that has a spotted skin, even though it is considered more to be in the cat family of animals.

These similarities notwithstanding, there are some features that set the hyena apart. It is agile, slim, very fast and it has an amazing energy that makes it to run long distances tirelessly; it is considered a hardy beast and so strong that it is known to be the only animal that can confront lions not for food but to fight. The jaws of the hyena are noted to be exceptionally strong and embedded in it are bone-crushing teeth that it uses to great advantage. The female hyena in particular has exceptional qualities that are important to the discussion on the import of the metaphor. It is reported that the female hyena has an unusual genitalia that outwardly resembles that of the male; a feature that makes some to describe it as a hemaphrodite. Also, the female hyena is known to be stronger and larger than the male counterpart. These features make her a better hunter than the male hyena for which reason she is given the accolade the ‘alpha predator’. All in all, the hyena and the dog may possess similar qualities but naturally, they belong to two different animal categories—the cat and the dog respectively; the hyena is larger, more muscular, stronger and more aggressive than the dog (*internet source; retrieved: 6/06/2016*). The Ewe saying that *avulenu meléa dzata o* (the *dog can catch everything but it cannot catch the lion*) then shows that if the hyena can confront the lion then the hyena is superior to the dog.

The reference to the hyena as *briwε* connotes weakness and fragility; she is referred to as *abriwa* among the northern Ewe and *nyagādedi* or *ablewɔ* among the southern Ewe. A woman is generally considered and treated as the weaker sex among the Ewe and not required to possess the qualities of men, let alone those that have been mentioned about youth male (*kankoo*). The use of the diminutive particle /ε / at the end of *abriwε* emphasises the degree of weakness, disrespect and inconsequential status of the old female hyena.

The outstanding qualities of the hyena and especially the female hyena above show that old age will not affect the hyena's superiority over the dog. The agility, strength, speed, intelligence and size of the female hyena may be affected by ageing but these will not make the youthful dog (*avu kankoo*) to measure up to it. In addition to this the dog and the hyena will naturally remain in their taxonomic classifications.

The import of the metaphor will be better appreciated when it is posited in the specific context of the referent, Go Kɔmla. He was described as a huge, strong and fearful disciplinarian in his community. He had a husky and thunderous voice that sent shivers down the spines of both adults and children; but he was feared more because he was credited with the possession of magical powers which he used in his role as an executioner. He performed this text in his old age when he thought he was losing respect and the awe around him. He reminded and cautioned anyone who wanted to take advantage of his very old age and physical weakness with the text.

The metaphor thus represents two categories of people; the young and those who once possessed certain qualities but now are weak because of age or infirmity. The young ones (*avu kankoo*) who have achieved greatness must not consider the aged (*akpataku briwe*) as not useful any more; these old ones may still possess some amount of potent qualities for the benefit of all. A tired, old, decimated hyena is no match for a youthful dog; thus, the metaphor also seems to emphasise the need for people to accept their natural individuality.



Hyena (*Akpataku/Agbotoe*)



Dog (*Avu*)

Go Kɔmla be avu kankoo kple akpataku briwe meso o | Go Kɔmla says a youthful male dog is not comparable to an aged female hyena (#27).

The youthful male dog may equal the female hyena only when it dies; an idea that is captured in the text: *Kɔsi Tawia be ne dadi meku o, afi matee kpɔ o (Kɔsi Tawia says if a cat is not dead, the mouse will not dare to feel it) (#58)* shares some similarities with *nyadodo* text #27. The natural enmity between the cat (*dadi*) and the mouse (*afi*) is the source of the trope in this text. The Ewe metaphorically refer to implacable enemies as *dadi kple afi (the cat and the mouse)*. The cat actually hunts for the

mouse and so it will be tragic and unwise for the mouse to willfully expose itself to the cat let alone getting close enough to touch or feel the cat. The phrase ... *afi matee kpɔ o* (*the mouse will not feel it*) is embedded with a negation *ma...o* which implies that this type of action from the mouse will be dangerous and out of the natural order of behaviour. The metaphor is a lamentation about falling from grace to grass; a condition that exposes one to ridicule. When the cat is dead then the mouse will be able to touch or play with it.

We have already analysed texts that reveal metaphors that stress keeping to the natural order of things as well as how life's circumstances could compel one to deviate from communal norms and values or behave in 'unnatural' ways. The world view of the Ewe that focuses on uncertainties of life is further illustrated in tropes that have been derived from another important vocation of the Eweme people—palm-wine tapping as exemplified in texts #73, #81 and #86. Palm-wine (*deha*) is tapped from the sap of the palm-tree. The process goes through a lot of stages including felling of the palm tree (or climbing in some areas) and making a hole in the sap to collect the wine. The first collection, which is commonly referred to as *akande*, is usually sweet and non-alcoholic but after a few days the alcoholic content of the wine is realised. Palmwine (*deha*) plays a very important socio-cultural role in the life of the Ewe. For example, it is critical in marriage ceremonies; it is also used during libation and funeral rites. Drinking palm-wine is mostly a social activity, even though it can be drunk alone by an individual. In text #73 Ape Kɔku the referent says, *ne aha ku ahakpamɔ netɔ gbe* (*once the palm-wine tree is dead; the wine-path becomes bushy*). The

trope is specifically derived from the stage where palmwine starts coming from the sap. It is common to find people going to the palmwine tapper's cottage from their farms and homes either to drink palmwine free of charge or to buy and retail. Most of the time, the generosity of the tapper, the quality of the wine and life span of the palm trees determine the frequency and number of visitors to the cottage. Usually, because of the large number of people who visit the cottage daily, the path is always busy but obviously, the human activities including walking to the wine cottage cease when the palm tree stops producing wine (*ne aha ku*). This will subsequently make the path to the cottage, *ahakpamɔ*, bushy.

The metaphor foregrounds the Ewe view about human beings and their attitude to prosperity and well being. The palm-wine connotes the period of prosperity in the life of a person when resources are available for people to enjoy or when one is capable of providing for others. This is the period the exhibition of friendship and camaraderie is most strong; but, when the wine ceases the tides change, then the path becomes bushy, *ahakpamɔ ato gbe* because nobody would have need for a palm tree that does not produce wine or in our metaphor, worthless person. The truism of the metaphor is enhanced through the expression *netoo gbe* meaning, *it does become bushy*. The Ewe proverbs, *avedodo tefe mesea dzogbe zua o* (*the thick forest sooner or later will become a grassland/savannah*) and when *ati dama lu xe ko, xewo dewo kana le ete* (*when a tree loses its fresh green leaves, birds desert it*) support this view of the Ewe.

Another view that the metaphor presents is that one must not always trust the friendship that people may exhibit; it may be dependent on what they will derive from the friendship and not what they can offer especially in hard times. There is the need therefore for circumspection and careful planning in life. *Nyadodo* text #96, *Kɔdzo Takuma be woɖui; woka (Kɔdzo Takuma says they have finished eating it; they have dispersed)* expresses a similar focus we find in *nyadodo* #73.



Ape Kɔku be ne aha ku ahakpamɔ netɔɔ gbe/ Ape Kɔku says once the palmwine-tree is dead; the wine-path becomes bushy (#73).

Another trope that derives its source from palm-wine tapping is text #86: *Peki de be wo ɲtɔe le ahaa kpaa gale efi trɔ noo (Peki person says you are the same person tapping the wine and stealing it to drink)*. As discussed above, palm-wine plays an important role in the socio-cultural activities of the Ewe. The Ewe, as it is among most societies, acknowledge the presence of social deviants like those who display a life of double standard. But through genres like *nyadodo* the Ewe show their abhorrence for such practices. The expression *wo ɲtɔe le ahaa kpaa gale*

efi trɔ noo is an ironic and paradoxical situation in which the wine tapper is said to be stealing what he has or owns and could use at will. It is ridiculous and paradoxical because generally, nobody steals his or her own possessions since stealing is basically the illegal possession or taking from another without permission. The surprise element is made more evident by the use of the second person singular pronoun *wɔ* (*you*) and the emphatic reflexive *ɲtɔe* (*yourself*). The wine tapper's *bona fide* status in relation to the wine is thus established but contrasted with *gale efi trɔ no* (*but stealing it to drink*). The tapper is thus wearing two garments; first, that of the rightful owner and second, that of the thief. It must be noted that even if the tapper is working for somebody (which is not an uncommon practice) he still has some level of ownership status that he could enjoy. This dual disposition is not positive and therefore it evokes a sense of dishonesty and a life based on double-standard. The Ewe will describe such a character as *tsɔe yi tsɔe gbɔ tɔ* (*send it away, and bring it back person*) or *wo ɲtɔe le dɔ gale lɔɔ* (*you exhibit for sale and buy it yourself*). The *nyadodo* text can therefore be employed to show distaste for and warn against incredulous and doubtful behaviour of a person. *Nyadodo* #55 emphasises the value of truthfulness in *Elefume be ahatso menɔ axadodro me o* (*Elefume says a lie does not reside in the armpit*). It is better for one to live a life of honesty, integrity and frankness. Even if practising any of these values comes with a price, as expressed in *nyadodo* #8 *do sigbe nezu fe* (*say it and let it become a fine*) the Ewe will applaud it.



Wo ɲtɔe le aha kpaɔ gale efi trɔ noo |you are the same person tapping the wine and stealing it to drink (#86).

Metaphor in some *nyadodo* texts foregrounds the Ewe view on other aspects of personal and interpersonal relations such as moderation, independence of the self, friendship and complacency. These are identified and discussed below. The first is Togbe Zoli's *nyadodo ...tu yeye flelawo, avawɔwɔ ne dzroɔ wo. /... those who have bought new guns, fighting wars interests them (#133)* which espouses the theme of moderation in life. The implied meaning in the text is represented in *tu yeye* (*new gun*) and *avawɔwɔ* (*fighting war*). The acquisition of anything new, for example, houses, clothes and cars elicits some excitement and so the tendency is for one to showcase or exhibit the achievement to others. In an interview with the referent, he offered the explanation that the metaphor can be compared with a child and his new toy-gun. The child will look for anything to shoot at even though the child may not even be conversant with the intricacies as far as the use of the gun is concerned. But the referent stressed that in most cases the duration of this excitement is limited.

The gun (*tu*) is an important weapon that every adult male wishes to possess for reasons such as hunting, defence and war. The *tu yeye flela* (*buyer of a new gun*) may desire to use the gun at all costs out of sheer excitement; not necessarily out of need. The temptation is to create or look for war (*ava*) or situations so that the new gun would become functional. The excitement and zeal would soon wane when the realities of the enthusiasm become evident. The metaphor is therefore a warning against over zealousness and thoughtless reaction to achievements and discoveries. It recommends practising the value of moderation in life because the Ewe know that *wometsòà fia na ame wotsòà fiati qua ye o* (*you do not win a case and dance with an axe*). For example, technology has brought us new and exciting discoveries but we must be careful to be moderate in their use.

Closely related to the above is the Ewe view on complacency as expressed in the *nyadodo* #139 thus: *Thaddeus Kòsi be ametsitsi nya ku edòe wuie / Thaddeus Kòsi says the old person who knows death will go hungry*. The metaphor rests on the comparison between an old person's knowledge about death and hunger. All things being equal, it is expected that the older person will die earlier than the younger one. It is common knowledge among the Ewe that whoever has reached a ripe age in his life might have worked hard and acquired enough of life's necessities such as clothing, shelter and some luxuries. At that point in the person's life, the temptation is to conclude that one has had enough that would take one to the end of their life on earth. One could decide not to work any more; some who are wealthy even boast in the metaphor that the distance between them and

poverty is very far. Any one who thinks this way is metaphorically described as *ametsitsi nya ku* (*the old person who knows death*).

The import of the metaphor becomes clear when one considers the power of destiny as determining human activities in the physical world. As we have noted, death as a phenomenon that is considered as so powerful that it can strike at any time. It is therefore ridiculous for any human being to determine how or when they will die. The impossibility is revealed in a line of a popular *konyifaha* (*song of lamentation*) of the Ewe thus: *nu si le ve yem yae nye be nye kugbe si nye menya o* (*what is hurting me is the lack of knowledge about the day I will die*). The point being stressed here is that even though old age is credited with some degree of wisdom and knowledge about a variety of things, this aspect of life (when to die) remains illusive to them. The *ametsitsi nya ku* (*the old person who knows death*) in the first place is deceiving him or her self. The other point in the metaphor is about what will happen to that old person; *edæ wuie* (*s/he will go hungry*) because they would have stopped working and would have exhausted what they had erroneously thought would suffice the short period left for them to live.

Going hungry connotes the possibility of ending up in disgrace and utter poverty. Interviewees on the import of the metaphor cited several cases where very wealthy people who boasted about their status and their possessions lived to regret their attitude as many of them, in extreme cases had to beg for their daily meals. The metaphor therefore emphasises the need for

the face of society because of some violation of communal norms and values. In that case the deviant is considered *ɲukpetɔ* (a disgraceful person) just as we saw earlier in the discussion. The behaviour of a partner in friendship can either promote the quality of character of its members or tarnish their image. The friend who is tainted by the deviant behaviour of the partner will be metaphorically referred to as having a crooked neck *kɔ glɔ*. This is because the Ewe also are aware that *afɔ gɔglɔe faa mi titina de dzɔdzɔea ɲuti* (it is the crooked leg which is smeared with faeces that smears it on the clean leg too). Since individuality is acknowledged in the Ewe socialisation system it will be better not to associate oneself with that group or person. The metaphor is thus stressing the need for the individual to be wary of bad friends. Associating with the right company, people who will not make your neck crooked but rather make you walk with your chest out is being stressed. Efo Kwakuvi Ababio, a former Director of Center for National Culture, Ho summarises the whole idea in another saying of the Ewe thus: *ɲku kpɔ nu kple to senu yae zɔ zɔhe* (the eye that sees and the ear that hears walk together as companions). Therefore, Kɔsigā Kɔku in *nyadodo* #56 sympathises with families or persons whose members or friends are fools thus: *numanyala nɔviwo, babaa na mi / Kɔsigā Kɔku says woe to siblings of a fool*. The idea is that one deviant in a family could bring disgrace to all others just like a bad friend could make the neck of his/her companion crooked.

We have so far discussed metaphor as the most prevalent trope in collected *nyadodo* texts and analysis of metaphor in these texts shows that

though a linguistic expression, they go beyond mere words. Metaphor enhances the aesthetic quality of the texts into expressing various aspects of the culture and world view of the Ewe. These metaphoric expressions have helped us to notice aspects of Ewe life through the surprising analogies and similarities that they bring to our attention. New meanings are hidden behind the literal ones thereby allowing us to see the connection between a particular event and the entire life of the Ewe. The discussion that follows will discuss other types of tropes such as personification, ideophone, question, paradox, metonymy, exaggeration and names that have been identified in the data.

Personification

Personification like many other tropes is generally considered as a type of metaphor because it also exhibits elements of comparison and animates the inanimate. In personification there is attribution of human qualities to inanimate objects in order to make them to be regarded as living things or human beings. In Ewe, personification is referred to as *gbetodonu* (*making human of things*). Data have revealed a few of this type of trope in texts: #32, #41 and #69. The world (*xexeme*) has been troped upon in text #32 thus: *Dzambo be xexeme dze abi, evuvu magaku o* (*Dzambo says the world has a sore, it is chipped away; it cannot heal*). The concept of *xexeme* (*the world*) is animated by giving it a health condition of human beings *dze abi* (*to have a sore*). *Abi* (*sore*) is a health condition that can be treated completely but some may take a long period to heal, while others could resist treatment. Those that become worse and are difficult to treat are referred to as *abi makumaku* (*sore that never dies*) or as *abi nyinyi* (*a*

activities of physical as well as spirit beings of the world (*xexeme*) can compel an individual to become a social deviant, supporting the Ewe saying that *vugbe nye wodea afɔ do* (*the beat of the drum determines how you move your foot*). Efo Yao Kissiedu explains that the personification is sometimes employed as a defence for unacceptable behaviour.

Death as we have discussed is a phenomenon that affects the continual existence of humans on earth. In *nyadodo* text #41 Dugoe warns that *dolehaya menye eku fe nkue gbā o* (*Dugoe says when you recover from a sickness it does not mean death is blind*). Death is personified as being blind; a health condition of humans or generally animates. One major route of death is sickness from which one could recover referred to in the text as *dolehaya*. Normally, when one recovers from a protracted illness the person is considered as engaging in a battle with death and coming out victorious. In such circumstances there is celebration of victory through performance of rituals to thank the benign spirit beings. The rituals are in a way to taunt death and to emphasise its powerlessness but the trope here suggests that when one recovers from sickness, it does not mean it is because death has lost its power (becoming blind to see humans).

Recovery from sickness *dolehaya* may connote an achievement and a seeming triumph over any dangerous or life threatening situation in life. An individual might attribute such achievements to their own bravery and smartness; but the second part of the trope *menye eku fe nkue gbā o* (*it is not because Death is blind*) negates and cautions against this feeling of bravado and importance. According to some interviewees, this text teaches

humility and warns against recklessness. The trope also points to another aspect of Ewe socio-cultural life which stresses the danger in taking things for granted. For example, one may persistently manipulate and cheat; engage in undesirable social behaviours and escape reprimanded; this may not mean that these deeds go unnoticed.

Ideophone

Literary and language experts such as Okpewho (1992), Killian-Hartz (2001) and Ameka (2001) have acknowledged ideophones as a near-universal feature of human language albeit difficult to define. Agyekum (2013) and Okpewho (1992) refer to ideophones in similar ways as 'idea-in-phone' and 'idea-in-sound' respectively. Dingemans (2011:25) perceives the trope as 'marked words that depict sensory image'. He explains in another discussion on ideophones that they are marked because they stand out from other words and are strikingly 'distinguished by their aberrant phonology' (Dingemans, 2012: 655).

Okpewho is of the view that ideophones are natural to oral literary forms since oral literature is word-of-mouth presentation that appeals to its audience through sounds of the words that reach the ears. This view is evident in the way the Ewe, for example, premise performer credibility and expertise on how pleasing the performance is to the ear. This may be expressed as *evivi na eto* (*it is sweet to the ear*) or *enya se* (*it is good to hear*).

Apart from the problem of definition of ideophones, according to Okpewho (ibid) and Ameka (ibid) ideophones are also difficult to demarcate. Nonetheless, Okpewho has identified three main types of ideophones which include single word type that makes adequate impact, those that are

multiplication of sounds and those that emanate from recognisable root verbs which makes them onomatopoeic. Ameka (ibid), has also categorised ideophones according to syntactic classes; such as declaratives, questions, imperatives and negative sentences. He identifies ideophones functioning as adjectives, intensifiers, adverbials, nominals as well as interjections as well as exhibiting phonological properties such as the 'breathy voice or a growl' which are not used in the main Ewe sound system. According to Ameka (ibid: 30-33) the basic features of ideophones include the following:

1. Final vowel types where the final vowel is lengthened for expressive purposes; for example the final vowel /o/ in *lotoo* (*big and round*) can be lengthened. For example *lotoooo* to express intensity.
2. Tonal register or ideophonic words can be varied to symbolise different kinds of meaning. For example, *lī lī lī* (*high tone*) will mean a sweet smell (eg. perfumes) while the same with a low tone will represent a very bad smell (eg. from dead rotten carcas).
3. Syllables of disyllabic ideophones can undergo permutation; for example, *tsakli* can become *klitsa* (rough surface).
4. Inherent repetitive structure without a monosyllabic form; eg. *nyanyaanya* (trembling).
5. Syntactic iteration or word repetition; eg. *blewu, blewu* (calm and soft).

From the discussions so far, it is clear that ideophones are words that rely on sounds or they are sound symbolisms that are employed to express aspects of events that can be experienced by the senses. The trope is difficult to define but it has form and features that could guide its identification and

analysis. Ideophones were initially thought as being present in narratives alone but it has been acknowledged that they occur in other genres as well. The various types of ideophones abound in songs, riddles and in *nyadodo* texts as well.

The current collection of *nyadodo* texts has revealed the presence of ideophones in the following texts: #30, #31, #62 and # 64, #124, #140 and #141. Analysis of these texts will show the type of ideophones and how features in a particular ideophone enhance the artistic and functional qualities of the texts. Analysis of the texts with ideophones will take cognisance of the broad Ewe language and referent contexts. This is necessary since like all other tropes, the analysis and classification of ideophones will be contextualised to underscore Dingemans's (2012) advice that one must look within the system itself so as to avoid importing preconceived categories during analysis.

The ideophone in text #30 *Gɛ̀koto be ahɔ̃puu* (*Gɛ̀koto says 'ahɔ̃ puu'*) is *ahɔ̃puu* which follows the word final vowel type. In this we will note the lengthening of the final vowel /u/sound to express the intensity of an idea. Nasal sounds in Ewe language are consonants such as /m/ /n/ /ny/and /ŋ/; however, Ewe oral vowels /i/ /ɔ/ /e/ /o/ /e/ /a/ /u/ can be nasalised with the diacritical sign or tilde /~/ as /ĩ/ /ɔ̃/ /ẽ/ /õ/ /ẽ/ /ã/ /ũ/ (Atakpa, 1997). These sounds are linguistically relevant since they can provide semantic, structural and lexical differences in the language. Apart from these functions, nasal sounds are effective literary elements that sometimes stress the intensity and level of bad or unpleasant smell that emits from rotten items (such as carcasses), dirty places among others. The expression of such unpleasantness is

supported with extra-linguistic or non-verbal signs such as pulling or holding the nose. Even though there are lexical items with the nasal sound /ʒ/ such as *ahʒne* (pigeon), *ahʒpuu* does not refer to any meaningful word in the language.

From the referent's life story it was revealed that the ideophone was used to show derision and aversion for violation of moral values such as honesty. The nasal sound /ʒ/ therefore presents to us the nature of the behaviour; its unpleasantness and the need for it to be spewed out in the sound *puu*. The /u/ sound which has the quality of elongation therefore may suggest a continuous aversion for something. The people use this ideophone in discourses to register their scepticism on issues and thus question the integrity of the speaker.

In text #31, *Abiwu Kwami be obukubukù, ofendrefèndrè* (*Abiwu Kwami says obukubukù, ofendrefèndrè*) we realise an ideophone that exhibits a multiplicity type. The ideophonic element *obukubukù, ofendrefèndrè* displays repetition and marked with low tone to indicate a sour and unpleasant event. The repetition in *obuku... bukù* and *ofendre...fèndrè* provides a rhythmic effect; thus enhancing the aesthetic quality. A critical look at the nasal quality /n/ and *dre* in *ofendrefendre may* lead to the discovery of some meanings. Sometimes, babies are described as *fen* because they are fragile; crops or foodstuffs that are not mature are also described as such. Thus, anything that is fragile, immature and soft and can easily be destroyed is described as *fen*.

Among some Ewe communities plain, smooth but sometimes slimy substances or items are described as being *dredre*. The Eweme people describe yam fufu as *dre dre dre* not only because the texture is smooth or because it has the desired starch content but also because the yam fufu during pounding easily moves round in the mortar unlike fufu made from cassava. Yam fufu is also difficult to control in the mortar during pounding. These characteristics are similar to the nature of some humans who are not 'stable' in their dealings with other people. It was explained that this ideophone like the earlier one is used where there is a clear sign of dishonesty, where one vacillates or blows hot and cold on issues. A person who displays this type of behaviour is described as *adidritɔ* or *tsɔe-yi-tsɔe-gbɔ-tɔ* (*take it away and bring it back owner*).

Another ideophonic figure worth analysing is in text #62 *Sabaɖu ɖavakuɔ be kpòngbó dze kpòngbó dzi* (*Sabaɖu lunatic says kpòngbó falls on kpòngbó*). The ideophone *kpòngbó* (*dze*) *kpòngbó* has an inherent repetitive structure with no monosyllabic form. There is therefore no form **kpon* which could be the base of *kpòngbó*. The structure of the ideophone identifies it as possessing the grammatical form: *Kpòngbó* (Noun) + *dze* (Verb) + *kpòngbó* (Noun) + *dzi* (Preposition).

The labio-velar voiceless plosive /kp/ and its counterpart /gb/ voiced labio-velar plosive in *kpòngbó* point to the ideas that the trope expresses. The low tone vowel /ò/ in the first syllable *kpò* combines with the voiced sound /gb/ suggests heaviness and a big dimension. The verb phrase *dze...dzi*

which means *to fall on* also adds to the idea of something very heavy. In the Ewe Language, *dze dzi* has a slight semantic difference from other expressions which means to be on top of something. For example, *mlɔ dzi* (*lie on it*) does not carry that emphasis and thud that *dze dzi* connotes. It is worth adding here that in the narrative scheme of folktale (*gli*) for example, *dze dzi* is a formulaic expression that is employed as a response to the narrator's enumeration of the characters in the tale. The response is to add emphasis and veracity among other things to the performance. We can therefore explain *kpòngbó dze kpòngbó* as *heavy has fallen on heavy*. Tɔ̀gbe Baniba of Ho explains that this trope could be employed to foreground the enormity of an event or to explain a fierce challenge between two groups or people that display equal physical and spiritual powers in any competition. He described the fierce competitive situation as *mal̩mal̩ fe gbɔ̀gbɔ̀* (*the spirit of not agreeing*) or not giving up. In such cases, the determination of the best or the most powerful becomes very difficult. Tɔ̀gbe Baniba suggests that part of the one time popular slogan of BP Oil Company which says 'Man pass Man' is similar to what the trope implies.

There are however ideophones in some *nyadodo* texts that conote patience as exemplified in #64 which states that, *Adzakwa Clemence be nenɔ dzɔ̀bɔ̀* (*Adzakwa Clemence says let it be 'dzɔ̀bɔ̀'*). In this example, *dzɔ̀bɔ̀* also displays lengthening of a final vowel /ɔ/. The low tone of /ɔ / in this context, its oral quality and the imperative sentence type in which the trope is embedded suggests a continual process, a sense of absolute

slowness, and a demand for calmness and patience. There is an image of royalty, gracefulness and grandeur that is represented and demanded in *dzɔbɔɔ*. The trope could be employed in volatile situations such as what has been discussed in the ideophone on *kpòngbó dze kpòngbó*. The ideophone *dzɔbɔɔ* like *bɔkɔɔ* is therefore another way the Ewe stress an important individual character trait of patience which is necessary for group sustainability and harmony.

Togbe Dodzi's *nyadodo okliyakliya, osakposakpò* #124 displays an element of sound multiplication. Following the advice of Dingemans (2012) on the importance of context in the analysis of ideophones, the contextual evidence regarding the evocation of this ideophone is presented here briefly. The referent had a brother who drank heavily almost on daily basis. Somehow he noticed with amusement how the brother managed to get to his destinations, especially, home without support. One day, he saw the struggle but also the tenacity and the resilience that the brother displayed to overcome the obstacles (gravel, little 'mounds', crevices and rocks) on his way home. He exclaimed in a humorous but admirable tone *okliyakliya, osakposakpò* even though he reprimanded and warned the brother of the consequences of the habit.

The reduplication of *okliya* and *osakpo* creates a rhythmic effect which vividly describes an alternating process. The reduplication element marks the ideophone as strikingly, 'iconic' in the sense that it forcefully brings out the sensory image of a near-never-ending situation that demands an equally determined spirit to confront it. The reduplication therefore depicts the

nature of the event and forces us to view the image and action as if it were real. *Okliyakliya, osakposakpò* is therefore performing an adverbial function that describes the manner in which the drunkard walked home. More importantly, the harsh voiceless velar plosive /k/ and the labio-velar voiceless plosive /kp/ strongly evoke a sensory image of the rough struggle on 'the way home.' The low tone in *kpò* adds to the nature of the struggle, the idea of an unpleasant, sour and bad situation.

Another importance of the ideophone *okliyakliya, osakpòsakpò* is that it signifies the referent and the life experience from which the trope emanates as well as an aspect of the world of the Ewe. As has been amply indicated in this report, the Ewe world view does not suggest a smooth uninterrupted life in *kodzogbe* (*the physical world*). On the contrary, it involves struggles. The trope is therefore appropriately employed to teach determination in any undertaking despite minor inconveniences. It is a humorous but effective means to encourage the individual not to be deterred by minor hindrances or vicissitudes of life.

Kpando dɔvakuɔ be, bobooboi edɔ le Mawu ɲu / Kpando lunatic says 'bobooboi' God has a lot of work to do (#33) is another example of an ideophone that is embedded in a quotative clause and introduced by the complementizer *bé* (that). The ideophone, *bobooboi*, accentuates the drama surrounding the specific context that engendered the *nyadodo*. Our attention is drawn to the image of surprise of the referent at the sight of the 'sea' of people in a crowded market; it thus heightens the sense of the tediousness of whatever task that is ahead of God (Mawu). The bilabial

plosive /b/ and the reduplicated vowel /o/ reinforce the sudden outburst of the lunatic.

An inherently repetitive ideophonic type with no monosyllabic form which could be the base of the repetition is exemplified in the text attributed to Adaklu dee who said *oboborobi obó, ababarabi abá* (#140). The ideophone here relies on the repetition of just two vowel sounds /o/, /a/ and a consonant sound /b/ for effect. The repeated sounds create a musical effect that enhances the sensory image of a rhythmically organised movement. The referent is noted to perform this ideophone at the spectacle of the wriggling of a woman's hip. The first set of the beat ends on a high tone in...*obó*, then the tempo is lowered in the low tone on *abá bā ra* but picks up and finalises on another high tone sound *abá*. The effect of the high tone or register is symbolic of aesthetic values of what is pleasant, good and sweet as suggested by Ameka (2001). The rhythmic beat also suggests a particular ordering in the wriggling of the hip.

The final example we shall examine in respect of ideophonic words is extracted from the *nyadodo* text attributed to Mamee (Somebody) which states that *ne elè lalāālā naḍu lā, ne elè kpákpaákps naḍu akpa./* ...if you are 'lalāālā' eat meat; if you are 'kpákpaakps', eat fish (#141). The ideophone in this text is the imperative sentence functioning as adverb. The ideophonic words *akpa* (fish) and *lā* (meat) are typical of Eweme people. *Lā* is used by the Eweme people as a generic term for all categories of meat including those they derive from domestic and bush animals, while fish is used for all types of fish. Most Anjo communities on

the other hand, use *lā* as a general term for both fish and meat; *akpa* is a particular type of fish, the tilapia. The importance of ideophones as having aesthetic and functional qualities is revealed in this present situation as well. The high tone on the vowel /a/ and its nasal counterpart /ǎ/ in the *kpákpáákpe* and *lālāǎlā* respectively connotes beauty and pleasantness. The nasal /ǎ/ also strengthens the concept of beauty that is symbolised in the trope. Indeed, the Ewe use *lālāǎlā* for glossy, smooth and dazzling surfaces of items. For example, *nyɔnuvia fe ηui zrɔ̄ lālāǎlā* to suggest that the skin of the lady is very smooth and dazzling. It is also common to hear the Ewe use the ideophonic word *kpa* in expressions such as *ele kpa* to mean it is 'right on point' or it is well done.

These explanations therefore show that the ideophonic words *akpa* and *lā* are both considered good protein sources since they both carry high tone. However, the use of the diminutive /ɛ/ in *kpákpáákpe* is suggestive of a lanky and haggard person. *Lā* (meat) must be taken by those that are dazzling and glossy looking; while the lanky must take fish. It is imperative that each of these two sets of people stay in their designated groupings. This categorisation suggests that embedded in the ideophone is a metaphoric idea that strikes a comparison between those that must eat meat *lā* and those who must eat fish *akpa*. The ideophone indicates that though the Ewe is in essence communal, the idea of social classification and hierarchical structures also exist. Thus, it is sometimes difficult for one to cross into another category. The trope also teaches the value of modesty and a warning against excessive ambition. One must stay within ones means to avert possible embarrassment.

Question

Interrogation as a literary element is effective in affirming the quality of an action. The audience in a literary context are given the opportunity to participate in a discourse by validating an addressee's submission. The Ewe also use this device in their everyday life for various reasons. Data show texts #15, #65, #66, #102, #103, #104, #109, #111 and #113 as questions that the Ewe use. Some of these are analysed below to show their aesthetic and functional values.

In the first *nyadodo* example, #65 *Akubia be egbœ du woa?* (*Akubia says has a goat eaten you?*). The question as to whether a goat has eaten the addressed may be considered ironical since naturally speaking a goat is herbivorous and not carnivorous; it will therefore be a misnomer if a goat eats a human being. If it happens, the Ewe may explain it from a spiritual perspective. Therefore, the right answer to the question, *egbœ du woa?* (*Have you been eaten by a goat?*) should be No! This answer may also depend on the distance between the interlocutors. But the addressee could offer a Yes answer to show his or her displeasure about the question. We can also infer a euphemistic approach here where the Ewe would employ the question as an indirect method to reprimand any of its members who deviates from a social or cultural norm.

It has been abundantly discussed through the analysis of relevant tropes that truthfulness, honesty and integrity are important values that the Ewe demand of their members. It has also been demonstrated that no matter how structured and efficient socio-cultural control systems of the Ewe work, there will always be deviants. The question in the text #102 *Kumasi be ne*

amegbeto mewo adidri o de, akpo agbe anaa? (Kumasi says if a human being is not dishonest, will he have life to live?) foregrounds a reality of life; a negation of the presence of a utopian world. Somehow, there will always be some form of dishonesty as a result of the struggle of humans to satisfy their basic needs of life (*agbe*). Life (*agbe*), as presented in the text, represents total well-being of humans and the desire to be present in *kodzogbe* (*poverty savannah*) to enjoy all of its good things. The Eweme greeting, *ele agbea* (*are you living/alive?*) goes beyond enquiring about the health status of a person. It seeks to enquire about the total well-being, physical and spiritual, of a member which a community expects and desires. Ironically, some elements of Ewe world view, such as destiny, and the very meaning of *kodzogbe* (*poverty savannah*) suggests that the desire for total prosperity in life could be an illusion. There are challenges that can therefore compel one to engage in the undesired practice, *adidri* (dishonesty) in order to live/survive. The word *adidri* therefore would represent any form of undesired activity that is contrary to Ewe socio-cultural norms and values that an individual would employ to live. In such cases it will be acceptable for some to answer *Ao!* (*No*) to the question *akpo agbe anaa?* (*will you find life to leave?*)

Another question trope is located in text #103 which says, *Adaklu dee be polisi wo ada be fetu neto vo na polisi mawoada too?* (*Adaklu person says is the salary of the over enthusiastic police different from that of the less enthusiastic police?*). The expression

wɔ ada in Ewe is associated with aggression, rigidity, an unbending and rough behaviour that sometimes stems from over-zealousness. Indeed, this behaviour could be exhibited as a sign of commitment to duty or to gain favour or reward from a superior. It may also be an emotional expression of anger. Those in the security services including the police (*polisi* or *kpovita*) are mostly accused of this disposition.

Indeed, the text emanates from the arrest and rough treatment by a police officer of the referent for an infraction. The fact is that the remuneration for the rigid and compromising, non-rigid police normally would be the same; therefore, *Ao! Meto vovo o* (*No! It is not different*), will be the appropriate answer to the question... *fetu neto vo na polisi mawɔada taa?* This trope could be deployed this to ridicule the police officer for his unnecessary enthusiasm.

The *nyadodo* text attributed to Sodza Mensa that... *nyɔnunyado gamagblɛ de lia? Afle kpetike godoo* (*Sodza Mensa says can you flirt without spending money? You will buy toffee by all means.*) (#104) is derived from *nyɔnunyadodo* (lecherousness or what is commonly referred to as womanizing by Ghanaians). The Ewe would refer to a Playboy as *nyɔnunyadola* and *ɔutsunyadola* if it is woman who flirts.

The man who decides to take to the habit of flirting must therefore understand that the behaviour *nyɔnunyadodo* goes with *ga gbegbegblɛ* (*waste of money*) which is rendered as *gamagblɛ* in the text. The positive statement then would have been *nyɔnunyadodo ga gbegblɛ ye*

(*womanizing is wasting money*) or *ne edo na nyɔnu nya la agblɛ ga godoo* (*if you are a womanizer you will waste money by all means*). The emphasis of the trope is thus not on spending but wasting money (*ga gbeɣblɛ*); it does not matter how much. The inconsequential amount involved does not mute the idea of extravagance and waste. This is concretised in what follows the question: *Afle kpetike godoo* (*You will by all means buy toffee*). *Kpetike* (*toffee*) may not cost much but its provision any time one indulges in the habit is stressed in the final vowel elongation in the word *godoo* as well as its semantic denotation. The trope points out a social reality of the Ewe as well as the relationship between actions and their consequences. It lays bare choices that the individual has to make and the imperative demand that the individual takes full responsibility.

Paradox

A statement that seems self contradictory or senseless on the surface but on a closer and critical look reveals to one an underlying truth is referred to as paradoxical. A paradox is thus considered to encompass both truth and error simultaneously (Agyekum, 2013). Sometimes a paradox can result from placing side by side two contradictory words; such as the words *nyɔnu ɲutsu* (female, male) and *evivim vevem* (*it is sweet, it is bitter*) in the following expressions of the Ewe.

1. *Ame sia ɲutsu-nyɔnue* (*This person is a male-female*).
2. *Agbea vivim vevem.* (*Life is sweet bitter*).

The first example is used to describe a female that has male features or displays characteristics of a male, while in the second example there is a suggestion of the presence of both success and failure in life. Text #59, *Akatsi tsukunɔ be yetutu mefia xoxo hafi de afɔdzia be ne yetso ko ye ngo nakɔ* (*Akatsi lunatic says he has already cleaned himself before easing so that when he gets up his front will be free*) is an example of a paradox. The natural and logical practice is that one cleans herself or himself only after easing themselves; it will thus be totally absurd and most unnatural for anyone to do the reverse ...*tutu mefia xoxo hafi de afɔdzia*. It is made even more paradoxical when we consider the reason *be ne yetso ko ye ngo nakɔ* (*so that when he is done his front will be free*) given for this reversal of a natural order. The reversal is indicative of an error but when one looks at it closely and critically the import of the trope—preparing for any bad or nasty event in life will become evident. An elder from Afife, known by all as Awambaby, is of the view that just as *afɔdzi* (*shit*) is unsightly, and generally not appealing to the senses but a necessity of life, the trope, he explains, represents unfavourable and undesirable events or situations in life. Because these are realities of life, one should not wait for the unexpected to occur before remedies are found for them. He cites modern day life insurance policies in support of his analysis. The underlying truth that the trope emphasises is therefore the value of preparing for any eventualities of life. An Ewe saying *Dɔlegbe tae wodea srɔ ɔɔ* (*You marry so that in time of your sickness you may have*

somebody to nurse you), supports the idea that one must not live without any thought for the future.

Finally, text #67 *Afɔku be miulā blewuu* /*Afɔku says be quick slowly* displays an oxymoronic feature that can be considered paradoxical. The element of oxymoron is presented in *miulā* (*be very fast*) and *blewuu* (*very slowly*), while its paradoxical nature is in the fact it is impossible to be engaged in these two opposing actions simultaneously. It will sound absurd. The verb *ulā* demands very quick and smart movement of the legs. A mother who for example asks the child to *ulā* is demanding from the child to walk or move very fast; to haste but not necessarily to run. The reduplication of the final oral vowel /u / in the onomatopoeic word *blewuu* (*very slowly*) intensifies the slow motion; suggesting a regal step and a calm disposition. This image which is in contrast with the haste image in *ulā* intensifies the absurdity in the paradox.

However, the underlying truth, which is an important value of the Ewe is the idea of being cautious in life. One who applies caution to his or her life will balance the two extremely contradictory actions of being fast and extremely being slow.

Metonymy

Metonymy has its etymology in Greek which means 'change of name'. It involves one thing being represented by another that is commonly and often physically associated with it (Murfin & Supryia, 2003). For example, a line of a popular *Gabaḍa* song, *Dɔwɔasi*, of the Eweme people goes like this:

Dɔwɔasi mekpɔ aɖadzie / Dɔwɔasie yie vovo gbe (The working hand does not rest/The working hand is going to rest). The working hand (*Dɔwɔasi*) is associated with human and so it is standing for the human being.

Similarly, *ame ta* (human head) in *nyadodo* text #18, *Pati be ame ta sɔgbɔ* (*Pati says human head is many*) is metonymised since it is a part of the human body. While the trope *ame ta sɔgbɔ* (human head is many) stands for a number of human beings, it also underscores the important Ewe value of differences and varying degrees of importance and depth of thought and capability of people. While the trope can be used to stress the need for respect of other people's views, it also warns people about absolute trust in humans.

Text #120, *Tɔgbɛ Agbemenu be asie nɔa ame si enu nyo nana ame* (*Tɔgbɛ Agbemenu says it is when you have hands that things will be good for you*) uses the hand (*asi*) as a metonymy. The hand is an essential part of the body that performs various functions. The hand (*asi*) can be used to search for wealth, to feed, to comfort, to reprimand and even to hurt among others. All these and many more are some of the traits that humans exhibit. The hand in the trope therefore stands for humans (family members for example) and the critical role they play in one another's well being as expressed in *asie nɔa ame si enu nyona na ame* (...it is when you have hands that things will good for you). Literally, it may sound quite abnormal to imply that some may not have hands (*asi*) but what follows,

enu nyona na ame (*that things will be good for you*), implies that one's prosperity and total well being is conditioned on the presence and support of relations.

Hyperbole/Exaggeration

The final trope that will be considered in this chapter is hyperbole. It is a device that deliberately overstates something for emphasis or humour. Things are made to go beyond the normal or literal expectation for which reason some refer to the device as exaggeration (Nilanko, 2010). Hyperbole is common in everyday expressive discourses of the Ewe and it plays an artistic and functional role. The device can be used in both negative and positive ways. For example, when used as a major narrative element that contributes to its aesthetic effect, exaggeration *amideɖe de nu ɲuti* (*oiling something*) or *dze dede nu* (*adding salt to something*) can be said to be positively employed. However, exaggeration becomes negative when it is used to question the credibility of a person's action. For example, among the Ewe a person can be described as *numevivito* (*sweet-mouth-owner*) or *eɖe nume vivina wu sukli* (*his/her mouth is sweeter than sugar*) to stress the person's lack of credibility. Data have revealed a few texts that are embedded with exaggeration, one of which is *nyadodo* #47, *Keve be yeɖe tsi le Agona xo* (*Keve says he has already taken a bath in Agona*). Agona is a town that can be found in many traditional areas in Ghana—especially the Central and Ashanti Regions. On the other hand, the referent Keve in the text comes from the south-eastern corner of Ghana which is quite far from whichever location we find Agona in Ghana. Thus, the

referent's claim to have taken his bath already in Agona (*yele tsi le Agona xo*) is highly hyperbolic; overstating and emphasising, from one perspective, the referent's unwillingness to take his bath. Since it will be very difficult to access Agona immediately (considering the distance and resources involved) it means to ascertain the truth of the action will be difficult. The Ewe place a high premium on truthfulness and honesty and these values are stressed through various aspects of their traditions including their artistic forms. This *nyadodo* text is an example of a negative hyperbole that is employed to question the validity of a claim and to show disdain for a person's lack of integrity or truthfulness. The text is similar to the Ewe saying, *avatsoto be yefe adasefo le didife* (*the liar says his/her witness is at a far away place*).

Name

Literary and language experts like Finnegan (1970), Anyidoho (1997) and Atakpa (1997) have underscored the importance of names of Africans especially in their daily discourses and artistic processes. Finnegan for example acknowledges that one of the most striking aspects of this importance is the way 'names can be used as a succinct and oblique way of commenting on their owners or on others' (Finnegan, *ibid*: 470). This means that names have both manifest and hidden meanings which express ideas, aspirations, sorrows or philosophical comments (Atakpa, 1977). Among the Ewe grief and the struggles of life, man and his relationship with the other, expression of joy, and allusions to historical events are common themes that their names espouse directly or obliquely. *Ahamarkowo* (*insinuating names*) and

ahanɔŋkɔwo (*drinking names/appellatives*) are among Ewe names that are condensed, evocative and figurative.

It is worth pointing out the fact that data have not revealed any deliberate use of poetic names in *nyadodo* texts. However, names of some referents add depth to the texts that are attributed to them; the names enhance the figurative intensity and meaning in the texts. The relevant *nyadodo* texts are discussed below.

De Gaulle be do sigbe nezu fe (*De Gaulle says, say it and let it become a fine*) #8. The name De Gaulle alludes to the acclaimed French military General and President of France from 1959-1969. De Gaulle was known for his tenacity and dedicated service to his country. However, he was also considered to be too frank to the point of being irritating, bold and not afraid in making controversial decisions (www.biography.com, retrieved: 15/07/2016).

These character traits enhance the interpretations that could be derived from the *nyadodo* text #8 *do sigbe nezu fe* (*say it and let it become a fine*). The Ewe have various social control systems which include fines (*fe*) which are imposed on individuals for infractions such as stealing and serious crimes such as adultery. The phrase *do sigbe* really connotes being plain and unequivocal; uttering taboo words or using invectives all which could attract huge fines. The fines can take the form of money, livestock or a combination of these. No matter the form of the fine and its magnitude, fines are not palatable to anybody since its payment could have serious economic or social effect on the individual or the group. It will therefore take the tenacity,

irritating frankness and boldness of people like De Gaulle to literally encourage others to be resolute in being truthful and frank. The trope concretises the strong resolve of a person to say it as it is but also knowing fully the consequences. The Akan expression, *ka ne wu* (*say it and die*) is similar to the trope in the *nyadodo*.

Mawule be sitima mevo le afu dzi o (*Mawule says there is no shortage of ship on the sea*) #43. The name Mawule (*God is there*) explains the Ewe perception of a Supreme Being whose presence and benevolence are abounding and everlasting. For man to enjoy Mawu's (God's) presence and benevolence, s/he must be patient. This perspective of the referent's name supports what the *nyadodo* text manifests. Indeed, once there is life, one must be hopeful that s/he would enjoy the good things of life which are represented in *sitima mevo le afu dzi o* (*the ship is not finished on the sea*). God's everlasting benevolence and the presence of ships (*sitima*) are being compared. Good things abound and will always be available. The trope therefore emphasises the Ewe values of patience and hope for the future as critical to life.

In text #52 the referent's name Togbe Anyigbanu enhances the meaning of the text *yeaku afee vɛ anyo fufu* (*it is only after his death that the taro will be good for fufu*). The name, Anyigbanu, which literally means *Thing-of-the-Earth*, interacts with *vɛ* (*taro*) a corm that is a swollen underground stem like the cocoyam. Even though the cocoyam and the taro are both *things of the earth* or swollen underground stems each have its characteristics and natural uses. The text may thus be pointing to the

personal or individual philosophy of life of the referent which may invariably tie in with the World view of the Ewe.

Finally, in *nyadodo* #127 attributed to Togbe Dodzi thus: *okliyakliya, osakposakpo* we note the aesthetic and functional values of the text. As demonstrated under the section on ideophones analysis of this showed that the dominance and repetition of consonant sounds suggest a continuous struggle, a rough and unstable movement which are characteristics of life. But with determination and tenacity of purpose, the Ewe believe that one would reach one's destination in life. The same philosophy of life is expressed in the name *Dodzi* (*Be courageous/Do not be afraid*). The name and the text together encapsulate a basic philosophical pillar in the lives of the Ewe. The name *Dodzi* of the referent therefore is expressed and expanded in the text.

Conclusion

The intention of the researcher in this chapter has been to identify major tropes in collected *nyadodo* texts. The chapter further sought to analyse the tropes to bring out the various meanings that they reveal and how all together, they shed light on aspects of Ewe world view, community and individual values.

The analysis has shown that there are a number of tropes in the texts but the degree of their occurrences varies. Those that have been identified and discussed include tropes of resemblance such as metaphor, personification, metonymy; those of emphasis such as hyperbole, paradox, oxymoron and ideophone. Few texts which display qualities of poetic names have been discussed to show their aesthetic and functional values. Among all the tropes

identified, there is a preponderance of metaphor which may not be too surprising since it is a trope that is regarded as basic to many tropes.

The analyses have shown that the tropes in *nyadodo* have been derived from the everyday activities of the people as well as the flora and fauna in their environment. Parts of the body such as the genitalia, the face and all that they entail; the waist and legs have been identified and analysed as great sources of tropes in *nyadodo* texts. The process of analysis also took into consideration the effects of available and relevant linguistic units or items that help in concretising or foregrounding a trope in a particular text.

Finally, the analysis of each trope revealed values such as taking responsibility for one's actions, foresight, hardwork, self-worth, and respect for all humans no matter their social statuses, honesty and the need to follow the natural order of things. The major feature of tropes which is the element of contrast between what is said and what is intended is very much present in the texts. This has added depth to the ideas expressed and the meanings they espouse. Texts from other oral genres of the Ewe, such as songs and proverbs have been employed at relevant sections of the analysis to confirm and support the view that *nyadodo* shares aesthetic and functional values with some other Ewe oral genres. It also sought to emphasise the point that despite the feature of genre interaction, *nyadodo* remains another form of communicating the sensations of life. The final chapter of this report is a summary on the entire work, basic conclusions that could be drawn from the report. It will also offer some suggestions that could be the focus of future investigations.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The focus of the study was on *nyadodo*, an important oral artistic form of the Ewe. The study was motivated by the researcher's conviction that apart from well known and often cited oral literary forms of the Ewe, there are other genres such as *nyadodo* which possess artistic and utilitarian values that are critical to the lives of the Ewe. Despite these important values that *nyadodo* offers, it has not attracted much scholarly attention especially from the literary perspective. The aim of the study was therefore to examine evidence of tropes in *nyadodo* texts and their relevance in espousing the socio-cultural, community values and world view of the Ewe of Ghana.

The study was driven by three major questions that included what is *nyadodo* and who its referents are, what type of relationship exists between referents' experiences and their compositions and what types of tropes are embedded in *nyadodo* and what their link with the world of the Ewe is. These questions were based on the assumption that *nyadodo* as an artistic form and a communicative mode that emanates from the everyday life of the Ewe must emphasise some community and individual values as well as the people's world view. In seeking responses to these research questions, closely related issues such as types of composers of *nyadodo*, the spaces or circumstances that evoked the composition of the texts were pursued. Information about the historical circumstances of referents was organised from both primary and

secondary sources in order to fulfil the demands of the study and to understand the problem better. Data were treated and presented in relevant chapters.

The opening chapter provides a general discussion on the importance of oral artistic forms to non-literate communities in general and the Ewe in particular. The chapter further emphasises the problem, the purpose and the significance of the study. Also, the argument that *nyadodo* was worth studying for its literary and sociolinguistic relevance was strongly made. The methodology, data gathering strategies, the research locale and the appropriate analytical tool were part of the major discussions in the first chapter. In Chapter Two a copious review of related literature on aspects of the study was done. The main objective of the chapter was to point out the importance of the study as filling a gap in the study of oral literary forms of the Ewe. Indeed, the review revealed that while an enormous amount of work has been done on various aspects of other oral genres of the Ewe, the same cannot be said for *nyadodo* even though it is an important artistic form and communicative channel of the people. It was noted that scholars, experts and researchers on oral forms of non-literate societies in general and the Ewe in particular were convinced that non-literate societies still have fields of artistic forms that have not been tapped into. Many of these scholars and experts on oral literary forms have therefore encouraged indigenes of African societies especially to search and study their own oral artistic forms. In Chapter Three, form, content and structure of *nyadodo* texts were discussed with the view of accentuating the genre for the needed attention. The discussion in this chapter revealed that *nyadodo* shares a number of micro and macro elements that are of aesthetic and functional values with other oral artistic forms of the Ewe. However,

there are some features that are very peculiar to *nyadodo*, especially, where author imprint was concerned.

The specific and broader contexts of *nyadodo* text performances and the typology of composers formed the content of Chapter Four. It was found out that *nyadodo* texts were mostly evoked by personal experiences of composers and that together with textual evidence the basis of crediting the genre with individual author imprint was possible. Attribution of some texts was based on fondness for specific *nyadodo* texts, while some were derived from idiosyncrasies of referents. The disseminative role of the public and the continuous performance of *nyadodo* have helped to turn lives into stories and stories fold back into lives.

In Chapter Five, the core issue of the thesis, which is the identification and analysis of major tropes in selected *nyadodo* texts, engaged our attention. The analysis showed the prevalence of tropes that express resemblance and relationships such as metaphor, personification, metonymy and synecdoche. Other types of tropes that manifested in the text were those that are used for emphasis or understatement. These included exaggeration, question, name and paradox. The major sound trope that was identified and analysed was ideophone. The interpretation of the tropes and the derivation of the various meanings that they offer were guided by rhetorical-sociolinguistic analytical tool. This is a composite frame that combined elements of rhetoric and sociolinguistics, context frame. Syntactic properties of the selected *nyadodo* texts and exophoric features have therefore individually and jointly provided the basis that unravelled the different meanings in the texts. Interpretation was

thus done through observation of tropes, their details, their connectivity, possible meanings and link to the specific and broader context of production.

Findings

One of the striking confirmations that the study has provided concerning genre development is that a group of people are capable of producing new forms to serve a purpose. *Nyadodo* displays genre fluidity but it remains a distinct artistic form to the Ewe.

It is also evident from data and analysis that unlike some oral genres that are exoteric or exclusive to a particular group, *nyadodo* attribution is open to all manner of people (except children) no matter their social, physical, psychological, economic or political status. All the age groups interviewed exhibited appreciable knowledge on community history, events and heritage. Unlike the proverb, attribution of *nyadodo* is to individual human beings, community units and the mentally challenged who have specific individuating features that manifest in their names. These referents are not subsumed under the general elder categorisation or wellerism as evident in the case of proverbs (*lododo*). *Nyadodo* referents derive their author imprint mainly from indigenous 'copyright' system proposed by Yankah (1989). There is therefore evidence of individual artistry and originality in the data even though there are cases of truncation, transformation and borrowing from other oral artistic genres such as *lododo* (proverb) of the Ewe.

The emergence of new and original compositions of *nyadodo* has been evident in the work. The view that a pragmatic approach to the

conceptualisation of folklore would mean that due to social and cultural dynamism that occur in human society new forms would be composed has been confirmed in the work.

Characteristically, *nyadodo* as an oral form reflects and refashions individual and community experiences; thus, representing and telescoping the societal consciousness of the Ewe. Despite the presence of individual ingenuity, it has been revealed that *nyadodo* as a communal artefact in the expression of their fears and concerns as well as interrogating their existence and recounting personal moments and emotions have not been compromised.

The concept of 'ecology of art' suggested by Okpewho (cited in Akoma, 2007) was highly demonstrated in the work. Thus, we realise that Ewe aesthetic principle or view derives from a connection to their physical environment and language. The referents have used their physical environment—the flora and the fauna to generate tropes that make statements about life. The texts are composed in the Ewe language, albeit from the different dialects. There is only one *nyadodo* text that has been composed in the English language. The presence of tropes in the texts also supports the view that *nyadodo* referents are not only interested in the content of their compositions or linguistic competency; but also the aesthetic quality of the composition. This underscores the relevance of the various tropes that have been employed in enhancing the quality of discourse and oratory. It is worth pointing out in this regard that there was no direct manifestation of simile as a trope in the texts that have been collected. This occurrence also corroborates Egblewogbe's (1991) suggestion that simile is rare in Ewe artistic works. The figurative language of the texts was found to encapsulate important societal

norms, communal and individual values of the Ewe; thus, providing a kind of lens through which one could view not only relevant phenomena of the Ewe but also the individuating character of referents. The unique qualities of an individual thought process are embedded in the texts and they guide in delineating personhood and the reverberations of a society.

From analysis of data it is clear that apart from the much cited Ewe proverb (*lododo*) for example as a medium in the proper understanding of the philosophy and principles that undergird personal and social behaviour (Dzobo, 2006), *nyadodo* texts also explicate the complexity of life and human relationships and are like road maps to the heart of the Ewe.

The study has also confirmed an earlier observation by Dzobo (ibid) concerning Ewe proverbs that despite the vast themes of life that they project and explicate, there is no explicit evidence of the centrality of the concept of love (*lɔlɔ*). *Nyadodo* texts that have been analysed also exhibited a similar feature; however, we must quickly add that this does not mean that the Ewe do not see the concept of love as relevant to life. The values that embed *nyadodo* texts show that the Ewe are keenly interested in developing a strong sense of sensitivity in human relationships as a prerequisite to harmonious living. Analysis of data has shown various forms of character traits and attitude of members of the society that are stressed to constantly remind the individual to be responsible. The need to understand the nature of humans (their individual idiosyncrasies) among others and the importance of community cohesion in spite of the concept of individualism is foregrounded in the texts. It is through these that love as a concept is expressed and emphasised. So, *nyadodo* texts

are not only used to direct social behaviour but are also a medium to reveal the way the Ewe look upon the tangled web of human relationship and life.

Despite the non-exoteric quality of the genre, data have identified male compositions as dominating and covering a wide thematic spectrum of life including bravado, ingenuity, self worth and a strong sense of optimism in life. Male vocations such as cash crop farming and palmwine tapping have provided resources for male *nyadodo* compositions. The seeming male dominance in Ewe artistic enterprise, which has been linked to patriarchy and masculinity and emphasised in earlier studies, has been confirmed by data on *nyadodo*. Therefore, apart from the scanty female compositions of *nyadodo*, some female referents and interviewees requested anonymity, while others totally refused to be interviewed or did so in the company of male relatives. From the data available to this research the few compositions by women were derived mainly from contexts that are closely linked to their traditional roles as child-bearers and home-makers. The content of these texts express themes on marriage, labour pain, childlessness, the huge responsibility of motherhood and the implicit determination to tell their stories despite community inhibitions.

Statement of Contribution

In the statement of the problem to this study, the point was made about the lack of visibility of *nyadodo* on the literary research landscape even though the genre is an important artistic and communicative channel for and about the Ewe. The discussion in chapter one also identified scholars, especially Ewe literary researchers who have made passionate calls to

indigenous literary researchers to venture into investigating 'new' oral artistic forms of the Ewe. This present study should be regarded as a response to this call and contributing to lifting the genre out of obscurity. The study has the advantage of projecting *nyadodo* as another artistic form that could be studied from various perspectives. It will thus increase the corpus of oral artistic forms that have received scholarly investigation aside known types such as songs, proverbs and appellatives.

Another important addition to knowledge is realised in author acknowledgement of oral art forms. The groundbreaking ethnographic study of Akan proverbs by Yankah (1989) provided useful directions to the study on *nyadodo*; especially, with regard to indigenous systems for author delineation. Yankah identified three major ways in which proverb authors are identified among the Akan. He emphasised the point that author acknowledgment is not peculiar to the proverb tradition. Indeed, the study on *nyadodo* has confirmed the three methods as available to the Ewe in ascribing authors for the texts. The analysis of data on *nyadodo* however demonstrates that Yankah's model of author delineation is inadequate as far as *nyadodo* is concerned. There is therefore a modification of the three strategies proposed by Yankah to a fourth type—idiosyncrases of individuals. Idiosyncrasies of referents rather than verbal expression have been identified as the fourth source of attribution. These referents include the mentally challenged who have either lost speech or derived authorship imprint because of their behavioural patterns.

Recommendations

Even though author delineation has been discussed in support of referent typology, there is the need for an in-depth biographical study as a means of delineating individual artistry and authorship. This way, the argument against 'folk' label for oral genres in general and those of the Ewe in particular may be made more concrete and stronger.

Also, oral tradition has provided ample evidence in delineating authors in the present study; to further support author imprint, it will be rewarding to carry out a more detailed study on the geographical or dialectal differences in *nyadodo* texts. A study on the tonal differences in the texts for example would posit the texts in their natural linguistic environments. It has been shown in the study that context could be supported with textual evidences to underscore the aesthetic and social functions of *nyadodo* texts. Studying *nyadodo* from a purely linguistic point of view could therefore be worthwhile.

Extant literature has revealed the presence of genres that are similar to *nyadodo* of the Ewe; for example, among the Akan and the Kasena of Ghana as well as in Somalia. A cross-cultural study of the genre type can be done to show genre similarity and difference. Also, a major characteristic of oral literary forms is their dynamism (Muleka, 2014; Barber, 2007); therefore, a diachronic and synchronic investigation into *nyadodo* texts would be rewarding.

Literary works, especially oral forms can be reflexive, that is, they could provide a channel into the personhood of authors and others. A detailed investigation into the characteristics of male and female *nyadodo* texts should engage the attention of oral literary researchers. Such studies would reveal the

world of males and females, what they reveal about each other and about themselves. It will be interesting to investigate this phenomenon beyond the limitations of patriarchy in order to see if women compositions express other thematic concerns apart from what the present study has revealed.

In conclusion, Hampate Bâ's (1995) metaphor that each society sees 'high noon from its own doorway ... through the prism of its own passions or mentality or interests, or eagerness to justify its point of view' (p167) is true to *nyadodo* texts and the Ewe of Ghana. It is clear that context as an analytical tool is very crucial in arriving at a rewarding interpretation of oral artistic forms of the Ewe in general and *nyadodo* in particular. This study on *nyadodo* text of the Ewe has demonstrated that the texts have literary worth that is active in the world view and socio-cultural life of the people. Socio-cultural values such as contentment, wealth and its acquisition, friendship and kinship, honesty as well as self actualisation are embedded in the texts. Statements about Ewe world view on destiny and its impact on their lives as a whole has been amply emphasised.

All in all, collected *nyadodo* texts and their analyses have revealed a myriad of tropes that have been derived mainly from body parts of human beings, health and diet, vocations, cultural institutions and Christianity. These have enhanced the artistic quality of *nyadodo* as a literary form and also as a sociolinguistic frame that points to the Ewe perspective on life. The past, the present and the future of the Ewe are all locked in the texts that are another 'social surface' of the people. *Nyadodo* as a creative art of the people may entertain but it serves as an important space where the 'truth [of the Ewe] speaks itself' (Eagleton, 1983: 64; cited by Birch, 1996). The synergy between

the spoken word, society, the individuality of the artist, and communal values are merged in *nyadodo* texts.

REFERENCES

- Abiola, I. (2007). Orality, literacy, and African literature. In O. Tejumola, & A. Quayson (Eds.), *African literature an anthology of criticism and theory*. (pp.74-82). USA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Abotchie, C. (1997). *Social control in traditional Southern Eweland of Ghana: Relevance for modern crime prevention*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Acquah, L. J. (2002). A repertoire of tropes: A study of Fante-Akan Asafo song texts from the Cape Coast area of the Central Region of Ghana. Unpublished master's dissertation, Department of English, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast.
- Acquah, L. J. (2012). Foregrounding of imagery in T.O. Echewa's *The Land's Lord*'. In D. Edu-Buandoh, & A. Appartaim (Eds.), *Between language and literature. A festschrift for Professor Kofi Edu Yankson* (pp.323-335). Cape Coast: University Printing Press.
- Adali-Mortty, G. (1967). Ewe poetry. In Beier, U. (Ed.), *Introduction to African literature: An anthology of critical writing on African and Afro—American literature and oral tradition* (pp. 3-11). London: W.I. Longmans, Green & Co Ltd.
- Adam, G. N. (2006). The use of euphemisms: A legitimate stylistic device or an instrument of linguistic manipulation. *Language Centre Journal*, 2, 19-34. Ghana: University of Ghana.
- Adebayo, M. (2009). Islamic strictures and *Senwele* music: The emergence of female art. In O. Akin, E. Arua & A. Sailal (Eds.), *Language, gender*

- and politics. A Festschrift for Yisa Kehinde Yusuf* (pp.163-176). Nigeria: Concept Publications.
- Adejare, O. (1989). Translation: A distinctive nature of African literature in English. In E. L. Epstein & R. Kole (Eds.), *The language of African literature* (pp.19-38). Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc.
- Afansyev, V.G. (1987). *Historical Materialism*. New York: International Publishers. Retrieved from: [https://www.questia.com pdf. 31/06/2016](https://www.questia.com/pdf/31/06/2016).
- Afejuku, T. (1998). Language as sensation: The use of poetic and evocative language in five African autobiographies. In E.L. Epstein & R. Kole (Eds.), *The language of African literature* (pp. 3-17). Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc.
- Afreh, E.S. (2013). Space-to-time metaphors in Akan: Compound or primary metaphors. In H. Lauer, N. A. Appiah Amfo, & J. Boampong, (Eds.), *The one in the many—Nation building through cultural diversity* (pp.122-134). Legon, Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers.
- Agovi, K.E. (1989). Oral tradition and social change in contemporary Africa. *The ancestors beads. 2*, (pp. 47-59) Retrieved from [http:// scholar works.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream 25/11/2014](http://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/bitstream/25/11/2014).
- Agyekum, K. (2003). Akan metalanguage: Terminology and terms in Akan linguistics, Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Department of Linguistics, University of Ghana.
- Agyekum, K. (2004). Aspects of persuasion in Akan communication language. *International Journal of language and communication. RASK 21*, 63-96.

- Agyekum, K. (2006). The sociolinguistic of Akan personal names. *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 15 (2), 206-235. Retrieved from <http://www.nyas.helsinki>.
- Agyekum, K. (2007). *Introduction to literature. Second Edition*. Ghana: Media Design.
- Agyekum, K. (2012). Akan proverbs and aphorisms about marriage. *Institute of African Studies Research Reviews* 27(2), University of Ghana.
- Agyekum, K. (2013). *Introduction to literature. 3rd edition*. Accra: Adwinsa Publications.
- Ahiawodzi, A. K. (1997). Economic Activities. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *A handbook of Eweland. 1. The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana* (pp250-281). Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Aikhenvald, A. Y. (2000). *Classifiers: A typology of noun categorization devices*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ajadi, G.A. (1998). D. O. Fagunwa's Narratives: A rhetorical analysis. In E.L. Epstein & R. Kole (Eds.), *The Language of African literature* (pp.185-202). Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, Inc.
- Akmajian, A., Demers, R.A., Farren, A.K., & Harnish, R.M. (1990). *Linguistics: An introduction to language and communication, Third Edition*. London, England: MIT Press.
- Akoma, C. (2007). *Folklore in new world black fiction: Writing and the oral traditional aesthetics*. Columbus: The Ohio State University Press.
- Akyea, E.O. (1967). A study of some verbal art forms in Juaben—an Ashanti state.' Unpublished master's dissertation, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.

- Akyea, G. M. F. (1999). Gabada songs of the people of Have in the Volta Region of Ghana. Unpublished master's dissertation, Department of Ghanaian Languages, University of Cape Coast.
- Akyea, G.M.F. (2009). *Nyadodo* among the Ewe. *Drumspeak, International Journal of Research in the Humanities*, 2, (1), 91-107. Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Coast.
- Akyea, G. M.F. & Asante, C. (2011). From the *horse's* own mouth: Gender perception in some Akan and Ewe proverbs. *Abibisem, Journal of African Culture and Civilization*. 4, 29-46. Department of History, University of Cape Coast.
- Alabi, A. V. (2009). Syntactic and Lexico-Semantic Structures of Proverbs in Achebe's and Adimora-Ezeigbo's Trilogies. In O. Akin, E. A. Arua, & A. Sailal (Eds.), *Language, gender and politics. A Festschrift for Yisa Kehinde Yusuf* (pp.297-312). Lagos: Concept Publications Limited.
- Alagoa, E. J. (1978). Oral tradition and history in Africa. *Kiabara Journal of Huamnities 1*. Rains issue. 8-25.
- Alemna, A. A. (1993). *Oral Literature in African libraries: Implications for Ghana*. Indiana: Indiana University Bloomington.
- Ameka, F. K. (1991). Ewe: Its grammatical constructions and illocutionary devices. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Australian National University.
- Amuta, C. (1989). *The theory of African literature, implications for practical criticism*. London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd.

- Angmor, C. (1996). *Contemporary literature in Ghana 1911—1978 A Critical Evaluation*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Angmor, C. (2010). *Literature, life and present day-Ghana 1978—2003*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Ansa-Koi, K. (2006). Politics, oral literature, and the Hill Guans: A study of the socio-political uses of oral literature in contemporary Africa. *Language Centre Journal*, 2, 55-63. University of Ghana, Legon.
- Ansre, G. (2000). The Ewe language. In K. Gavua (Ed.), *A Handbook of Eweland. Vol 11. The Northern Ewes in Ghana* (pp. 22-47). Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Anyidoho, K. (1997). Ewe verbal art. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *A Handbook of Eweland. Vol 1. The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana* (pp.123-152). Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Anyidoho, A. (1993). Gender and verbal art: The case of Akan verbal art *SALSA I*. Retrived from salsaut@uts.cc.utexas.edu. 16/02/2014.
- Apronti, E.O. (1972). Structural unity of the Akan dirge. *Research in Review*, 8, (2). IAS. University of Ghana, Legon.
- Asare, Opoku K. (1978). *West African traditional religion*. Jurong, Singapore: FEP International Private Limited.
- As-Safi, A. B. (2011). The role of rhetoric in discourse hibridity Petra University. Retrieved from www.citeseerx.ist.psuedu/viewdoc/30/09/2015.
- Atakpa, F. K. (1997). The Ewe language. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *A Handbook of Eweland. Vol 1. The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana* (pp. 28-46). Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.

- Averill, J. R. (2001). The rhetoric of emotion, with a note on what makes great literature great. *Emperical Studies of the Arts*, 19 (1) University of Masachussets, Amherst. Retrieved from people.umass.edu/jra/studie ofemotion/articles/creativity/RhetoricofEmotion 24/10/2015.
- Avorgbedor, D. (1990). Preservation, transmission and realisation of song texts: A psycho-musical approach. In I. Okpewho (Ed.), *The oral performance in Africa* (p. 223). Ibadan: Spectrum.
- Awoonor, K. (1974). *Guardians of the sacred word: Ewe poetry*. New York: NOK Publishers Ltd.
- Awoonor, K. (1976). *The breast of the earth: A survey of the history, culture, and literature south of the Sahara*. New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday.
- Azasu, K. & Geraldo, P. (2005). *Mastering literary criticism*. Accra: Yamens Printing Press.
- Babatunde, S. & Odepidan, O. (2009). Pragma-rhetorical strategies in selected speeches of Nigerian president Olesegun Obasanjo. In O. Akin, E.A. Arua & A. Sailal (Eds.), *Language, gender and politics. A Festschrift for Yisa KehindeYusuf*. (pp. 297-312). Nigeria: Concept Publications.
- Babatunde, S. T. (2000). The rhetoric of mass protest: Persuasive strategies in Olu Obafemi's plays.' In D. Oni & S.E. Ododo (Eds.), *Than larger his frame: Critical reflections on Olu Obafemi's Plays* (pp.147-163). Lagos: Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilisation.
- Barber, K. (2007). *The anthropology of texts, persons and publics*. Cambridge: University Press.
- Barthes, R. (1968). *Elements of semiology*. London: Cape

- Barthes, R. (1991). Introduction to the structural analysis of narratives. In C. Kaplan & W. Anderson (Eds.), *Criticism: Major statements*. 3rd edition (pp. 405-419). St Martin's Press.
- Bascom, W. (1965). Four functions of folklore. In A. Dundes (Ed.), *The study of folklore*. England: Prentice Hall.
- Bashford, B. (1976). The rhetorical method in literary criticism. *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 9, (3), 133-146. Retrieved from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40237483> 02/04/2014.
- Bauman, R. (1977). *Verbal art as performance*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Bauman, R. (1983). The field study of folklore in context. In R. Dorson (Ed.), *Handbook of American folklore* (pp. 362-368). Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Bauman, R. & Sherzer, J. (Eds). (1974). *Explorations in the ethnography of speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Benson, D. and J. Hughes. (1983). *The perspective of ethno-methodology*. London & New York: Longman.
- Berry, J. (1961). *Spoken art in West Africa*. London: London University Press.
- Best, J.W. & Khan, J.V. (2002). *Research in education*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India.
- Birch, D. (1996). *Language, literature and critical practice ways of analysing text*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Burns, J. (2009). *Female voices from an Ewe dance-drumming community in Ghana*. USA: Ashgate Publishing Company.

- Burton, R.F. (1865). *Wit and wisdom from West Africa*. London: Tinsley Brothers.
- Busia, K.A. (1976). The Ashanti. In D. Forde (Ed.), *African Worlds: Studies in the cosmological ideas and social values of African peoples* (pp.190-209). International African Institute: Oxford University Press.
- Castle, G. (2007). *The Blackwell guide to literary theory*. USA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Creswell, J.W. (1994). *Research design qualitative & quantitative approaches*. New Delhi: SAGE Publications.
- Chambers, J. K, & Trudgill, P. (2004). *Dialectology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Christopher, A. A. (2009). A longitudinal study of the use of rhetorical figures and communication and stylistic strategies in advertising slogans, doctoral dissertation, University of Nottingham Hallward.
- Cockcroft, R. & Cockcroft, S. M. (2005). *Persuading people. 2nd ed.* London: Macmillan Press.
- Cohen, T. (1978). Metaphor and the cultivation of intimacy. In S. Sheldon (Ed.), *Critical inquiry: special issue on metaphor*. Chicago: USA.
- Corbett, E. P. L. (1990). *Classical rhetoric for the modern student*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Culler, J. (2005). *Literary theory: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Darah, G.G. (2004). Urhobo performance arts. In F. Perkins (Ed.), *Where Gods and mortals meet: Continuity and renewal in Urhobo Art*. Ghent: Snoeck Publishers.

- de Man, P. (1979). Semiology and rhetoric. In C. Kaplan, & W. Anderson (Eds.), *Criticism: Major statements*. 3rd edition (pp. 661-677). New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Department of Linguistics (University of Ghana), (2011). *Ewe Encyclopedic Dictionary of Health*. Combert Impressions Ltd.
- Dingemans, M. (2012). Advances in the cross-linguistic study of ideophones. *Language and linguistics compass*, 654-672. Max Planck Institute of Psycholinguistics: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Dilley, R. M. (2002). The problem of context in social and cultural anthropology. *Language and communication*, 22, 437-456.
- Di Yanni, R. (2002). *Literature reading: fiction, poetry and drama*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Doku, E. V. (1967). Root Crops in Ghana. *Journal of Tropical Geography*. 11(19), 9.
- Donnelly, C. (1994). *Linguistics for writers*. New York: State University of NY Press.
- Dovlo, F. E. (1973). Maize in the Ghanaian diet. *The home scientist. Journal of the Ghana Home Science Association* 2, (3), 13-29.
- Dovlo, F. E. (1997). Nutrition and food utilization. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *Handbook of Eweland. Vol 1. The Ewes of southeastern Ghana* (pp.195-200). Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Dundes, A. (1980). *Interpreting folklore*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Duranti, A. & Goodwin, C. (1992). *Rethinking context: Language as interactive phenomenon*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Duthie, A. (1996). *Introducing Ewe linguistic patterns: phonology, grammar, semantics*. Accra: Ghana University Press Press.
- Dyer, G. (1988). *Advertising as communication*. London: Routledge.
- Dzameshie, A. (1998). Sociocultural and sociolinguistics dimensions of Ewe personal names. Paper presented at the *GILLBT Seminar Week* Tamale, February, 16-20, 1998.
- Dzobo, N. K. (1973). *African Proverbs: A guide to conduct: The moral values of Ewe proverbs*. Vol 1. Cape Coast: University of Cape Coast.
- Dzobo, N. K. (2006). *African Proverbs, A guide to conduct Vol. III*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Edu-Buandoh, D. & Okyere, G. (2009). A sociolinguistic study of the paralinguistic modes of communication among the Kwahus of Ghana. *Drumspeak, International Journal of Research in the Humanities*, 2, (1), 1-18.
- Eagleton, T. (1996). *Literary theory: An introduction 2nd edition*. India: Blackwell Publishing.
- Egblewogbe, E.Y. (1991) Imagery in oral literature with special emphasis on Ewe oral poetry. *Legon Journal of the Humanities*, 5, 106-123.
- Egblewogbe, E.Y. (1975). Songs and games as an aspect of socialisation of children education media. Unpublished master's dissertation, University of Ghana, Legon.

- Eliot, T. S. (1991). Tradition and the individual talent. In C. Kaplan, & W. Anderson (Eds.), *Criticism, major statements 3rd edition* (pp.429-437). New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Enschot, R. Vans, Beckers, C., & Mulken, van M. (2014). *Rhetorical figures in UK and Dutch TV Commercials. The occurrence of schemes and tropes and their effects on AD Likeability*. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2066/78715>.
- Fiadjoe, G. (1996). Akpalu fe hawo. Nyadu legbe si wonlo na Ghanadegbewo n̄uti nusr̄ofe le Cape Coast abe *degree* dodokp̄o fe akpa aḍe ene.
- Fiagbedzi, N. (2005). *An essay on the nature of the aesthetic in the African musical Arts*. Ghana: Royal Crown Press Ltd.
- Finnegan, R. (1970). *Oral literature in Africa*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Finnegan, R. (1992). *Oral Traditions and the verbal arts. A guide to research practices*. Routledge: USA and Canada.
- Finnegan, R. (2012). *Oral literature in Africa*. UK: Open Book Publishers.
- Fiurama, G. C. (1995). *The metaphoric process: Connections between language and life*. New York: Routledge.
- Fiske, J. (1984). *Introduction to communication studies*. London: Methuen.
- Forde, D. (1976). *African Worlds Studies in the cosmological ideas and social values, of African peoples*. International African Institute: Oxford University Press.
- Gaba, C. R. (1997). The religious life of the people. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *A Handbook of Eweland. Vol 1. The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana* (pp.85-122). Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.

- Gavua, K. (Ed.) (2000). *A Handbook of Eweland Vol. II. The Northern Ewes of Ghana*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Glucksberg, S. & Danks, J. (1975). *Experimental psycholinguistics*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum Associates.
- Golomeke, J. A. (1998). *Ewe proverbs, idioms and their English equivalents*. Keta: Photo City Press.
- Gossen, G. (1971). Chamula games of verbal behaviour. *Journal of American Folklore* 84, 145-167. Retrieved from <http://en.wikipedia.org>.
- Gunner, L. (2007). Africa and orality. In O. Tejumola & A. Quayson (Eds.), *African literature an anthology of criticism and theory* (pp. 67-73). USA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Gyekye, K. (1996). *African cultural values, an introduction*. Accra: Sankofa Publishing Company.
- Hampate Bâ, A. (1995). The living tradition. In J. Ki-Zerbo (Ed.), *General history of Africa. Methodology and African prehistory* (pp.166-205). Heineman Educational Publishers: Oxford.
- Hanson, P. P. (1980). Explaining metaphorical interpretation. *Poetics* 9, (pp. 67-71).
- Holman, C & Harmon, W. (1986). *A handbook to literature. Fifth edition*. New York: Macmillan.
- Hulme, H. M. (1981a). *New swan Shakespeare Julius Caesar*. Great Britain: Longmans.
- Hulme, H. M. (1981b) *New Swan Shakespeare, Macbeth*. Great Britain: The Chaucer Longmans.

- Innes, G. (1990). Formulae in Mandika epic: The problem of translation. In L. Okpewho (Ed.), *The oral performance in Africa* (pp.101-110). Nigeria: Spectrum Books Ltd.
- Iyengar, K. R. S. & Nandakumar, P. (2009). *Introduction to the study of English literature*. India: Sterling Publishers Private Limited.
- Kaplan, S. J. (1992). A conceptual analysis of form and content in visual metaphors. *Communication*, 32, 144 – 161.
- Kilian-Hatz, C. (2001). Universality and diversity. Ideophones from Baka and Kxoe. In E. F. K.Voeltz & C. Kilian-Hatz (Eds.), *Ideophones* (pp.155-163). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Kiyimba, A. (2010). Men and power: Masculinity in the folktales and proverbs of the Baganda. In H.H.Mugambi & A.J.Tuzyline (Eds.), *Masculinities in African literary and cultural texts* (pp.35-48). UK: Ayebia Clarke Publishing Limited.
- Koul, L. (2011). *Methodology of educational research. Fourth edition*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.
- Kovey, J. A. S. Y. (1998). *Tɔgbi evemegā akpa gbātɔ*. Accra: Bureau of Ghana Languages.
- Kumassah, A. (2014). *The migration saga of the Anlo-Ewes of Ghana*. Keta: Photo City Press.
- Kwesi, George. (2006). Nzema mrelabule Nzema proverbs. *Perspectives on research: Materials and studies*, No. 2. Institute of African Studies, Univ. of Ghana.

- Lakoff, G. (1993). The contemporary theory of metaphor. In A. Ortony (Ed.), *Metaphor and thought. Second edition* (pp. 202-251). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago and London: Chicago University Press.
- Lakoff, G. & Johnson, M. (1999). *Philosophy in the flesh: The embodied mind and its challenges to western thought*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lakoff, G. & Turner, M. (1989). *More than cool reason: A field guide to poetic metaphor*. Chicago: University of Chicago.
- Lawrance, B. (2005). The history of the Ewe language and the Ewe language education. In B. Lawrance (Ed.), *A Handbook of the Eweland Vol. III: The Ewe of Togo and Benin*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Service.
- Leech, G. N. (1973). *A Linguistic guide to English poetry*. London: Longman Group Limited.
- Mamatta, C. M. K. (1978). *The Ewes of West Africa. Vol.I*. Accra: Advent Press.
- McQuarrie, E. F. & Mick, D. G. (1996). Figures of rhetoric in advertising language. *Journal of Consumer Research* 22: 424–438. Retrieved from <http://gates.comm.virginia.edu.04/04/2014>).
- McGregor, W. (2009). *Linguistics: An Introduction*. Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Metcalf, P. (2005). *Anthropology, the basics*. New York: Routledge.
- Meyer, M. (2007). *Poetry: An introduction*. New York: Bedford/St. Martin's.
- Mooij, J. J. A. (1976). *A study of metaphor*. New York: North-Holland Publishing Company.

- Mugambi, N. H. & Allan, J. T. (2010) (Eds.) *Masculinities in African literary and cultural Texts*. England: Ayebia Clarke Publishing Limited
- Muleka, J. (2014). Theory in the study of African oral literature: The oral artist's agenda. *Journal of Arts and Humanities (JAH)*. 3, (7), 85-91. Retrieved from www.theartsjournal.org/index.php/site/article.07/07/2015.
- Mugambi, N.E. (2010). Masculinity on trial: Gender in African song performance. In H. H. Mugambi & A. J. Tuzyline (Eds.), *Masculinities in African literary and cultural texts* (pp.78-94). UK: Ayebia Clarke Publishing Limited.
- Müller, C. (2008). *Metaphors dead and alive, sleeping and walking: A dynamic view*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Murfin, R. & Supryia, M. (2003). *The bedford glossary of critical and literary terms. Second edition*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Murdock, G. P. (1959). *Africa: Its peoples and their cultural history*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Mwinlaaru, N. I. (2012). Transitivity and Narrative Viewpoint in Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *Weep Not child*. In D. Edu-Buandoh & A. Appartaim (Eds.), *Between language and literature. A Festschrift for Professor Kofi Edu Yankson* (pp.354-370). Cape Coast: University Printing Press.
- Nayo, N. Z. (1965). Akpalu and his songs—A study of the man and his music. Unpublished diploma dissertation, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana, Legon.

- Neuman, L. W. (2007). *Basics of social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. Second edition.* United States of America: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Nilanko, M. (2010). *Compact English prosody and figures of speech.* New Delhi: Macmillan Publisher India Ltd.
- Nukunya, G. K. (1997). The land and the people. In F. Agbodeka (Ed.), *A Handbook of Eweland Volume I: The Ewes of Southeastern Ghana* (pp. 8-13). Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Nkansah, S. K. (2012). Metaphor as concretising tool in *Bɔ̀bɔ̀* Mfantse funeral libation texts. In D. Edu-Buandoh, D. & A. Appartaim (Eds.), *Between Language and Literature. A Festschrift for Professor Kofi Edu Yankson* (pp.371-388). Cape Coast: University Printing Press.
- Nketia, J. H. K. (1955). *Funeral dirges of the Akan people.* Achimota.
- Nketia, J. H. K. (1963). *Folk songs of Ghana.* Legon: Ghana Universities Press.
- Nketia, J. H. K. (1964). The techniques of African oral literature. *Proceedings of the Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences* 8, 5-44.
- Nketia, J. H. K. (1986). *The music of Africa.* London: Victor Gollancz.
- Obeng, G. S. (1994). Verbal indirection in Akan formal discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/222863102_08/02/2015.
- Ohwovoriole, F. (2013). A reflection on Urhobo funeral. In G.G. Darah (Ed.), *Nigerian Journal of Oral Literatures*, (1), 65-80.

- Okombo, O. (1992). The place of ethno-methodology in the study of oral literature. In O. Okombo & J. Nandwa (Eds.), *Reflections on theories and methods in oral literature*. Nairobi: Kola.
- Okpewho, I. (1990). Towards a faithful record: On transcribing and translating the oral narrative performance. In I. Okpewho (Ed.), *The oral performance in Africa* (pp.111-135). Nigeria: Spectrum Books Ltd.
- Okpewho, I. (1992). *African oral literature, backgrounds, character and continuity*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Okpewho, I. (2007). Oral literature and modern African literature. In O. Tejumola & A. Quayson (Eds.), *African literature: An anthology of criticism and theory* (pp.83-91). USA: Blackwell Publishing.
- Omatsola, D. (2013). Towards a semiotics of the literary aesthetics of Itsekiri drum language. In G.G. Dara (Ed.), *Nigerian Journal of Oral Literatures*, 161-185. Nigeria : Delta State University.
- Ong, W. J. (1982). *Orality and literacy. The technologizing of the word*. London & New York: Methuen.
- Osei-Tutu, E. (2002). *Eve numenyaduwo*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.
- Osisanwo, W. (2008). *Introduction to discourse analysis and pragmatics*. Ebu-Meta Lagos: Femolus-Fetop Publishers.
- Osotsi, R. M. (2002). Dead leaves between pages: An essay on the definition of art. *Ijele: Art E-journal of the African World*. Retrieved from <http://www.africaresource.com/ijele/issue5/>
- Orwin, M. (2003). On the concept of definitive text in Somali poetry. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 66, (3), 334-34. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/04/04/2014>

- Owusu, B. (1992). Language as a factor in ethnographic research. *Institute of African Studies Research Review*, 8, (1&2), 55-63.
- Peek, P. M. & Yankah, K. (Eds.) (2004). *African folklore: An encyclopedia*. Great Britain: Routledge.
- Plett, H. F. (2010). *Literary rhetoric: Concepts—structures—analyses*. Boston: Brill
- Putnam, L. L. (2004). Dialectical tensions and rhetorical tropes in negotiations. *Organisational Studies*. Retrieved from <http://oss.sagepub.com/content/25/1/35> 18/09/2014.
- Ricoeur, P. (1985). *Time and narrative, Volume 3*. Blamey, Kathleen, Pellauer & David (trans). Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Saah, K. K. (1986). Language use and attitudes in Ghana. *Anthropological Linguistics*. Indiana University. 367-377. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30027963> 29/09/2015.
- Sacks, H. L. (2009). Ethics and politics in oral history research. In D.M. DeBlasio, C.F. Ganzert, D.H. Mould, S.H. Paschen & H.L. Sacks (Eds.), *Catching Stories: A practical guide to oral history* (pp.42-55). Athens: Swallow Press.
- Sadock, J. M. (1982). Figurative speech and linguistics. In A. Ortony (Ed.), *metaphor and thought* (pp. 46-63). New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Scholes, R., Klaus, Carl H. & Comley, R. Nancy (1982). *Elements of literature 3. fiction, poetry, drama*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Seshie, L. K. M. (1991). *Akpalu fe hawo*. Accra. Sedco Publishing Limited.

- Sherzer, J. F. (1977). *Cuna Ikala: Literature in San Blas*. In *Verbal Art as Performance* (pp133-150). Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Shuk-ling, A. & Foong, Y. Y. (2015). Please continue to be an anime lover: the use of defamation metaphor in Hong Kong electoral discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics* 87. 31-53. Retrieved from [www. sciencedirect. com](http://www.sciencedirect.com)16/02/ 2016.
- Sidikou, A. G. (2001). *Recreating words, reshaping worlds: The verbal art of women from Niger, Mali and Senegal*. Trenton: Africa World Press Inc.
- Sperer, D. & Wilson, D. (1995). *Relevance communication and cognition. Second edition*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Limited.
- Stratton, F. (1995). *Contemporary African literature and the politics of gender*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Sutherland-Addy, E. & Diaw, A. (Eds.) (2005). *Women writing Africa. West Africa and the Sahel*. New York: The Feminist Press, NY.
- Sutherland-Addy, E. (1998). Women and verbal arts in the Oguaa-Edina. *Institute of African Studies Research Review*.14, (21), 1-39.
- Tanure, O. (2010). Deploying masculinity in African oral poetic performance : The man in *Udje*. In H.H. Mugambi & A.J.Tuzyline (Eds.), *Masculinities in African iterary and cultural texts* (pp.66-77). UK: Ayebia Clarke Publishing Limited.
- Thornborrow, J. & Wareing, S. (2005). *Patterns in language: An introduction to language and style*. London: Taylor & Francis.

- Torgah, E. (2006). Did the 'N' really say that? In K. Opoku-Agyemang & J. Highfield, (Eds.), *The State of the Art(s) African studies and American studies in comparative perspective* (pp. 272-277). University of Cape Coast: IDS (un) Limited.
- Tuan, L. T. (2010). *Rhetorical structures in the language of Vietnamese advertisement in Asian Social Science*, 6, (11).
- Vansina, J. (1995). Oral tradition and its methodology. In J. Ki-Zerbo (Ed.), *General history of Africa. Methodology and African prehistory* (pp.142-165). Oxford: Heineman Educational Publishers.
- Vaslov, V. V. (1980). On content and form in art as a reflection of life. In *Marxist-Leninist Aesthetics and the Arts*. Moscow: Progress.
- Veenstra, J. R. (1995). The new historicism of Stephen Grenblatt: On poetics of culture and the interpretation of Shakespeare. *History and Theory*, 34, (3), 174-198. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2505620> 17/04/2013).
- Warren, D. M. & Andrews J. K. (1990). An ethnoscientific approach to Akan arts and aesthetics. In D.M. Warren (Ed.), *Akan arts and elements of change in a Ghanaian indigenous knowledge system* (pp.1-10). The Netherlands.
- Wheelwright, (1968). *Metaphor and reality*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Yankah, K. (1989). *The proverb in the context of Akan rhetoric. A theory of proverb praxis*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc.

- Yankah, K. (1994). *Visual icons and the Akan concept of proverb authorship*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan.
- Yankah, K. (1995). *Speaking for the chief: Okyeame and the politics of Akan royal oratory*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Yankah, K. (2004). Language, the mass media and democracy in Ghana. Annual lecture in the humanities. Accra: CSIR-INSTI.
- Yankah, V. K. (1995). The tropes of degeneration: Language and meaning in Wole Soyinka's *Madmen and Specialists*. *Asemka*, 8, 85-100.
- Yankson, S. A. (2008). Sociolinguistics aspect of Akan in Accra. *Language centre journal*, 2, 55-63.

Oral Sources (Interviews)

1. Aba, John Bosco. 2015 (August, 15). *58years, male child of the referent Aba*.
2. Abiti, Georgina (aka Rhinenɔ). 2014 (December, 27). *75years, wife of the referent Anku Kofi*.
3. Abiwu, Francis. 2015/2016 (November, 10/April, 4). *67years, authority on oral tradition*.
4. Abiwu, Winfred (aka Efo Win). 2015. (January, 1). *70years, son of the referent Abiwu Kwami, a linguist and opinion leader*.
5. Abusa, Christian (aka Awambaby). 2015 (May, 30). *52years, transport owner and driver*.
6. Apawudza, Lance. 2015 (September, 8). *54years, officer at Volta Star FM, Ho*.

7. Atubra, Semanu. 2014 (December, 8). *73years, traditional opinion leader.*
8. Anku, Rhinefreid. 2015(December, 27). *59years, son of the referent Anku Kofi.*
9. Commander (Rtd) Dovlo, Tsidi. 2015/2016 (January, 16/October, 2). *74years, Head of family, opinion leader, expert in oral tradition.*
10. Dr. Opeku, Fabian. 2013 (October, 3). *75years, former Senior Lecturer, Department of Classics and Philosophy University of Cape Coast.*
11. Dzogbelu, Emmanuel. 2013/2016 (February, 16/October, 14). *49years, youth organiser, informant.*
12. Kissiedu, O.V. Yawo. 2015 (January, 8). *72 years, former Director of Center for National Culture, Volta Region, opinion leader, expert in oral tradition, oral literary performer.*
13. Kofinti, Florence. (aka Babynɔ). 2016 (January, 21). *66years, daughter of the referent Kofi Ansa.*
14. Kottoh, Emmanuel. 2016 (July, 14). *78years, elder and expert in oal traditions, opinion leader.*
15. Kro, Yawa. 2014/2016 (August, 13/July, 8). *78years, female referent.*
16. Kwami, Senyo. 2016 (July, 27/Augut, 12). *60years, Former Head of Ewe Section, Hot, Ewe Morning Programme, 'Ewe dukɔ agbe ŋdi na mi' Volta Star, Ho.*
17. Logo, Grace (aka Da Brã). 2015(April, 12). *65years female trader.*

18. Mama Bedzra, Xanu. 2015 (January, 13). *89years, elder of family, expert in oral traditions.*
19. Mama Kuehu II. 2016 (July, 29) *35years, Queenmother of Ave Dakpa, Dzita.*
20. Mama Sadzi, Denyeameto. 2015 (May, 30). *91years, elder, performer and expert in oral tradition.*
21. Professor Amuzu-Kpeglo. 2015 (May, 30). *76years, former District Chief Executive, Ketu South; Director, Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, University of Cape Coast.*
22. Professor Dorm-Adzobu, Clement. 2016 (August, 2). *78years, Vice President, Evangelical Presbyterian University College; opinion leader, Special Adviser to Gbei Traditional Council*
23. Tɔɔbe Baniba, George. 2016 (May, 19). *75years, elder and opinion leader.*
24. Tɔɔbe Doklo Akumsa VI. 2015/2016 (October, 5/March, 3). *69years, Chief of Adume Avenafedo, Anlo Traditional Area*
25. Tɔɔbe Keh XII. 2016 (June, 13). *60years, Chief of Gbi Uegbe, Hohoe Traditional Area.*
26. Tɔɔbe Aziaku, Alormatu. 2014 (March, 3). *92years, family head, expert in oral tradition.*
27. Tɔɔbe Brenya, Yao Solomon. 2016 (August, 8). *65years, farmer, opinion leader.*
28. Mr. Gawuga, Seth. 2015. (November, 29). *73years, a librarian, Evangelical Presbyterian University College, Ho.*

APPENDIX

NYADODO TEXTS

1. *Adzarjudɔ be yee xà Aba*
Adzarjudɔ says he has bothered Aba.
2. *Adzovino be mayia*
Adzovino says let me go/pass.
3. *Kpando dee be ɲlɔkpe ɲu ko wɔate.*
Kpando person says it is the buttocks that will be tired.
4. *Agbalɛ Sunday be Gɛ kpè.*
Agbalɛ Sunday says Accra is huge
5. *Atakuma Kwami be eya ma.*
Atakuma Kwami says that's it.
6. *Aɲku Kofi be kpɔvuvu meziɔ de kpɔvuvu o, nedo gede ko, anyigba ke.*
Aɲku Kofi says a broken fence does not rest on a broken fence; when it snaps, straight to the floor.
7. *Aɲku Kofi be yebe xe yeazu ɲukpetɔ ta yeazu fetɔ.*
Aɲku Kofi says he says rather than he being a disgraceful person he will be a debtor.
8. *De Gaulle be do sigbe nezu fe.*
De Gaulle says say it and let it become a fine.
9. *Peki dee be aalimee mi tsa da.*
Peki person says it is your hip; throw it.

10. *Kpando dee be mako o tse, aḍu ladze.*

Kpando person says even if you don't want to laugh, the teeth will show.

11. *Kɔku Anka be eku de ga ŋu.*

Kɔku Anka says it is dependent on money

12. *Kɔtse Kɔku be petro metɔ agawu o, deko wɔafia.*

Kɔtse Kɔku says petrol is not used to fry bean cake, it will only burn.

13. *Paakunɔ be nyatefe asotɔ mebua ame o baa.*

Paakunɔ says it is true the daft does not respect

14. *Kɔsikumatɔ be menya sie o.*

Kɔsikumatɔ says it is not pleasant to hear.

15. *Alavanyo Tata be wɔnya numɔku wɔazɔ afe akua?*

Alavanyo Tata says do you know how you will walk before you die?

16. *Maame be menye aḍusi ta yeagbe fu gba o.*

Maame says a bleeding gum will not stop her from cracking bones.

17. *Kofi Doḍo be etsiakuwo ko wonya.*

Kofi Doḍo says that is all they know.

18. *Pati be ame ta sɔgbɔ.*

Pati says human heads are many.

19. *Pati be nyawuamee nye veku dodoe.*

Pati says it is circumstance beyond one that results in the exposure of the testicle.

20. *Kɔku Do be edzee nye ame.*

Kɔku Do says salt is man.

21. *Paakunɔ be yebe dome le nya biao ame.*

Paakunɔ says her stomach is interrogating people.

22. *Tagā Mansa be nu nyuie mevɔ le Ablotsi o, ame koe kuɔ le gbɔ.*

Tagā Mansa says good things do not get finished Abroad, it is only human beings that die and leave the things.

23. *Takpoti Kɔsi be kodinya mesia dzre zuɔ o.*

Takpoti Kɔsi says play matter can turn into a quarrel.

24. *Ape Kɔku be yemeyie ame deke be nkume yie Gɛ o.*

Ape Kɔku says he does not borrow anybody's face to travel with to Accra.

25. *Matias be koko mafumafu dada yanya yata yekpɔ ga.*

Matias says it is because he knows how to sell wet cocoa that is why he is rich.

26. *Amewosi be menye kɔkɔ fuanyi ta yeagbe vu wɔɔ.*

Amewosi says it is not because of being thrown down she will stop fighting.

27. *Go Kɔmla be avu kankɔɔ kple akpataku briwe mesɔ o.*

Go Kɔmla says a youthful male dog is not comparable to an aged female hyena.

28. *Kɔsi Kɔkɔ be da tukpɔ media asi o, edɔ wowɔɔ.*

Kɔsi Kɔkɔ says Afro hair does not marry, it is work you must do.

29. *Akɔsiadzānɔ be ekakra menye edɔɔ o.*

Akɔsiadzānɔ says asking for it to be bought is not the same as ordering for it.

30. *Gɛkoto be ahɔpuu.*

Gɛkoto says ahɔpuu.

31. *Abiwu Kwami be obukubuku ofendrefendre.*

Abiwu Kwami says obukubuku ofendrefendre.

32. *Dzambo be xexeme dze abi, evuvu magaku o.*

Dzambo says the world has ulcer, it is chipped away; it cannot heal.

33. *Kpando davakuo be, bobooboi edo le Mawu nu.*

Kpando lunatic says 'bobooboi' God has a lot of work to do.

34. *Kro Yawe be evi nabu na.*

Kro Yawe says a child must obey the mother

35. *Domefesia be yemeto nati de ame deke fe atamagoe nu o.*

Domefesia says he has a nose not because of anybody's snuff box.

36. *Abra Kototsi be ekewoe.*

Abra Kototsi says these ones.

37. *Aba be ne èle lã dami duu, do nku kpede tse dzi.*

Aba says if you are eating fatty meat remember also cough-sickness.

38. *Abiwu Ama be ne'yo Ku be Efo tse awu wo, yoe be Ku nãvo.*

Abiwu Ama says even if you call death Brother, it will kill you; call it Death and be free.

39. *Kofi Ansa be nati be vse deke mele o.*

Kofi Ansa says there is no bad/ugly nose.

40. *Dzangbono be edzie wã nu.*

Dzangbono says it is courage that does things

41. *Dugoe be dɔlehaya menye eku fe ŋkue gbā o.*

Dugoe says when you recover from a sickness it does not mean death is blind.

42. *Mawule be ati wo koe.*

Mawule says they will surely be fed up.

43. *Mawule be sitima mevɔ le afu dzi o.*

Mawule says ship does not get finished on the sea.

44. *Dzam Kofi be ne meku o ko, aɖu nutsitsriwò wo petee.*

Dzam Kofi says if you don't die you will eat all that you are allergic to.

45. *Larpe be nyawuame ta wotsoɔ kpɔxa gbɔ fáá gavanɔ ɔ nye le xome.*

Larpe says it is matters-beyond-one that makes you to start farting in a room immediately after visiting the toilet.

46. *Kpetse be wometoɔ na ame o, ame ɔtɔɔ nyaa.*

Kpetse says they do not tell people, one has to know it him/her self.

47. *Keve be yele tsi le Agona xo.*

Keve says he has already taken a bath in Agona.

48. *Avate Xɔdrɔ be ne yeku ko dɔ awu tagbatsutsuwo.*

Avate the bed-ridden says when s/he dies houseflies will be hungry.

49. *Akosinɔkpɔ be gbɔ konɔ menye gbɔ tre o.*

Akosinɔkpɔ says a barren goat is not a spinster goat.

50. *Tu Kɔdzo be wɔkpɔ nyawoe ke.*

Tu Kɔdzo says you see, these are the issues.

51. *Tu Kɔsi be ele wo gbo.*

Tu Kɔsi says it is up to them.

52. *Tɔgbe Anyigbanu be yeaku afe ulɛ anyo fufu.*

Tɔgbe Anyigbanu says it is only after his death that the taro will be okay for fufu.

53. *Xɔxɔe ɖavakuɔ be wometsɔɔ ɲlɔmenya ɖia kɔ o.*

Xɔxɔe lunatic says you don't joke with issues of the vagina.

54. *Letebi Kɔmla be ne nua manyo ko, ɖe wɔagblɛ ɖe dzi.*

Letebi Kɔmla says if the thing will not be good, it will only worsen.

55. *Elefume be ahatso menɔ axadodro me o.*

Elefume says a lie does not reside in the armpit

56. *Kɔsigã Kɔku be numanyala nɔviwo, babaa na mi.*

Kɔsigã Kɔku says woe to siblings/friends of a fool.

57. *Agɔtri be nyɔnu manyomanyo be ye srɔ menyɔ o.*

Agɔtri says it is the bad woman who says the husband is not good

58. *Kɔsi Tawia be ne dadi meku o, afi matee kpɔ o.*

Kɔsi Tawia says if a cat is not dead, the mouse will not dare to feel it.

59. *Akatsi tsukunɔ be yetutu mefia xoxo hafi de afɔdzia be ne yetso ko ye ɲgɔ nakɔ.*

Akatsi lunatic says he cleaned himself before easing himself so that when he is done his front will be clear.

60. *Afife tsukunɔ be aɖavadzede nyo, gake afɔ yi le eɲuti la koe ɖe fu.*

Afife lunatic says to be a lunatic is good but the only problem with it is the walking.

61. *Kpando nyonuwo be mina mifui anyi.*

Kpando women say let us push him to the ground.

62. *Sabaḍu ḍavakuo be kpòngbo dze kpòngbo dzi.*

Sabaḍu lunatic says kpongbo falls on kpongbo.

63. *Akotokpa be ga mele asiwo nebe nyonu nya mevivia yenu o.*

Akotokpa says you don't have money so you say you don't like women.

64. *Adzakwa Clemence be neno dzoboo.*

Adzakwa Clemence says let it be 'dzoboo'.

65. *Akubia be egbæ ḍu woa?*

Akubia says has a goat eaten you?

66. *Tsali be ekae ka wo?*

Tsali says which one concerns you?

67. *Afoku be miulä blewuu.*

Afoku says be quick slowly.

68. *Akatsi tsukuno be yewo katä yewo ku tsu gake Yevugboma to ya gbome.*

Akatsi lunatic says they are all mad but the case of Yevugboma is extraordinary.

69. *Dakota be menye ye nyana o, xexemee vadoo.*

Dakota says he is not evil; it is the world which is evil.

70. *Davɔdzi be katuga medoa 'sigba o.*

Davɔdzi says you do not depend on court fines to go set up a business.

71. *Davɔdzi be yefe nya medzea Atokotowo nu o, yata wòle alea. Davɔdzi says he is not taken seriously by the people of Atoko that is why things are the way they are.*

72. *Hólú Yawe be eviwonṵwe loo.*

Hólú Yawe says mothers!

73. *Ape Kṵku be ne aha ku ahakpamṵ netoṵ gbe.*

Ape Kṵku says once the palm-wine tree is dead; the wine-path will become bushy.

74. *Kpeleṛe be yebe yemasubṵ Mawu vṵ, agasubṵ mawudṵla tse o.*

Kpeleṛe says he says will not finish serving God and go to serve angels too.

75. *Sakpo be ne ezu ganya ko miese ge.*

Sakpo says when it becomes a case of money we will hear it.

76. *Tṵgbi Sri be yewole dzea ḍom gake yefe ṅku le amlakoea dzi.*

Tṵgbi Sri says they are chatting but his eyes are on the tax.

77. *Lume fia be menye agbalṵ ḍeke yenya o ta, ekeke Howusu do ko eya se yele.*

Lume chief says since he is not educated whatever Howusu says he agrees with.

78. *Dzake fia be yemegaba le egbe nyawo mese o, yata yedzra gbṵto nyigba bale to dzi.*

Dzake chief says he no longer understands issues of today that is why he has sold his low-lying land to live on a hill.

79. *Doga be gae nye dzo.*

Doga says money is fire.

80. *Tṵgbe Dṵku be 'I see.'*

Tṵgbe Dṵku says 'I see.'

81. *Klefe tsiami be mele yewo atakpawo kpaa o, wobe ahayoviwo.*

Klefe linguist says it is not easy for the master tappers let alone the trainee/apprentice tappers.

82. *Kendo be nude le yewo dzi wɔɔ, yeana vuta me.*

Kendo says something is happening to his heart, he wants to seat on top of a vehicle.

83. *Kendo be netɔ kam tse madui.*

Kendo says even if you give me a knock, I will still say it.

84. *Kendo be yemenya gbenegbe woatsɔ yeɔ fia o, yeana vu ta me ana apakamenana srɔ.*

Kendo says he doesn't know when he will be enstooled as a chief so he wants to seat on top of a vehicle to learn how to sit in a palanquin.

85. *Keta tsukuna be edzo de Yesu kple atsiafu dome.*

Keta lunatic says it is between Jesus and the sea.

86. *Peki dee be wo ntɔe le ahaa kpaa gale efi trɔ noo.*

Peki person says you are the same person tapping the wine and stealing it to drink.

87. *Agbozume fiafi be xeyi wɔhedzo xo de.*

Agbozume thief says it has happened already.

88. *Eso be egie ko mele.*

Eso says this is where I am.

89. *Keta tsukuna be gbeyigbe wɔtsiwo kata fe game nasɔ ko, gbemagbee yef^ɔ adava ha vɔvɔ ge.*

Keta lunatic says the day all watches will indicate the same time that is the day he will be cured of his lunacy.

90. *Asrāvɔ be yegblɔm womesem na ye o, ne ŋua ke ko womese ge.*

Asrāvɔ says he speaks but they don't understand him, when the day breaks they will understand him.

91. *Mawuli be wometsɔa akpetesi kua uu o, deko woanoɛ.*

Mawuli says akpetesi is not used to fuel a vehicle, it is drunk #91

92. *Aklɔbɔ be Akatsisia melolo na ye kple Avɔkuɖi o.*

Aklɔbɔ says the Akatsi market is not big enough for him and Avɔkuɖi.

93. *Avɔkuɖi be yenyo wu asikplakɔ.*

Avɔkuɖi says he is better than covering the chest with the hand.

94. *Uudidi fia be asigbalɔ medie Gɛ o.*

Uudidi chief says the empty hand does not go to Accra

95. *Amegã Zanu be gbe na gbe eyi ge*

Amegã Zanu says refuse and refuse you will go.

96. *Kɔɖzo Takuma be woɖui; woka.*

Kɔɖzo Takuma says they have finished eating it; they have dispersed.

97. *Edzam be Edzam be nu me le vo na Bom tɔ.*

Edzam says Edzam's mouth is different from Bom's.

98. *Tagbɔ be yemeto aɖu de ame aɖeke fe bli ŋu o.*

Tagbɔ says he developed teeth, not because of anybody's corn.

99. *Atsu Bɔta be degbɔɛ na nu hawo.*

Atsu Bɔta says it is go and come that gives to the group

100. *Gbagblavudza be amemaxanu, womexaa nu de nu o.*
Gbagblavudza says one who does not worry; you do not worry for him.
101. *Kumasi be amenogbe adibae; ne etee kpɔ woɖi nanyii.*
Kumasi says a living person is a pawpaw; if you feel it and it is ripe you eat it.
102. *Kumasi be ne amegbetɔ mewɔ adidri o, akpɔ agbe anɔa?*
Kumasi says if a human being is not dishonest, will he live?
103. *Aɖaklu dee be polisi wɔada be fetu neto vo na polisi mawɔada tɔa?*
Aɖaklu person says is the salary of the over enthusiastic police different from that of the less enthusiastic police?
104. *Sodza Mensa be nyɔnunyado gamagblɛ de hã lia? Afle kpetike godoo.*
Sodza Mensa says can you flirt without spending money? You will buy toffee by all means.
105. *Ganda be devisinu menye deɖifɔkpa mesaa me o.*
Ganda says what is in the hands of a child is not a child's footwear that cannot fit people.
106. *Gidisu Mensa be ame ɣutɔ be ɣkume aɖaɣu nɔ wozɔɔ kpeme.*
Gidisu Mensa says it is the aesthetic in the face of the individual that makes him/her to walk in stones.
107. *Tɔngɔɖiɔ be gbedeme fu.*
Tɔngɔɖiɔ says old time is difficult.
108. *Keta tsukunɔ be wɔ ɣutsu ya, nanee newɔ.*
Keta lunatic says you this man, it is something you have done.
109. *Agbozume ɣpli be yeahanya na woa?*
Agbozume ghost says does he know for them?
110. *Simon be ame bubu fe afɔdzi de wɔnya kpɔxa?*
Simon says is it pleasant to look somebody else's shit/faeces?
111. *Agbeli Yawoe be ela wɔnya naa?*
Agbeli Yawoe says is it how easy it is to give?
112. *Agbeli Yawoe be nekpam ko, ko asi dzi nam.*
Agbeli Yawoe says when you meet me just wave at me

113. *Agbeli Yawoe be enya nuke wowɔ le gbedzi afe nebe gbedzitowo dea?*

Agbeli Yawoe says do you know what takes place in the forest for you to be welcoming me from there?

114 *Christoph Sowu be wɔɔi woɔu.*

Christoph Sowu says what you create is what you eat later.

115. *Kpando ɔavakuɔ be ame keke foa si le yebe ɲlɔme ɲu, Dagadu be afeme ke yewoadoe se le.*

Kpando lunatic says if anybody jokes with her vagina, they will both end up in Dagadu's house.

116. *Xɔxɔe ɔavakuɔ be gbeto mevo o.*

Xɔxɔe lunatic says man is not free.

117. *Maame be futɔ f'a va panie le ɲlɔme.*

Maame says an enemy's penis is a needle in the vagina.

118. *Alavanyo Tata be yef'afɔ deka le Kɔlebu loo.*

Alavanyo Tata says one of his legs is left at Korlebu.

119. *Tɔgbe Kwami be ne susu maade abla o ko, afɔ ya kpe fu.*

Tɔgbe Kwami says if the brain will not be fast then the legs will suffer.

120. *Tɔgbe Agbemenu be asie nɔa ame si enu nyo na*

Tɔgbe Agbemenu says it is when you have hands that things go well.

121. *Adonu be de wɔ wɔm pɔ.*

Adonu says it has happened to me before.

122. *Agbeve be ayoo hee*

Agbeve says 'ayohee'

123. *Sefenu be sukli le ye ve me.*

Sefenu says sugar is in his throat.

124. *Tɔgbe Dodzi be okliyakliya, osakposakpo.*

Tɔgbe Dodzi says okliyakliya, osakposakpo

125. *Yawotse Anani be ame keke ye aku koe aku.*
Yawotse Anani says the person who will die, will die.
126. *Mama Nyoame be dame maka kpɔ bángédé tse vivi na.*
Mama Nyoame says the stomach is not searched 'bángédé' is also delicious.
127. *Anku Kofi be emesewoe le.*
Anku Kofi says the understanding time is there.
128. *Titsa Seniadza be egbeke woayɔ kaatu tsotso be wɔfa mase o tse elee gbɔ.*
Titsa Seniadza says the day they will call the broken liana Uncle to no avail is coming.
129. *Abalo be amenɔvi kuku nyo wu ame nɔtɔ.*
Abalo says the death of a friend/sibling is better than the death of oneself.
130. *Dzam Kofi be ne yebe avɔ vu, meka ame 'deke o; ele yekple gblele dome.*
Dzam Kofi says if his cloth is torn, it is not the business of anybody; it is between him and the harmattan.
131. *Agblayɔ Tins be nugbegblɛ eve menɔ tefe deka o.*
Agblayɔ Tins says two bad things do not live at the same place.
132. *Gaxatse be ne yebe nya tsi nawoe, megakpɔ yebe nkume o; golome gbɔ nyaa le.*
Gaxatse says when he is talking to you, do not look into his face; inside the pocket is where the matter lies.
133. *Tɔgbɛ Zoli be tu yeye flelawo, avawɔwɔ ne dzroɔ wo.*
Tɔgbɛ Zoli says those who have bought new guns, fighting wars interests them.
134. *Dugoe be faɖeme metuɔ ehawo o.*
Dugoe says what is planted later cannot catch up with the rest.
135. *Dugoe be amatsi no le ame gbɔ mevɔ dɔ na ame o.*
Dugoe says drinking medicine from somebody will not end your sickness.
136. *Afutu Kɔmla be zɔhe wozɔ ame fe kɔ glɔ yemezɔ o.*
Afutu Kɔmla says friendship that makes one's neck crooked he does not engage in.

137. *Dzo Kɔkuvɪ be ne yeku woɔa akpakplalá na amewo, meka ye o.*

Dzo Kɔkuvɪ says when he dies and they cook frog meat for people, he does not care.

138. *Agbloyor Sam be avu kuku tse nyuie fe le eru.*

Agbloyor Sam says even a dead dog has a good thing in it

139. *Thaddeus Kɔsi be ametsitsi nya ku edɔe wuie.*

Thaddeus Kɔsi says the old person who knows death will go hungry.

140. *Aɔaklu ɔee be oboborobi obó, ababarabi abá.*

Aɔaklu ɔee says 'oboborobi obó, ababarabi abá'.

141. *Maame be ne elè laláálá naɔu lá, ne elè kpakpaakpe naɔu akpa.*

Maame says if you are 'laláálá' eat meat; if you are kpakpaakpe, eat fish.

142. *Amambaby be miele edzi nyo wu ɔeɔi te.*

Amambaby says we are on it is better than we are tired.

143. *Saba be neyi dzi.*

Saba says let it go on