

# **UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

## **THE AESTHETICS OF DIPO SONGS**

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**2014**

# **UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA**

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**MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY**

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**(8110060010)**

**A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH EDUCATION,  
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EDUCATION**

**2014**

## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I, Rebecca Gberki Angmor declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotation and reference contained in published works which have all been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

Signature

.....

Date

.....

### Supervisor's Declaration

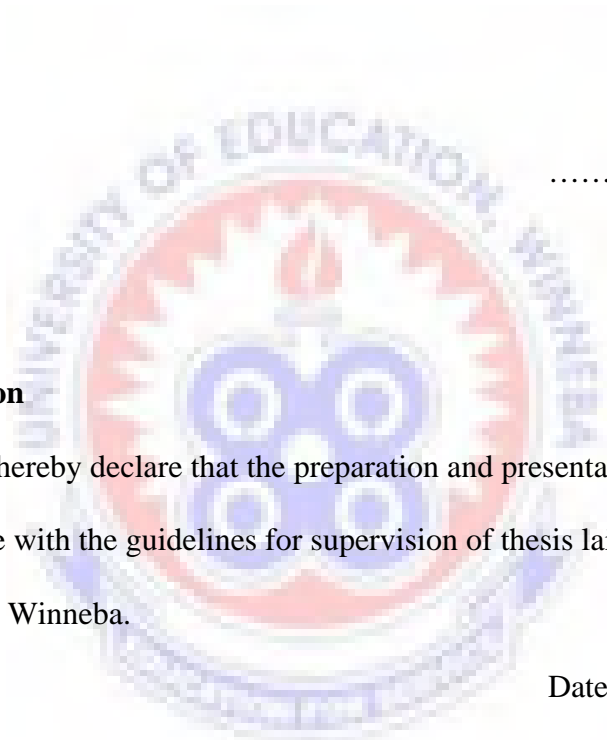
I Prof. Kwakuvi Azasu, hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Signature

.....

Date

.....



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## **DEDICATION**

To my daughters,

**GRACE KABUKIE KORANTENG-AKLIE &**

**BENEDICTA KABUKOUR KORANTENG-AKLIE**



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## **ABSTRACT**

This study sets out to investigate the use of aesthetic elements in *dipo* songs that contribute to their social importance. *Dipo* songs serve as a means of social control; as a means of action directed towards the solution of problems that have plagued society in recent times by exposing the weakness, minor follies and major vices. Thus satire which is a major aesthetic element of *dipo* songs acts as a means of surgery to correct the follies. In a bid to achieve this, the researcher used questionnaires (unstructured and unrestricted), participant observation and face to face interviews to collect data for analysis. These sessions were recorded and translated and interpreted for analysis. The population was taken from major towns in Manya Krobo. In all, about 70 songs were presented for analysis in the study. The research has proved that *dipo* songs educate; spell out the dos and don'ts of life. For this reason, one major aesthetic element which has been extensively discussed is satire and humour in *dipo* songs. Over the years, these songs have helped to produce a conscientious and productive people since any deviation from the normal way of life is held up for ridicule. The study therefore recommends that the study of African music be give a priority in the country's universities and colleges of education. The researcher also calls on the Konor and people of Manya Krobo to redirect their attention to *dipo* songs because they have the ability to address the vices they have to contend with in recent times.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Over the years, the artistry of oral forms has been noted by scholars. Several arguments have been put forward as to the literariness or otherwise of these art forms. Some of such forms include songs and dances. These pose major problems of definition and categorization. Many scholars, therefore, do not consider them as literature in their own right. These songs, mostly composed on the spur of the moment, usually address problems peculiar to African experiences, hence they are not easily comprehended by foreigners.

Despite the prejudices against traditional African songs they form an integral part of African culture. Music in African societies serves many roles. It is inseparable from the people's culture and many other practices. Music, either making it or listening to it, is linked to their life experiences. These experiences involve special occasions such as births, weddings and funerals, and to the accompaniment of everyday experiences, such as playing games, learning about the environment, driving in cars, and discussing politics and economics. From birth through puberty, maturity, and old age, Africans observe various rites and rituals accompanied by music, binding them spiritually and culturally to others in their communities. Finnegan (1970:242) notes

Rites of passages are common occasions for singing. There are songs associated with birth, with initiation and puberty, betrothal, marriage acquiring a new title or status and funeral and memorial celebrations.

These art forms are usually neglected by most scholars, Africans hold them in high esteem and there is hardly any traditional gathering that is not embellished by the art form. And it must be noted, that these art forms have been used to forge unity among the people over the years.

Initiation rites are necessary parts of communities as are arms and legs to the human body. These rites are critical for individual and community cohesion, and it should not be taken for granted that people automatically grow and develop into responsible community-oriented adults. These rites were originally instituted by African ancestors while they were living in order to link the individual to the community and the community to their ancestors in the spirit world. Thus they serve as mediums for socialisation. These rites include birth, adulthood or initiation, marriage and death. Okot p' Bitek (1974) observes that "dramatic ritual is functional in traditional society, because rites are efforts to change the undesirable or maintain the desirable".

The rite of adulthood or initiation is the second major rite and it is nowadays the most popular among the set of rites. Most people today assume that the rite of passage only refers to initiation into adulthood, and they are often not aware that adulthood rite is only one set of rites within a larger system of rites. Adulthood rite is usually done at the onset of puberty and it is to ensure the shaping of productive, community-oriented and responsible adults. The most important is the initiation of girls into womanhood. African female initiation ceremonies are rites of passage for girls entering womanhood, and are usually a public announcement of the girl's eligibility for marriage.

In Africa, initiation ceremonies are rooted in deep, conservative traditions. African life revolves around the family and, therefore, female African initiation ceremonies tend to focus heavily on the preparation of young girls to be good wives and excellent mothers. Examples are the *Dipo* performed for Krobo girls and the 'Bragoro' or 'Brapue' among the Akan, especially, the Asante and Bono, who perform puberty rites for their daughters.

Among the Akans *bragoro* is performed to usher girls into womanhood. Considering the value placed on womanhood, the initiation is performed under the supervision of the queen mother in collaboration with women opinion leaders. On seeing her first menstruation, a girl is secluded from the community for about two weeks. During the confinement, she is taught the rudiments of womanhood; cleanliness, sex in marriage, care for spouse and childbearing. At the outdooing, a durbar is held where the newly-initiated woman is presented to the community and especially prospective suitors. She is also showered with gifts.

*Dipo* is a puberty rite performed for Krobo girls both of the Manya and Yilo, to usher them into womanhood and especially to teach them the rudiments of marriage and the training of children. It takes place between the months of March to June every year. The rituals begin with a public announcement for parents to get their daughters ready. The ceremony begins on Thursday and ends on Monday.

Thursday marks the formal beginning of the rite. The girls wear stringed beads around their necks and are made to stand on an antelope's skin. This is to check their chastity. It is believed that something will happen to a girl found to be pregnant.

Friday marks the going to the stream. The girls are cleansed ritually. The main cleansing is done on their return where a he-goat is slaughtered and the blood smeared on the feet of the girls. Before the goat is slaughtered, the girls are reminded of the need to respect their future husbands. The cleansing is to ward off evil associated with marriage and childbirth.

Sunday marks the climax of the performance; the climbing of the *dipo* sacred stone. This is what makes one a Krobo girl. Girls found to be pregnant are banished to serve as a deterrent to other girls. From that moment, the girls are regarded ripe for marriage.

On Monday, the girls are outdoored and a *durbar* is held in their honour to display their beauty and dance skill. They are given messages through the rich *klama*. To the Krobo, failure to undergo this very important rite breeds vulnerability, immorality, youthful waywardness, negative upbringing and social unrest

*Dipo* is indigenous and pregnant with values that will impact today's Krobo woman with rich moral values, business orientation and long-lasting relationships which we currently lack. This is the preoccupation of most *dipo* songs. Society needs to go back for its lost moral fibre.

Singing is a major part of the celebration. Every ritual is accompanied with songs which are meant to buttress the message given to the girls. The songs address good motherhood, respect, faithfulness in marriage, business orientation, cleanliness and the like. The songs only benefit the initiates, but messages are sent through it to the larger society especially on vices such as irresponsibility, extravagance, laziness, hypocrisy and many others. The aesthetic qualities of these songs cannot be overemphasized. This will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

Over the years, however, the *dipo* rites have been severely distorted. Cultural domination due to Christianity and Islam, colonization and neo-colonization has led to the reduction of this female rite of passage into nothing but idol worship. The emergence of Christianity has seen Krobos throwing away what has closely knitted the moral fibre of society. What is practised today has lost its significance hence the need for the younger generation to revive and reposition it in the Krobo cultural context. Commenting on the *dipo* custom and the Christian faith, Teyegaga (1985:20) writes:

What good has *dipo* custom today in Krobo society? In the traditional community *dipo* custom has completely lost its moral and social aspects of puberty rites and preparations for marriage. What is left now is a shadow and not the original substance. The present society now has no patience to practice the ancient moral principles associated with it...

This assertion may be true, but there is something about the whole rite which has been kept under a bushel for generations. It is now time to unearth the richness of the *dipo* songs which this study seeks to do.

Another important aspect of the culture of the Krobos worth looking at is the art of music making. The Krobo concept of music is totally different from that of the Western world. To the Krobo, music expresses life in general. This explains the reason why music must be studied within the context of the life of the Krobo. Music is an integral part of the life of every individual from the cradle to the grave. At a very early stage in life, the child takes an active role in music, making musical instruments by the age of three or four. Musical games played by children is to prepare them to participate in all areas of adult

activity such as fishing, hunting, farming, grinding of cereal, attending weddings and funerals, and dances, among others.

The art of music is so inherent in the Krobo that he hardly does anything without music. Music is nearly always coupled with some other art such as poetry or dance and is one of the most revealing forms of expression of the black soul. One cannot help, but to conclude that everyone in Krobo must be a musician by definition. Music is an active and driving force that animates the life of the entire community. Music among the Krobos is a way of life and not just a form of entertainment. This goes to explain why there is hardly any rite in Kroboland that is not accompanied by song texts.

Initiation rites to usher young girls into adulthood are occasions for singing among the Krobos of Manya Krobo in the Eastern Region of Ghana. Apart from the fact that these songs are sang to accompany the various rituals the girls are taken through, they are also intended to teach or admonish not only the initiates, but the society as a means of social control. According to Agordoh (1994:90):

Song texts in Africa are sometimes a reflection of the concerns of the culture of which they are part; they contribute to the correction of those aspects of behaviour to which they call attention. They serve as a direct social control, that is, they are sometimes used, through admonishing, ridicule, and in some cases even more direct action, to effect change in the behaviour of erring members of the society.

This is because you can say publicly in songs what you cannot say to a man's face. These songs are composed with so much wit that they provoke laughter; they are at the same time effecting corrections in society which is one major objective of literature. This is one use of song identified by Merriam.



Song texts, then, can be used as a means of action directed toward the solution of problems which plague community. While this can take the form of ridicule or shame, or sanctioned legal action... (1963:201).

Thus to Merriam if all the verbal forms aimed at addressing a problem fail then one can only resort to the use of songs. If the main aim of the artist is to imitate human nature, bringing out its frailties, address them as far as possible, then there is the need to study *dipo* songs which are pregnant with the 'medicine' to bring about a change as far as human nature is concerned.

It is against this backdrop that the study of the aesthetics especially, satire and humour in *dipo* songs among the Krobos is the focus of this thesis.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Initiation ceremonies are occasions for singing. Among the Krobos, *klama* is the music performed during the *dipo* ceremony to usher young girls into womanhood. It is the song that brings out the performance and tells the audience about the occasion.

In the olden days, the words in the songs were meant to educate the young girls on womanhood and marriage in general. Over the years, the lyrics in the music have given way to words of criticism of hypocrisy in society. The rich *klama* of old is giving way to songs of mockery, sarcasm, insult and songs of insinuation against pastors and the Church in general as well as hypocrites. This change has come about as a result of Christianity and the so-called modernity and the erroneous belief that traditional practices are a form of pagan worship. When *dipo* and anything associated with it is mentioned

today, it no longer conveys a sense of social cohesion, but hatred of customs and tradition, prejudice, misunderstanding and discord. This has been a major concern to the literary artist. Cultural adulteration through modernity and Christianity has contributed so much to the prejudice. The attempt to address the problem has given way to a new breed of *klama* songs.

A few people have written about the origin of *dipo*, the ceremony and its social importance, and compiled *dipo* songs for posterity. Mention can be made of Tettey (2001) who wrote the significance of the rites and Accam (1990) who also compiled some *klama* songs. However, little has been said or written about the aesthetics of these songs and what really goes into them that contribute to their social importance but not into the change that has eaten into the songs in recent times. This thesis therefore looks at the aesthetics of *dipo* songs which contribute to their social importance.

### **1.3 Scope of the Study**

The Krobos are part of the Ga-Adangbe ethnic group and are among the inhabitants of the Eastern Region of Ghana. They are grouped as part of Ga-Dangme ethno-linguistic group and also the largest group of the seven Dangme ethnic groups of southeastern Ghana. They occupy the Accra Plains, Akuapim Mountains and the Afram Basin. There are two Krobo groups: the Manya and Yilo Krobo.

They are believed to have migrated from Sameh in Western Nigeria, crossed the Savannah westward through hostile lands and crossed the River Volta, and settled at the Tagologo plains, within the Accra Plains, later to be called Lɔlɔvɔ somewhere around the fourteenth century. ('Lɔlɔvɔ' means brotherly love is finished in allusion to community quarrels among the immigrants).

After travelling through many territories, which resisted their passage, they finally After travelling through many territories, which resisted their passage, they finally established their home on the Krobo Mountain where they lived for more than four hundred years. "Their migration has been attributed to political strife and wars". (Teyegaga 1985:7) The Krobos were the first to inhabit the Krobo Mountain, also known as *Kloyo* upon arrival in the area now known as Ghana. They were forced to leave the mountain in 1892 by the British. There are two Krobo groups: the Manya and Yilo Krobos. The two Krobo traditional areas were originally known as 'Nɔwe' that is Manya meaning "ones home" and Nyɛwe (Yilo). The name Manya came from the word, Maonya 'that is,"keep your mouth shut'. The Yilo is derived from the expression "wa yilo", meaning "we don't eat that'. Some oral traditions have it that, when the Yilo returned from Denkyera, they lost most of the indigenous Krobo customs. As a result of that, they were taken through series of aculturalisation rites to make them accepted into the society. The Yilos mainly consist of people from other tribes who sought refuge in Kroboland . The Krobos were a united nation until 1858 when a conflict developed between Nene Olongo Patu, Chief of Western Krobo (Yilo Krobo) and Nene Odonkor Azu of the eastern Krobo (Manya

Krobo). It is after this that the Krobos have been administered as two separate states, namely Manya Krobo and Yilo Krobo.

The study will cover the songs sung during the performance of *dipo* initiation rite in Manya Krobo. The special location for the collection of data will be Manya kpognunor, Osiekuse, Adjikpo and Koletsom. These songs will be studied for elements of humour and satire and then analysed to bring out their aesthetic values.

#### **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The issue of the authenticity of African literature has been a major concern to literary scholars. African literature right from its inception has faced challenges as regards its definition and survival. To support Finnegan (1970) there are prejudices against traditional African songs. These prejudices do not only come from the outside world, but from Africans.

Christianity and modernity coupled with the fact that most of these songs are not written is a threat to traditional African music text which may gradually lead to its extinction. Over the years *dipo* which has been a platform to showcase the rich cultural, social as well as the religious life of the Krobos has suffered many prejudices with the advent of Christianity. Christians have created the erroneous impression that *dipo* and everything about it is pagan and have made people not to see the need to appreciate it.

In her conclusion to her work on 'Oral Literature in Africa', Finnegan (1970:521) says:

African oral literature then is of interest not only for students of literature, but also for sociologists and all those with interest in African society, past or present. The final note must be however, to point out the great need for further research into this subject...

The researcher, a lover of the African society, both past and present and who hopes to keep and project its rich heritage, is committed to play her part through this study to preserve the beauty of these songs from just fading away with the passage of time. It is the passion to preserve the aesthetic value of these songs that has driven the researcher to investigate the use of satire and humour in the songs. The purpose of the study is to make an in- depth study of *dipo* songs, bring out the use of satire and humour for appreciation, and document it for posterity.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is that it is the first of its kind to be conducted on satire and humour in *dipo* songs.

Folklore as an aspect of African literature is gradually dying out with the passage of each day. Many scholars have gone into the study of 'Language' and even the few that go into the study of Literature seem to be interested in the written aspect.

A personal interaction with Professor Charles Angmor, a seasoned critic of literature, and he was fast to point out, "I know oral literature as a discipline in African literature, but have not done any in-depth study into that field."

This does not mean that oral literature as a literary art form is not worthy of study. What it simply means is that it is time for many scholars to go into the study of oral literature, in particular, the text of lyrics in order to preserve it for posterity.

African music is used in various aspects of life. Africa's culture is deeply rooted in its music. Music is an integral part of the African heritage, with various ceremonies being accompanied by some sort of music. Music is used to communicate and welcoming heroes, among other rituals. As stated earlier, song texts are of great importance in the African society and should be studied and their aesthetics appreciated, Agordoh (ibid.pg.4). Examples are the various lampoons aimed at attacking individuals, communities or institutions either by private or public means. Chief among these are the *halo* performed by the Ewes of the Volta Region of Ghana and the *kpashimo* of the Gas which are used to satirise social deviants.

The study will go a long way to bring oral literature to the fore in the study of African literature and will also serve as a reference material to other researchers who may like to go into the study of oral literature in the near future. The study will also draw the attention of other researchers towards these beautiful songs which have been left unattended to over the years.

## 1.6 Research Questions

1. Are *dipo* songs an important aspect of oral literature?
2. Do *dipo* songs contain aesthetics?

3. What elements bring out the aesthetics?
4. What are the reasons for the use of humour and satire in *dipo* songs?
5. How effective is the use of satire and humour in the *dipo* songs?

## 1.7 Synopsis

Chapter One presents the background which established the need to study *dipo* songs. Chapter Two reviews the literature which provides the backbone to the study. It attempted looking at what satire and humour are and their role in the literary circle. Chapter three presents the methods used in collecting data. In chapter four, the study looks at the aesthetics of *dipo* songs which makes them a unique genre worthy of study. A detailed discussion is made of satire and humour which addresses various thematic concerns. It was realized that the songs have increased in their satiric intent because of the decay which has taken over the Krobo society. The aim of the singers is to cause a reformation in society. Chapter Five presents the findings, summary, conclusion and makes recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

## 2.1 Introduction

A thorough treatment of the topic of this study requires that existing works related to it are critically examined to put it in the right context. Therefore, books and other literary materials such as information from websites, journals and newspapers on *dipo* and other puberty rites were examined. Other things which engaged the attention of the researcher, were literary materials on figures of speech, music, aesthetics, oral literature, importance of songs, satire, humour, their types and significance, performance and new formalist movement. I must say that indeed the examination of the works related to the topic provided a firm grounding for the analysis of data for this research.

## 2.2 Oral Literature

The development and the future of a nation depend on the ability of that nation to create a people firmly rooted in the best of its traditions. The beginning of creating such a firm base is the study of oral literature hence the Dangme name of oral literature *masu gbagbɛɛ*.

Anaba (1993:40) defines oral traditions as;

Those recollections of the past orally transmitted and recounted, that arise naturally within and from the dynamics of a culture. They are shared widely throughout the culture by word of mouth even though they may be entrusted to particular people for safe keeping, transmittal, recitation and narration. They are organic expressions of the identity, purpose, functions, customs and generational continuity of the culture in which they occur. They happen spontaneously as a phenomenon of cultural expression. They would exist and indeed they have existed in the absence of written notes or other more sophisticated recording devices.



By the nature of its orality, the performance becomes alive depending on the performer and audience. The benefits of oral literature include the following:

- Oral literature reflects and shapes the lives and ideas of a group of people: it represents the people's way of life.
- It offers the opportunity to understand the values of a society.
- It serves as a reservoir of cultural heritage.

Aborchie (2012) identifies twelve forms of oral literature among the Adangmes. This includes *Nyazia* (Folklore), *Mifi* (myth), *Lejedi* (Legend), *Telimi* (Libation/ Prayer text), *Alobalo* (Puzzle), and *Amɔɔnɔsaa* (Riddle). Others are *Miegbi* (Drum Language), *Palimi* (Panegyric) *Asile* (Poetry), *Lahi* (Songs), *Lile peemi* (Abuse) and, *Yana* (Dirges). Among these, the song is the most flexible. It is easy to take new ideas or words and fit them into a song without altering the structure, the rhythm or the body movement involved and would at the same time serve its intended purpose. This flexibility makes song the most responsive genre to everyday life and to the ever changing circumstances.

The function of songs depends on the time and seasons when it is created and performed and the prevailing circumstances within the society. Thus when changes occur in the society, they are projected through the medium of the song. According to Wanjiku (1988:7), "Song can reflect the people's philosophy of life, serves as a means of entertainment and a historical record". It is through songs that events such as heroic deeds, wars, natural disasters are talked about.

### 2.3 Aesthetics

The word has been derived from a Greek word 'Aisthetikos', which means 'sensory' or 'sensitive.' From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia, aesthetics is a branch of philosophy dealing with the nature of art, beauty, and taste with the creation and appreciation of beauty.

Introduced into the philosophical lexicon during the Eighteenth Century, the term "aesthetic" has come to be used to designate, among other things, a kind of object, a kind of judgment, a kind of attitude, a kind of experience, and a kind of value. For the most part, aesthetic theories have divided over questions *particular* to one or another of these designations: whether artworks are necessarily aesthetic objects.

The concept of the aesthetic descends from the concept of taste. that we judge things to be beautiful by reasoning it out, where reasoning it out typically involves inferring from principles or applying concepts.

By the late nineteenth century aesthetics was chiefly identified with the cultivation of 'good taste' in anything and everything from fine wine and clothes to literature, painting and music. . Art was also being used as an umbrella term for what were now being called the fine arts: architecture, sculpture, music, poetry (as distinct from verse and song) and literature.

In English and Literary Studies, for instance, the two dominant aesthetics of the first half of the twentieth century have been effectively challenged. New Critics had approached texts as semi-sacred art objects and had asserted an aesthetics which resolves tensions and ambiguities and celebrates organic unity, balance and harmony .

Formalists had concentrated on literariness and poetics in so far as these defamiliarise routine language and sharpen dulled perceptions. Both these critical movements, for all their differences, were therefore upholding positions consistent with late nineteenth century versions of aesthetics and art. Nowadays, however, such positions are much harder to maintain and in many areas have been substantially superseded

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia in the pre-modern tradition, the aesthetics of music or musical aesthetics explored the mathematical and cosmological dimensions of rhythmic and harmonic organization. In the eighteenth century, focus shifted to the experience of hearing music, and thus to questions about its beauty and human enjoyment of music.

There has been a strong tendency in the aesthetics of music to emphasize the paramount importance of compositional structure; however, other issues concerning the aesthetics of music include lyricism, harmony, hypnotism, emotiveness, temporal dynamics, resonance, playfulness, and color. The study will however discuss the aesthetics of dipo songs from a different dimension in chapter 4.

## **2.4 PERFORMANCE**

Performance is the basic characteristic of oral literature. This is, however, overlooked in the collections and analyses of oral literary forms. Oral literature by definition is dependent on a

performer who formulates it in words on a specific occasion—there is no other way in which it can be realized as a literary product. The significance of performance in oral literature goes beyond a mere matter of definition: for the nature of the performance itself can make an important contribution to the impact of the particular literary form being exhibited. Even though it is true that these instances may also exist in written form, they only attain their true fulfillment when actually performed.

The printed words alone represent only a shadow of the full actualization of performances as an aesthetic experience for poet and audience. For, quite apart from the separate question of the overtones and symbolic associations of words and phrases, the actual enactment of the poem also involves the emotional situation, the singer's beauty of voice, facial expression, vocal expressiveness and movements. In fact, all the variegated aspects we think of as contributing to the effectiveness of performance in the case of more familiar literary forms may also play their part in the delivery of unwritten pieces; expressiveness of tone, gesture, facial expression, dramatic use of pause and rhythm, the interplay of passion, dignity, or humour, receptivity to the reactions of the audience. Such devices are not mere embellishments superadded to the already existent literary work as we think of them in regard to written literature, but an integral as well as flexible part of its full realization as a work of art.

Unfortunately it is precisely this aspect which is most often overlooked in recording and interpreting instances of oral literature. A focus on performance brings out the obvious: that much of our relationship to reality, even to the everyday, is negotiated through performance. The invisible is often made visible through performance.

Performance involves performer and audience, often being a participatory audience; and performance space ranging from the fireside, the village square or market place, to a shrine. But whatever the combination of location, time and audience, oral literary forms realise their fullness in performance. Performance involves engagement, audience, and emotion. This remains the case even when there are written texts that represent some or all of the words. Performance of the oral literature necessarily involves interaction with its audience.

When oral traditions are stripped from their contexts and collected in books, most often their embodied aesthetic features of voice, body, and social interaction are lost.

### **2.5 New Formalist Criticism**

Formalism is a school of literary criticism and literary theory having mainly to do with structural purposes of a particular text. It is the study of a text without taking into account any outside influence. Although New Formalism first drew attention as a trend in contemporary American poetry, its genealogy can be traced back to the Russian Formalism and Anglo-American New Criticism of the early and mid- 20th century, or even earlier, to German philosophers of the Enlightenment such as Immanuel Kant. The New Critics argued that a work of art should be studied on the basis of its formal qualities alone, without resorting to contextual details of authorial biography or historical period. Likewise, the Russian Formalists argued that “literary language” was distinct from everyday language and produced a “scientific” system of analysis that they used to distinguish between the two. Central to this system of analysis was attention to form. For example, in one of his early works Victor Shklovsky compared “literary language” to dance. Just as the form of a dance makes one conscious of the way steps are put together, he

claimed, so the form of poetic language makes one aware of the way that words are put together. The rise of New Historicism in the 1980s worked to reverse that methodology, arguing instead that the recognition of a work's historical and cultural context is central to any act of interpretation. New Historicist scholarship criticized New Criticism for its tendency to disregard its own conservative or reactionary ideologies, for unreflexively privileging cultural elitism and intellectual isolationism, and for ignoring the dangers of universalizing or totalizing principles of form and aesthetics.

In literary theory, formalism refers to critical approaches that analyze, interpret, or evaluate the inherent features of a text. These features include not only grammar and syntax but also literary devices. The formalist approach reduces the importance of a text's historical, biographical, and cultural context.

## **2.6 Songs as an Aspect of Oral Poetry**

There used to be a widely held view especially among European anthropologists who studied African societies in the 19th and early 20th centuries that there was nothing of true poetic merit in African oral literature. Poetry, these scholars argue is a mark of an advanced culture or civilisation and the business of men of specialized skill and training who devote their time to observing and commenting on life with beauty and seriousness. Traditional African societies were, in their view, 'still groping in the dark with elementary problems of existence and had not yet attained the level of achievement whereby men could indulge in the pursuit of poetic excellence...' (Okpewho, 1992:3-4) This is further buttressed by Burton as cited in Finnegan (1970:26) thus,

The savage custom of going ‘naked’, we are told, ‘has denuded the mind, and destroyed all decorum in the language. Poetry there is none...There is no metre, no rhyme, nothing that interest or soothes the feelings or arrests passions...

This is what African oral literature has been reduced to by Western scholars. On the contrary, Africa has a rich oral tradition. Chinua Achebe in one of his declarations as cited in Emennyonu (2006: xiii) says:

The fundamental theme in African writing is that African peoples did not hear of culture for the first time from Europeans, their societies were not mindless but frequently had a philosophy of great depth and beauty; they had poetry and above all they had dignity ...

Taking Achebe’s declaration together with the definition of oral literature, it firmly establishes that these rich cultural traditions existed before the Westerners ever dreamt of visiting the continent. They form the core of the lives of the people and constitute their historical base. The fact that they are passed on by word of mouth does not make them in anyway inferior to other traditions that have been recorded.

Vansina (1985:27) also sees oral traditions as “verbal messages which are reported statements from the past beyond the present generation”. He continues to say that the message must be spoken, sung or called out on musical instruments. Thus these oral traditions are passed on through songs. According to him, oral traditions appear in the forms of formulae including titles, slogans, didactic formulae and ritual formulae; poetry comprising historical panegyric, religious and personal stereotypes, lists in the form of place names, and personal names; tales including myths and commentaries consisting of legal precedents.

*The Columbia Encyclopedia* defines a song as “a relatively brief, simple vocal composition, usually a setting of a poetic text, often strophic, for accompanied solo voice”. Dance, music and story-telling are among the ancient art forms that have flourished for many centuries in Africa. Music and dance are terms that we will use to denote musical practices of African people. Ancient African society did not separate their everyday life activities from their music and other cultural experiences. Stone (1998) attests to the difficulty of separating music from the cultural context as she says:

Honest observers are hard pressed to find single indigenous group in Africa that has a term congruent to the usual western notion of “music.” There are terms for more specific acts like singing, playing instruments, and more broadly performing (dance, games, music); but the isolation of musical sound from other arts proves a western abstraction, of which we should be aware when we approach the study of performance in Africa. (p.7)

## 2.7 Initiation Rites in Africa

The educational aspect of rites of passage has been stressed as the equivalent of the schooling of Western children. A very large number of rites contain periods of instruction and/or tests of competence for the initiate as adulthood is never an easy thing to attain. Female initiation rites are more than educational devices however. Examples are the *Dipo* performed for Krobo girls, the *Adifo*, the initiation rite performed to usher adolescents into womanhood among the Ewes of Volta Region of the Ewes and the *Bragoro* or *Brapue* among the Akan, especially the Asante and Bono also perform puberty rites for their daughters.

As Carol Beckwith stated in her book, *African Ceremonies*, Krobo women are regarded throughout the continent as making the most suitable wives. This is because of the



education the initiates are taken through. That is why *dipo* is regarded as what makes a girl a Krobo woman hence the term *klo yo peemi* meaning, 'making a Krobo woman'.

Sexual education was imparted through songs usually with hidden sexual meaning. For example, sex was taught as being pleasurable for its sake rather than for the sake of producing children. A girl was expected to be a virgin when she married and it was also expected that married women would not engage in extra marital affairs. Women were taught that while they enjoyed sex, it was also important they were aware that it was one of their most powerful leverage and that though a girl was not supposed to refuse her husband's advances, she could refuse a lover. In this group, boys were taught to beware of the demands their mistresses might make.

## **2.8 Folk Music in Africa**

The music for these occasions may be broadly classified as either daily or festive. Daily music includes all types of children's songs and game music, lullabies, songs to accompany tedious chores or to synchronize work, songs for personal enjoyment and many types of music designed primarily for mass entertainment, such as social dances or dramatic performances staged by travelling troupes. Festive music is closely linked to special events in the human life cycle, such as births, initiations, weddings and funerals, and to special national, religious, and agricultural events. The elaborate and spectacular masked dances for which Africa is famous are usually associated with such festivities.

In some societies another category of festive music is associated with particular individuals rather than with events. The festivity is generated by the mere presence of the

musician, usually a professional, who sings songs of commemoration and praise for a given patron. These praise songs serve to verify the claim to greatness of various leaders and heroes, both past and present. In the hierarchical societies this genre of song is still important as it serves to establish and maintain the necessary rapport between leaders and the populace.

Allied to the praise song is the historical song and its extension, the epic narrative. Both are common in various parts of Africa, and in both a story is told with musical accompaniment. Songs are incorporated at appropriate points in the story to depict particular scenes. A more popular version of this type is the story-song, in which the content is not necessarily true, but often incorporates a well-known fable or other entertaining stories. The story-song is a vehicle for moral teaching and entertainment.

Work-synchronizing songs promote efficiency and together with those calendar events, in which everyone takes part, contribute to a feeling of group solidarity. Music and instruments associated with royalty or leadership command respect. In the past, some societies even regarded royal instruments as the seat of the king's power; if they were captured by enemies, it marked the downfall of the kingdom.

Music in African societies serves many roles. It is often seen as inseparable from the people's culture and many other practices. Music is fun and makes people want to move to the rhythms, thereby making them lively. At birth, families perform birthrights that introduce the child to the community. Music plays an important part on this occasion.

Music is used to lull a baby to sleep. Game songs are sung during childhood, and they serve the purpose of educating young children about appropriate social manners, the human body, gender roles, the surrounding environment and animals, and relationships.

When girls and boys make the transition from puberty to adult life, they go through an initiation process that is marked by music. Music during this period is used to convey the lessons for the initiates. These lessons point out behaviours that are expected from the initiates and discourage unacceptable behaviours. Another milestone in any young adult life is marriage. Music at the marriage ceremonies marks the celebration of life of the man and woman as they start their lives as a family. During these ceremonies, music is used as a means of communication between the bride and groom. When death comes, there will be music to comfort the family; irrespective of religious conviction, music plays a central role in funeral ceremonies and throughout the period of mourning.

Music in Africa is not an individual affair, it is regarded as a communal activity. Thus to Nketia (1972)

In traditional African societies, music making is generally organized as a social event. Public performances take place on social occasions that is on occasions when members of a group or a community come together for enjoyment of leisure, for recreational activities, or for the performance of a rite, ceremony, festival, or any kind of collective activity... (p.21).

The actual music that may be performed on any occasion depends on the social event and those involved in it. Songs appear in an unlimited number of contexts in Africa and is the most common form of poetry in Africa. Finnegan identifies some examples of songs in

Africa: Religious poetry which includes the hymns, and special purpose poetry –war, hunting and work songs, lyric, topical and political songs, and children’s songs. On religious poetry, this is what Finnegan (1970:167) has to say;

There is a great variety of religious poetry in Africa. There are hymns, prayers, praises, possession songs, and oracular poetry, ...They range from the simple one-or-two line Songs of Senegalese Women in spirit possession rituals or the mystical songs of Southern, Rhodesia with their many nonsense words to the specialized hymns to West African deities or the elaborate corpus of Ifa oracular literature which is so striking a phenomenon among the Yoruba of Southern Nigeria.

These songs are sung or recited on religious occasions, but not necessarily by religious experts to invoke or praise the supernatural beings, to instruct followers, make supplication that is to ask for the day-to-day material needs, and to make intercession.

Special Purpose Poetry is poetry associated with secret societies, various types of associations, initiation, begging, masquerades, and there are also songs to do with cattle and cattle herding. According to Finnegan (1970:242), “rites of passage are very common occasions for singing”. Besides, there are songs associated with birth, initiation and puberty, betrothal, marriage, acquiring a new title or status, and funeral and memorial celebrations.

There are basically two ways in which a piece of music can appeal to us. One is by touching us emotionally, so that we feel either pleasure or pain; the other is by touching our minds so deeply so that we reflect on some aspects of life.

## **2.9 Importance of Songs to the African**

Music is of great significance to the African. It is used to invoke or praise the divinities or ancestors, to instruct followers, make supplication to make intercession. Songs can be

used to pass the time in the tedium of work, to call the attention of fellow hunters so as to identify each other's locations and those of their prey. Work songs, for example, are intended to increase productivity while reducing feelings of boredom. Music can also serve as a line of communication with the spirit world, entertainment and praising of chiefs. Aduonum (1986:19) sums up the importance of songs to the African in these words:

...music is life that is it permeates all daily activities. Music in Africa is the soul which is ultimately concerned with various customs and religious practices. The African is born, named, initiated, fortified, fed, nurtured, and buried with music. In Africa, music heals the sick, music directs and guides the blind, music comforts the widow, and music stops tribal warfare...

Another important role songs play in the lives of Africans is social control. Messages and, especially harsh messages, intended to reach certain portions of society are put in a song and directly or indirectly made to reach the intended audience. To Agordoh (1994), "song texts in Africa are sometimes a reflection of the concerns of the culture of which they are part. They contribute to the correction of those aspects of behaviour to which they call attention. They serve as a direct social control, that is, they are sometimes used, through admonishing, ridicule, and in some cases even more direct action, to effect change in the behaviour of erring members of the society".

Others like Merriam (1963:201) opines that song texts "can be used as a means of action directed toward the solution of problems which plague a community. This can take the form of a ridicule or shame, or sanctioned legal action...".

Thus through songs the message, no matter how foul or insulting, it is easily put across. This is because “you can say publicly in songs what you cannot say to a man’s face, and so this is one of the ways African society takes to maintain a spiritually healthy community” (Hugh Tracey 1954:237). This is what makes satire and humour important in songs.

Writing on protest and satire in Chopi songs, Mapanje et al (1990: 28) write “poetic justice; this neat phrase once used to describe the Chopi musicians of Southern Mozambique, refers to the rule in many African societies that allow poets an unusual freedom of speech. This explains the tremendous vitality of African satire. Any of the usual forms, the praise poem, the work song, even the dirge may be adapted for satirical purpose”.

From the above, it is clear that morality intended to regulate society is put across through the medium of songs. Most songs are not originally intended to satirise but, as and when the need arises, any song form can be adapted to satirise behaviour. Satire is even present in dirges especially when it is believed that the death of someone is not a natural phenomenon. In short, themes explored in songs include love, praise, criticism, death, war and personal redress.

#### **2.10 Puberty Festivals among the Krobos – *Dipo***

No other ritual, in the life of a female Krobo, is of greater importance than or even equal to the *dipo* (Hugo 1993:165). *Dipo* is performed for adolescent girls to usher them into womanhood.

*Dipo* came into existence as a ceremony to appease Krobo girls of jealousy over their male counterparts. In those days, circumcision was a ceremonial rite to usher boys into manhood. When a boy was circumcised, he was presented with a cockerel which was used to prepare a meal for the initiate and his friends. This was done amidst singing and dancing and merrymaking. This rite and gifts created a burning passion among mothers who gave birth to girls. The matter was presented to *Nana Kloweki*, the traditional head, who introduced *dipo* to mark the official entry of Krobo girls into womanhood and to announce their readiness for marriage

Up to the present time, the initiation rites have occupied a most cherished and privileged place in the minds and sentiments of the people. It must be said with emphasis here that unless the rite is performed for a Krobo girl, she is not regarded a true Krobo woman (*kloyo*). Unlike the *bragoro* of the Akans which is performed for girls at the onset of menstruation, *dipo* is performed for all categories<sup>2</sup> of girls except for pregnant girls. It is today performed for girls ranging from toddlers to teenagers. It is for this reason that many people argue that *dipo* as a firm background for young women which prepares them for marriage has lost its value. People also attribute the high rate of teenage pregnancy in the Krobo community to performing *dipo* for girls who have not reached puberty. These facts are confirmed by Steegstra (2005).

A girl who prior to or during the ritual is found pregnant is regarded as an outcast. She is driven away from her home. The ceremony which lasted for a whole year in the olden days is now reduced to a one- week ceremony probably due to formal education.

A *dipo yo* is a pride to her parents and the community as a whole. To Hugo (1963:165),

There is more than mere parental pride behind such esteem; there is the conviction, dating from ancient times, that no Krobo girl can ever become a mature Krobo woman and wife worthy of a Krobo man, unless she can show on her body and on her hand the visible marks of her initiation.

The joy of parents is mostly expressed in the *klama*. In its origin appears to have been a religious play of the Dangmes of Ghana with various subcategories. There is *klama* for each of the heroic cults, *klama* for the heroic association, *klama* for puberty festivals and proverbial and historical *klama*. It is a musical type of the Dangmes of Ghana. It still plays an important role in all major religious festivals. *Klama* is the announcement of success hence its reference as ‘manye’ (success). Success for the Krobo begins from puberty when a girl is able to stay chaste until *dipo* is performed for her. This importance of *dipo* has raised a lot of questions today since *dipo* is now performed for children. This is, however, regarded as the highest form of success that could come the way of the girl and her family. After *dipo* comes marriage. This explains why *dipo* is regarded as the foundation of marriage. Being able to find a good husband and having a successful marriage all depends on the performance of *dipo* hence the song,

Gba saa yo  
lo heo mo hisi ne  
a bu mo bo

---

Marriage is the woman’s glory  
So stay chaste until  
You become a woman

*Klama* has no specific composer. Anybody at any point in time could compose a song, but it must, however, conform to the form and rhythm of the already existing lyrics. The composer must be informed about the history and events in the community as and when they happen. He/she must have memory of relevant words, phrases and lines to help him sing sometimes extempore to the audience.



*Oglojo*, *ohuesabe* and *obonu* are other song groups among the Krobo. These are performed at funerals as a form of entertainment to soothe the pain of the family and also as a way of adding glory to the funeral. These group especially the *oglojo* and the *ohuesabe* have their root from the neighbouring Anlo, hence there are a lot of borrowed words in the texts of the songs. Most of the times, audience can only join in the performance by only singing few lines of the chorus. For the rest they only listen to words which are not comprehensible. For this reason, there are distinct groups for their performance.

Another feature of these song groups is that there are special drums accompanying their performance. For the *obonu*, it requires special rites before the drum could even leave the chief's palace. *Klama* on the other hand, is accommodative since the words of the song are easily comprehensible, and easy to learn. In the absence of the rattle, clapping will just be enough. This nature of *klama* is very important since most of the song texts address everyday issues, a feature the others lack. This explains the reason why there are not really distinct groups for its performance. The few that exist are for ceremonial purposes.

The performance of *klama* is a communal rather than an individual affair because of its call- and -response nature. This explains the participatory nature of most African music. The lyrics are drawn from the situation, occasion, the audience as well as the singer's experience which could either be pleasant or unpleasant. For example, an interviewee at

Adjikpo Yokunya, Maa Yofini, a seasoned *klama* singer explains the reason why she once sang this particular song.

My daughter was once impregnated by a man who immediately came with his family to make arrangements for the marriage rites. The scheduled day came, but they were nowhere to be found. Then some people in the neighbourhood started composing songs of insinuation. Fortunately, it was not long when our in-laws turned up.

During the ceremony the song that stole the show was;

eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee

Nyingmawoko lee  
Mau hwo we nge lo  
Nyingmawoko lee  
Mau hwo we nge ooo  
Ke I de jaa I je we noko  
Ke oyi wia pe wia  
Ke oyi wia pe wia ee  
Ke oyi wia pe wia ee  
Ke oyi wia pe wia ee  
Ke oyi wia pe wia ee  
Kpomo!

eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee

Nyingmawoko( name of a person)  
God does not sleep nor slumber  
Nyingmawoko  
God does not sleep because of us  
What I have said is no insult  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
Sorry!

nɔ nɛ I na nɔ heɔ  
I he ja we nge nɔ he  
nɔ nɛ I na nɔ heɔ

I hɛ ja we nɛ nɔ he

---

I am contempt with my lot  
I shall not rely on anyboby  
I am contempt with my lot  
I shall not rely on anyboby

Though there are repetitions in the song the voice modulation and tone used in singing them vary. This distinct mark of repetition in the lyrics makes it easy for composition and learning. The researcher has found out that *dipo* songs fall within different categories based on the words or the lyrics and what they hope to achieve

### 2.11 Forms of *Dipo* Songs

*Dipo* songs take three forms; *ha*, *haye* and *tingme*. *Ha*- song of the moment. These songs are sung to accompany the various ceremonies the girls go through. This song announces to the audience the ceremony as they perform them. As discussed, in chapter two, the initiates are taken for ritual cleansing in the river amidst singing and dancing. The following song is to announce the success of that particular event

Djangma kɛ waa ya  
Wa yaa wa ba  
nɔko be blɔ nɔ

---

Djangma called on us to go  
we have gone and come  
there was no impediment

The gods are regarded the messengers of the Supreme Being, and they are accorded respect as such. On the return, from the river, it is prudent to knock. This song is to ask for permission to enter the shrine.

kɛ wa yaa nomo weɔ  
ago wadeɔ

---

When entering the old man's premises  
We announce our presence with agoo

It is the climbing of the sacred stone that makes one a Krobo woman. On the way to the stone, this song is sung to show the importance attached to this part of the ceremony.

I bi Dede lee  
O se dipo

---

my sweet daughter, Dede  
you have undergone dipo

Marriage is a much cherished institution by the Krobos. The community expects all its members to get married upon reaching a certain age, so as to procreate and perpetrate the existence of the community. After the girls are made Krobo women, the women then call for suitors to patronize them.

Atu nge sowe no  
meno maa he  
wa nge juae

---

It's put on sale  
who will buy them?  
we are selling it

*Ha* therefore is a song of the moment to keep audience abreast with the ceremony. After the ceremony comes merry making. Most of the songs are for merry making. It is mostly the merry making songs or *dowomi lahi* that have the element of satire. As the audience enjoy the songs, they are at the same time been educated.

Language is a system of communication that enables human beings to co-operate. This definition stresses the social functions of language and the fact that human beings use it to express themselves and to manipulate objects in their environment. Songs have the ability to act as the voice of tradition. Gestures and other nonverbal means of communication are lost when recording or when these songs are written down that is why folk songs are regarded as poetry of utterance.

It is through the artistic use of language that the oral artist expresses the anxieties, the wishes, the hopes, aesthetics and philosophy of the society and records the people's cultural heritage as well as entertaining his audience. The singer needs a good vocabulary and creativity to achieve this purpose since it is language that reflects the beliefs of the society. Communication is normally done through words, tone of voice; high or low. That is why music is said to be language with melody.

The language of klama is of two forms, *Nam gbi* -connotative language. The language of *klama* abounds in euphemisms either to mask profanity, to refer to taboo topics, especially, on sex and the sex organ. The connotative aspect of the language is used when the singer is poised to conceal the object of ridicule. This tends to limit the scope of the language. Its use is also intended to amuse, or to give positive appearances to negative things. An example is,

Gbogblotonye lee  
Kε pi o heeε  
Jine hwo ko gbe wo

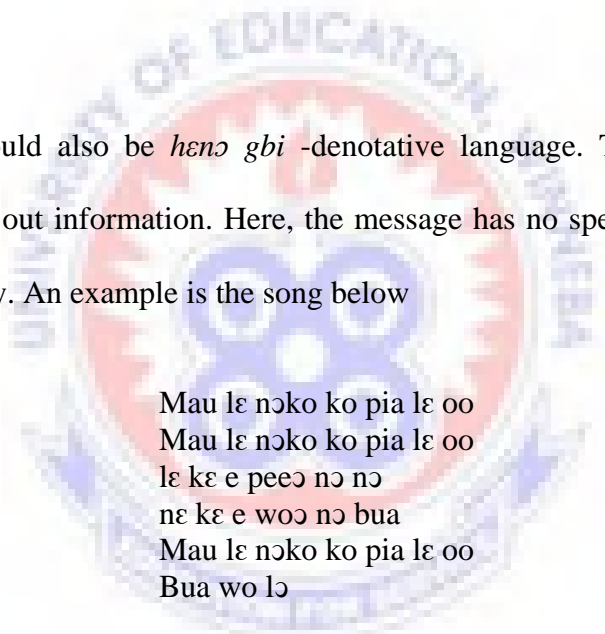
---

Gbogblotonye

Had it not been you  
We would have gone hungry

*Gbogbloto* is the name of the female sex organ. *Gbogblotonye* is literally the owner of the female sex organ. The term simply refers to the womenfolk in general. It emphasizes the role of women in keeping the family. This in effect calls on the men folk to rise up to their task. This is because it is the duty of the man, to feed his family. This role is however, being taken over by the women. The women through this song ask for a change in behaviour.

The language could also be *henɔ gbi* -denotative language. This is the use of plain language to give out information. Here, the message has no special audience, but to the whole community. An example is the song below



Mau le noko ko pia le oo  
Mau le noko ko pia le oo  
le ke e peeɔ no no  
ne ke e woɔ no bua  
Mau le noko ko pia le oo  
Bua wo lo

---

Nobody should blame God  
Nobody should blame God  
He punishes  
And he comforts  
Nobody should blame God  
Comforter

It does not take any special effort to get the message of this song.

## 2.12 Allusive *Klama*

Allusion is a brief, indirect reference to a person, place or event. According to their content, allusions may be historical or cultural. In order to convey much information within a few minutes of performance, the singers make use of allusions. Sometimes the singers hide behind these allusions to convey delicate information to particular audience.

The following songs illustrates the use of allusions in *klama*

Nɔnɛ o pee mi nɛɔ  
A pee wɛnɔ bi ja  
lɔɔ kɛ o pee miɔ  
ma ngma ngɔ wo tso he

---

what you did to me is a taboo  
it is forbidden  
Thus as you caused such sorrows to me  
I shall write it on the tree

This song is to an intended suitor who breaks his promise to marry a *dipo* girl. The family of the girl would sing this song alluding to the betrayal.

A maa fɔ mayo yi  
nɛ a sɛ ba de we mi

---

They are washing daughter's hair  
they did not inform me

Social life is important to the Krobo. Some are mutual help, collective responsibility and reciprocal obligations. The individual must, therefore, identify with the family. It is regarded an offence to perform a very important rite like *dipo* without informing the family. The song alludes to one who performs the *dipo* ceremony without informing relatives.

I nui o nane  
Nge Abidjan ya mio he

---

I do not prevent you  
Travelling to Abidjan

Formerly, Krobo women travelled to Cote D'ivoire to seek greener pastures. On their return, they made a public show of their wealth. The material wealth was paraded on the outdoorings of the *dipo* girls. If anybody complains about this public show of wealth, this song was sung to allude to the fact that if one also wanted material blessings, she should go to Cote D'ivoire.

The function of oral literature is to maintain the stability of a people's culture and ensuring its continuity. That is, it operates to ensure that the culture of a people continue to exist, and is handed on from generation to generation. The Krobos as a people have had a significant history<sup>7</sup> which they cannot forget easily. These experiences are passed on to the initiates through the medium of songs. They are to tell it to their generations. This is not only for the ears of the initiates, but for the audience as well, that is, both the participant and non-participant.

Part of the Krobo history is remembered in this song

Muase su la ha Maja  
ne e ke hie yoo  
ne Maja ke e yo  
se Muase ji yo tse

---

Muase lighted the torch for Maja  
Maja discovered the mountain  
Maja claims that the mountain  
but Muase is the owner



Nako nge wemi  
ne Kloweki ye nye

---

Nako was first to settle  
but Kloweki was accorded popularity

Their stay on the mountain was characterised by frequent wars until their forceful ejection by the British governor. Memories of this warring period are recalled through this song;

he ne Siako da  
Dome ta

---

where Siako stands  
Dome people fight

Siako is the name of an ancient leader of a sub-tribe. Thus memories of old battles are recalled.

Before the inception of the formal court, the people had a good leadership who arbitrated in cases. This is recalled in this song:

Anikika, waaka ne waa hie  
ne suɔ nya ma yo

---

Anikikalet's try and see  
that the elephant may shut up

Anikika is a place where the priests and tribal elders meet to decide in the case of any eminent calamity, and how to face the danger.

The Krobos are a hardworking and industrious people. Their major occupation is farming. They however learnt the act of fishing from the neighbouring Ewe and Adas.

The name of the first man to introduce fish from the sea is Tɛtɛ Okum. He is remembered in the following *klama* song,

Tɛtɛ Okum ya Ayigbe  
nɛ wo lo ba

---

Tɛtɛ Okum sojourned to Togoland  
And brought sea fish

*Dipo*, songs the focus of the study is not forgotten in recounting the history of the people. *Dipo* songs tell of the origin and the essence of *dipo*. As already discussed earlier in this work, *dipo* was started by *Kloweki* as a means to appease jealousy expressed by the womenfolk. This is confirmed by this song;

Kloweki je ohuɛ kɛ ba  
Dipo he

---

Kloweki came from Togoland  
because of *dipo*

Djangma kɛ wa y a  
Wa ya wa ba  
nɔko be blɔ̀ nɔ̀

---

Djangma called on us to go  
we have gone and come  
there was no impediment

Djangma is said to have been a hero of old who once was hiding in the bush and killed enemies who tried to kidnap the Krobo girls on their way to the sacred *dipo* stone. This song is in remembrance of the great show of bravery.

Adali ma kɛ a dɛtsine  
Ningoli ma kɛ a dɛ hokpa  
Kloli ma kɛ a dɛ okadi

---

The Adas are coming with calabash  
The Ningoes are coming with occult powers  
The Krobos are coming with a sign

This refers to the disappearance of Kloweki and the leaving behind of the sign of the cross. This will be discussed later in this study.

*Klama* songs are not sung just to entertain, but are used as a platform to pass on the rich history of the people from generation to generation. This is the main reason why there is the need to make an in depth study of these songs. The culture of the people will face its demise if these songs are allowed to die out. This is not to say that the study of the culture of a people is solely dependent on songs. However, folk songs should be regarded a treasure capable of providing insight into the history and culture of a group of people.

Before the introduction of western education in Africa, many Europeans thought education was non-existent in African societies. On the contrary, *dipo* marks the formal admission of young girls into adulthood. Hence, the girls are confined and taught to accept responsibility of adulthood. It is here that the essence of their existence is revealed to them. The researcher, surprisingly, finds out that, some of the songs are there to teach the girls certain communal values.

Mo ya bu nɔɔ  
kɛ onyemi ngmɛ hlui

---

If your friend lays an egg  
Hatch it

This song teaches the initiates about the co-operative nature of Africans. The Krobos are by nature a united people. The girls are taught the spirit of supporting others who might need their help. This stresses the woman's role in society as a unifying force. This explains the reason why initiation ceremonies are regarded as the medium through which community oriented responsible adults are produced.

Among the Krobo, songs are not only sung on serious occasions, but also on light occasions. Songs of this nature is what the researcher calls recreational *klama*. *Klama* accompanied by performance is a very useful genre through which the people entertain and enjoy themselves. Through the performance, the participants release their tension, relax and enjoy themselves while the audience is also entertained both by the words and the actions of the performers. Through this medium, the performers are able to publicly say what they could not say privately. The songs are also used to express sentiments. This accounts for the huge crowds that watch the performances.

The rhythm, tone, tune and the creativity of the artist contribute to the enjoyment of the song. This creativity emerges even when the content of the song lacks seriousness. An example of songs in this category is the song below set out to entertain both performers and audience.

Kε mo nε o li domi  
O ma kpe kungwɔ nane  
Kε mo nε o le domi  
O ma kpe kungwɔ fiɔ

---

The one who cannot dance  
Chews the leg of the chicken

The one who dances gracefully  
Will enjoy the thigh

The lack of seriousness in the content is supposed to entertain the audience.

### 2.13 Ancient *klama*

The ancient Krobo society was characterised by the reverence for the Supreme Being, his messengers; the divinities and ancestors as well as their representatives on earth; the priest and priestesses. This has regulated the life of the people into having morally upright life because they believe that it is living virtuously that human beings can give meaning to their social lives and existence. This will also guarantee the individual a good place in the spirit world. This belief has created a community relatively undifferentiated, homogenous and closely-knit. One can confidently conclude that the ancient Krobo society was a communitarian society.

In line with this, *dipo* songs aimed at teaching the girls their duties as women, wives, mothers and mould them into becoming community-oriented adults. Songs of the time were less satiric, but educative and entertaining.

The costume of performers was very symbolic. According to an interviewee from Koletsom, Maa Bea, they used to dress in a funny way to induce laughter in performance. The dressing is made complete with sandals made from corn husk. This was to tell those around that the major occupation of the people was the cultivation of maize. Performers would therefore not wait till the *dipo* season to perform *klama*. They moved from

community to community to entertain people. This is the spirit that must be revived today.

#### **2.14 Contemporary Klama**

Today, the only time one could hear of *dipo* songs is during the *dipo* ceremony which is a yearly event and sometimes during marriage ceremonies. People feel shy to be associated with klama. What has accounted for this change?

The introduction of Christianity into Kroboland by Rev. R. J. Zimmerman, a pioneer Basel missionary in 1859, with the message of the cross, denouncing the priestly leadership of Klowerki, thus the priestly leader of Klowerki is now regarded as 'belonging to the primitive age and old human traditions, cultures and customs' has given way to 'Jesus Christ the eternal Lord of life. In him we live and move and have our being'.

For Christianity, no human action is punished instantly, but rather reserved postmortem. Having destroyed the belief and fear of the wrath of the divinities and ancestors, there was a breakdown of the moral fibre of the people. With one arm embracing Christianity, and the other arm gradually letting go of the remains of traditional values, the Krobo society is now in a state of chaos. The destruction of these healthy means of social control has unleashed widespread prejudice, pretence, hypocrisy, materialism, unfaithfulness, abuse of humanity, corruption, indiscipline, laziness, and the like. These are the attitudes that the *dipo* songs seek to satirise to ensure that virtues rule over vices in the Kroboland.

Songs are major elements of the rituals performed for the girls. There are variations in the tune and rhythm hence the types *kple*, *ohikpo* and *ha*. The songs are cantor and chorus with mostly two line lyrics which are repeated several times for easy learning. For the purpose of this study only the main words will be written and not the repetitions...

## 2.15 Satire

Satire comes from the Latin, word *satira* meaning 'poetic medley' and includes all the many literary ways for diminishing a subject by making it laughable. It is a literary 'medicine' for a world morally and socially out of health. Satire dates back to classical times of Archilochus, Hipponax, and Aristophanes; regarded as the greatest satirist. It continued to the time of Pope, Johnson, Defoe, Swift and the like. It is in the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries that its use came on the rise. To Johnson, it is a "poem in which wickedness or folly is censured". Dryden, sees it as "the amendment of vices" and to Defoe it is 'reformation'.

To Pope as quoted by Danziger (1965), the aim of satire is 'to shoot folly as it flies'. He continues to say that it is to expose man's weakness, his minor follies and major vices, in all possible spheres, from social, to political to moral conduct". The tone may vary from the light and witty to the savage indignation. To Swift, however, satire is 'a sort of glass wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face, but their own'.

*The Norton Anthology of Literature* considers satire as “A work of manner within a work that combines critical attitude with wit and humour, with the intent of improving human institutions of humanity”.

A literary work in which a person or a group’s vices, hypocrisies or vanities are held up for ridicule or public criticism. This is how Schake (2005:G8) defines satire. Satire is a kind of protest against the deviation from the norms of society.

*The Columbia Encyclopedia* defines satire as “a term applied to any work of literature or art whose objective is ridicule”. From ancient times, satirists have shared a common aim: to expose foolishness in all its guises- vanity, hypocrisy, pedantry, idolatry, bigotry, sentimentality and to effect reform through such exposure. It could also be looked at as a literary term used to ridicule or make fun of human vice or weakness, often with the intent of correcting, or changing the subject of the satiric attack.

To some literary scholars, satire is “literary composition in prose or poetry intended to expose, ridicule, criticize or hold up to scorn the follies, abuse or vice of a person, place, event, issue, system or institution. As a mode, satire works through biting its target and wit on a person”.

Thrall et al (1960) see satire as “a literary manner which blends a critical attitude with humour and wit to the end that human institutions or humanity may be improved”. This study agrees with this definition because a particular institution or individual act is criticized because it may not be in accordance with the norms of the society and the



critics desires that human behaviour should blend with the society, criticism is achieved by ridiculing the targets and poking fun at such targets with the intention of improving ridiculed behaviour or institutions.

The realization of satire is largely dependent on elements like sarcasm, exaggeration, distortion, metaphors, irony, burlesque and oxymoron.

## **2.16 Types of Satire**

Informal or direct satire, the satiric persona, the speaker in the literary work speaks out in the first person. Thus “I” may address the character within the work itself.

In indirect satire the persona is cast in some other literary form than that of direct address to the reader. The objects of the satire are characters that make themselves and their opinion ridiculous or obnoxious by what they think, say and do. It is sometimes made even more ridiculous by the author’s comments and narrative style. The examples of indirect satire are Horatian, Juvenalian and Menippean satire.

Horatian satire is named after an Augustan reputable poet and critic, Horace. He believes mild mockery is the most effective way of writing and conveying a message. He contends that, “Satire should reflect the attitude of the writer, be easy and unpretentious, sharp when necessary, but flexible enough to vary from grace to gay” (Encyclopedia Britannica: 269). Horatian satire is often gentle, urbane, smiling to correct by gentle and broadly sympathetic laughter. The speaker manifests the character of urbane, witty and tolerant man of the world.

Juvenalian satire is named after a Roman poet, Juvenal. The character of the speaker is that of a serious moralist who uses dignified and public style of utterances to decry modes of vice and error which are no less dangerous because they are ridiculous and who undertakes to evoke contempt and moral indignation at the aberration of men. Juvenal conceives that, “the satirist is an upright man of the world who looks with horror on the corruption of his time, his heart consumed with anger and frustration” (Webster Encyclopedia of Literature: 678).

Having studied the satirical tradition of Horace and Juvenal, Dryden was convinced to sub-divide the genre in what he identified as “comic satire” and “tragic satire” (Webster Encyclopedia of Literature: 679).

Menippean is named after a Greek philosopher, Cynic Mennipus. Menippean satire uses stylized character as mouthpiece for abstract idea presented in loosely long narrative whose pattern resulted from the free play of the intellectual fancy. Works written in this manner could be a pure fantasy. Heron (1976:21) in looking at the concept of Menippean satire says, “The Menippean satire does not concentrate on the social behaviour of its character but on the idea that lies behind that social behaviour”.

Types of satire can also be classified according to the topics they deal with. From the earliest times, at least since the plays of Aristophanes, the primary topics of literary satire are politics, religion and sex. Another classification by topics is the distinction between political satire, religious satire and satire of manners. Another analysis of satire is the

spectrum of possible tones: wit, ridicule, irony, sarcasm, cynicism, the sardonic and invective. (Source: Wikipedia the Free Encyclopedia).

In his "*Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift*," for example, Swift denies any malicious intent in his works, and affirms his purpose was correction:

As with a moral View design'd  
To cure the Vices of Mankind:  
His vein, ironically grave,  
Expos'd the Fool, and lash'd the Knave.  
...  
Yet, Malice never was his Aim;  
He lash'd the Vice but spar'd the Name.  
No Individual could resent,  
Where Thousands equally were meant.  
His Satyr points at no Defect,  
But what all Mortals may correct. . . .  
(ll. 313-16, 459-64)

## 2.17 Purpose and Method of Satire

Inseparable from any definition of satire is its corrective purpose, expressed through a critical mode which ridicules or otherwise attacks those conditions needing reformation in the opinion of the satirist. There is no satire without this corrective purpose.

A reasonable definition of satire, then, is "a literary manner which blends a critical attitude with humor and wit to the end that human institutions or humanity may be improved. The true satirist is conscious of the frailty of institutions of man's devising and attempts through laughter not so much to tear them down as to inspire a remodeling" Thrall, et al:(436).

The best satire does not seek to do harm or damage by its ridicule, but it rather seeks to create a shock of recognition and to make vice repulsive so that the vice will be expunged from the person or society under attack from the person or society (regardless of who is the immediate object of attack). Whenever possible, this shock of recognition is to be conveyed through laughter or wit; the familiar satire is the one of honey and bitter medicine.

The reason the satirist does not merely write moral tracts encouraging people to virtue and the reason he feels justified in displaying anger and indignation at the common follies and vices of man is that the satirist world has accidentally gone astray. It is a world of hypocrisy which social standing, church membership, title and degrees, peer praise, lip service, morals and wealth are all used to hide evils of the first order. In such a world of hypocrisy and pretence, simple moral encouragement would be totally inefficacious. The satirist, therefore, will display his critical attitude and implicit morality through irony and criticism. Satire is to ridicule the fault or failings of individuals and also target those faults that are correctable but not those for which the individuals are not responsible.

In all the definitions, the common feature is that satirical works present the picture of man in a society which is plagued with follies and vices. That is why the satirist is conscious of the frailties of man and attempts a cure.

Ngugi's view on satire is, "Satire takes, for its province, a whole society and for its purpose, criticism. The satirist sets himself certain standards and criticizes society when

and where it departs from these norms. He invites us to assume his standards and share the moral indignation which moves him to pour decision and ridicule on society's fallings. He corrects through painful, sometimes malicious, laughter" (P. 56).

In conclusion, therefore, satire is a form of surgery; it cuts but does so carefully so that the parts may be reassembled after the corrections have been made. The intent behind satire is to make fun of people's follies and foibles in the hope of improving on their behaviour. Its purpose is to produce better people, not simply to crack a joke or hurt.

Satire, though it is not always painless, is bloodless. The target of the satirist is anyone the satirist values but who the satirist believes is guilty of folly. Satire can cunningly manipulate the subconscious thinking of others. The satirist can be likened to a kind of doctor, and a preacher. He is the guardian of standards, ideals and truth of moral as well as aesthetics values.

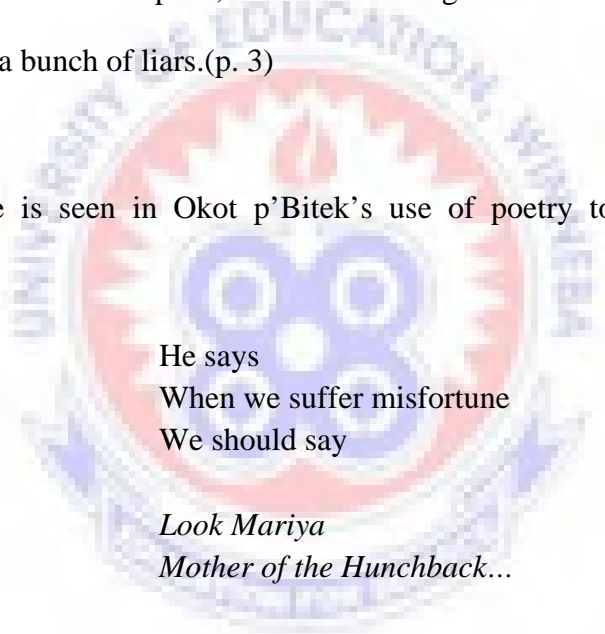
Knox R, in his *Essays in Satire* suggests that the satirist, is a kind of spiritual therapist whose function is to destroy the root causes of major sicknesses of the spirit, like hypocrisy, pride and greed.

Music in African societies serves many roles. It is often seen as inseparable from the people's culture and many other practices. Song texts, can be used as a means of action directed toward the solution of problems which plague a community in which vices, follies, abuses, and shortcomings are held up to ridicule, ideally with the intent of shaming individuals, corporations, and society itself, into improvement. For its nature and social role, satire has enjoyed in many societies, a special freedom or license to mock

prominent individuals and institutions. The African most of the times uses the medium of song to address pressing issues in society. This will be discussed later in this study.

The desire to satirise is inherent in the African and is evident in his literature, both oral and written. Behaviours which the African disapproves of are stylistically mocked by the power of music. A look at *The Slave Raiders* by Kwakuvi Azasu and there is no doubt that the novelist is poised to satirise the invasion and the looting of Africa by the Europeans in the name of preaching the gospel. The work is not only mocking at the ungrateful nature of the European, but also referring to the whole Christian race and the Christian God as a bunch of liars.(p. 3)

Another example is seen in Okot p'Bitek's use of poetry to make mockery of the Christian church.



He says  
When we suffer misfortune  
We should say

*Look Mariya  
Mother of the Hunchback...*

We should pray to Joseph  
And Petero, and Luka  
And the other ancestors of white men!  
He says  
It is stupid superstition  
To pray to our ancestors  
To avert small-pox,  
But we should pray  
To the messengers of the hunchback  
To intercede for us  
(Song of Lawino, p.155)

This is not only seen in written literature, but mostly in oral literature which is mostly composed on the spur of the moment.

## 2.18 Humour

According to the *Dictionary of Literary Terms and Language Theory* (1991:433-434), humour derives from the Latin *humours* meaning moisture. The term was used in the Middle Ages and during the Renaissance period to denote the four humours of the body which depended on the four fluids; blood, phlegm, yellow bile and black bile. The admixture of these determines a person's disposition, character, mind and morality. The humours affected the brain hence a person's behaviour; a person could be ill-humoured, good humoured etc. The source explains why humour is associated with the disposition of the body and is supposed to greatly affect the human mind.

The theory of humours, therefore, has effect on character creation in the arts. It is not until the 18<sup>th</sup> century that the term has been associated with laughter and used in contradiction to wit. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the use of humour in works of arts increased considerably.

Harmon (1996:244) sees humour to be derived from the theory of humour to designate a particular disposition that led to a person's readily perceiving the ridiculous, the lucid and the comical. Humour allows us to perceive shades of meaning that might otherwise be invisible. This is to say that any humourous work of art pushes the reader or listener to think just after the laughter. Thus one can conclude that in order to foreground a message, then, it must have a comic effect.

In comparing humour and wit, Meyer (2008), opines that humour is “a rather warm, and genial attitude of laughing at the world. It tends to be complacent rather than the critical, accepting life even when it sees its shortcomings. It lacks the elegance of phrasing, the epigrammatic quality that sees to characterise wit”. Humour may be as idle as the wisecrack and as vicious as the practical joke.

*The New Encyclopedia Britannica* defines humour as a type of stimulation that tends to elicit the laughter reflex. Whether in everyday speech, or in writing, the importance of humour cannot be over emphasized. Writing on the art of public speaking, Lucass (1998:20) asserts that humour ... “helped the speaker make his or her point by providing special insight into the topic”.

From the above definitions, it is clear that humor helps one to think critically about a topic while at the same time provoking laughter. Humour, therefore, has the capacity to work gently on the most dreaded sore that plagues a people, while at the same time healing it fast. For this reason, there is no effective medium of addressing social ills than through what is enjoyed. This explains why humour is a distinctive mark of *dipo* songs since they aim at effecting change in society through enjoyment.

## 2.19 Types of Humour



Humour in this study shall be discussed under two major types; humour of situation and humour of words. Humour of situation is the use of unexpected situation to create laughter.

Humour of words involves the use of pun, hyperbole, repetition, comparison and contrast. Humour of words may take many forms. It can be gentle and kindly. Or it can be harsh and biting. Techniques of humour include wit, irony, exaggeration, understatement, caricature, and parody.

## **2.20 Humour as an Element of Folk Music**

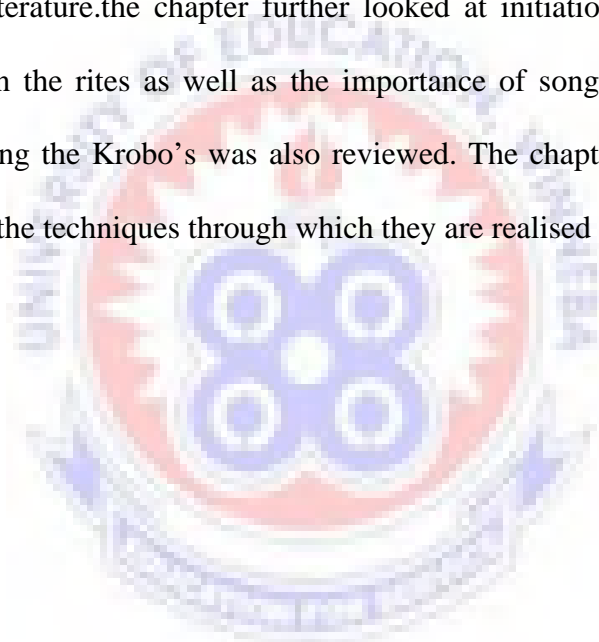
When it comes to folk music, singers have many opportunities to have fun. Some might adopt a funny name for their group just to create fun. As discussed earlier, “song texts in Africa are sometimes a reflection of the concerns of the culture of which they are part. They contribute to the correction of those aspects of behaviour to which they call attention. Owing to these, the lyrics of folk songs often deal with aspects of everyday life in a light-hearted and humorous way. Many comment on poverty, poor housing and other social issues. This is to make light the message of the song.

Music and humour have always overlapped to a certain degree in folk music. Take court jesters or minstrels, for example; their job was to entertain people with songs, and maybe a range of jokes, tricks and dances. A lot of music aims to make people feel happy, so it just takes one more step to enter the world of humour. The humour may arise from the unexpected, from a shared recognition or from imitation of certain scenes and events.

Humour may also arise from the characterization. Folk songs often used humorous elements including pastiche, parody and musical irony.

## **2.21 Conclusion**

This chapter reviewed the relevant literature used in the study. It began by providing a general overview of oral literature and confirming the fact that songs are an important aspect of oral literature. The chapter further looked at initiation rites in Africa and the place of songs in the rites as well as the importance of songs to the African. Dipo, a puberty rite among the Krobo's was also reviewed. The chapter finally looked at satire and humour and the techniques through which they are realised



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the methods used in gathering data for the study. The research was carried in two phases; Field and Library research. The field research was conducted

through participant and non-participant observation as well as face to face interviews. In the library research data was collected from relevant books on the subject. As could be observed, Chapter Two draws a lot from published works, unpublished works, some of which has been cited in the work and duly acknowledged in the bibliography. Internet materials also fall under this category. These were of great assistance as far as the study is concerned.

### 3.2 Setting

The research setting of a study can be seen as the physical, social, and cultural site in which the researcher conducts the study. In qualitative research, the focus is mainly on meaning-making, and the researcher studies the participants in their natural setting. The research was carried out specifically in the Manya Krobo Traditional Area located in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The inhabitants are scattered in both *yonɔ* and *dɔm*; settlements found in the villages and those in the towns. *Dipo* is, however, performed only in *dɔm*. *Dɔm* is the capital, hence important events like funerals, festival, *lapomi*, initiation rites are solely performed at *dɔm*. This fact is established in the saying, “*ke klono tsuni ja Dɔm*”, (if the Krobo goes out to acquire wealth, he must bring it to *Dɔm*). Major towns in *dɔm* include Adjikpo, Atua, Adɔmɛ, Odumase, Mampong, Agormanya, Manya kpongunor, Manaam and Nuaso. *Dipo* is only performed at *dɔm* and for that reason, during the *dipo* season, Krobos have to travel to *dɔm* to perform the rites. It must be said, here, that the ceremony is not performed in every home in the towns mentioned above but at designated areas which has been instituted long ago.

### 3.3 Population

Sowel, (1982), defines population as “a group that has one or more characteristics in common”. In choosing the population for any study, it is important that the relevance of the problem to the target population is considered. *Dipo* is performed in particular shrines located in the towns. The reason is that these shrines must be devotees of *Nana Kloweki*. The researcher chose a shrine at Manaam for the study because that is her maternal hometown and partly because she knew an elder who could introduce her to that particular shrine. In this era of Christianity, where all traditional practices are regarded as pagan, it will be difficult for a researcher to just walk into a shrine for research purposes. He/she would be seen as have a malicious intention. This is where proper introduction comes in. The researcher was lucky to have ten devotees who willingly assisted in giving out the required information partly because the researcher showed interest in the performance and also joined in some of the performances. Some face to face interviews were conducted in the *Kono*'s palace, the traditional council and among two song leaders of two *klama* groups.

### **3.4 Sampling**

The purpose of selecting a group is to develop deeper understanding of a phenomenon. For this reason, it is important that the researcher selects a group she can easily manage which will at the same time be a true reflection of the culture of the people. One particular shrine was chosen because the focus of the study is not the rites but the songs though the rites helped in the understanding of some songs. By the use of purposeful sampling technique; a technique by which the researcher intends to draw respondents from the population. This can be done by using random or probability, random or

systemic sampling methods the researcher chose the target group for the study. Thus to Meredith et al, (2006:218) the goal of purposeful sampling is to “select cases that are likely to be information rich with respect to the purpose of the study”.

### **3.5 Data collection**

The collection of data for this study was not an easy task. It was difficult because *dipo* is an annual performance. The researcher has to collect data for this study while she was still doing her course work. Since it was based on oral performances, data was collected through interviews, observation, audio and video recording of performances and the various interviews. This was followed by transcribing and interpretation of the songs collected.

### **3.6 Interviews**

One major technique used by the researcher to gather information was through the use of interview. An interview is a one-on-one directed conversation with an individual using a series of questions designed to elicit extended responses. Interviews allow participants to express their thoughts using their own words and organization and thus are particularly valuable for gaining insight. The qualitative research interview seeks to describe the meanings of central themes in the live world of the subjects. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say (Kvale 1996).

Considering the above, the researcher adopts its use to get information and to make possible inferences. The interview was informal and conversational. The questions were

not predetermined. The interviews began with the Kono's palace. The reason for the visit there was because there is a department of Archives at the palace, one of the five in the whole of West Africa. Unfortunately, the researcher was not able to access the facility. The reason is that most of the documents are finding their way out of the archives which has forced the *Kono* to put it under lock. At the time of visit, he travelled out of the country. However, the researcher was lucky to meet his linguist, Mr. Boatey. Upon hearing the research topic, he showed great interest because he feared for the future of *klama* since the older generation is phasing out of the world. He however, did not hesitate to caution the researcher to be realistic, accurate and be sincere in giving interpretations. He gave useful information on the people of Manya Krobo as a whole.

The next person to be visited was Nomo Gbertey who also gave information on few songs and formally introduced the researcher to the custodian of the shrine. Mr. Candey at the Customary Lands Secretariat also gave useful information concerning the history and the present location of the Krobos. The rites lasted for the five days thus, most of the songs were recorded here. Maa Yofini of Adjikpo and Maa Bee of Korletsom -Odumase Krobo, leaders of *klama* groups, who were also interviewed were renowned singers known to everybody. The researcher chose to interview these two because she believes the information from them would ably represent the information that could have come from the whole Kroboland. It is from this people that most of the songs which were sampled for analysis were collected. They were fast in pointing out the reason for the satire in the songs; Christianity and modernization which to them has brought in its wake breakdown of law and order. Songs were also recorded from these sources.

Another person visited was a man who only wants to be called Big Joe. One thing interesting about this is that he used to perform the dipo rites with his mother who is a priestess. He is now a Christian and for that reason would not have any connection with pagan practices. One thing is, however, sure, he sees nothing wrong with the songs which he also believes have the ability to impart moral values. Big Joe in an attempt to condemn the dipo rite, because to him it has outlived its usefulness, the researcher was able to gather much information concerning the rites, composition of songs and other useful information from him. This section helped the researcher to generate a lot of information which was really not planned for.

The researcher visited Big Joe to ascertain two facts; are *dipo* songs fetish? Could these songs probably enhance good moral behaviour? The visit was indeed useful since those questions were answered positively during the interview. It is from this interview session that the researcher gathered the reasons for the so much satire in the lyrics.

### **3.7 Observation**

Observation is another important tool the researcher employed in gathering data for the study. Marshall and Rossman (2011:7) define observation as "the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study". For qualitative research, it is important that a researcher studies events in their natural social setting.

Observations enable the researcher to describe existing situations using the five senses, providing a "written photograph" of the situation under study. Demunck (1998) describes participant observation as the primary method used by anthropologists doing fieldwork. Fieldwork involves "active looking, improving memory, informal interviewing, writing detailed field notes, and perhaps most importantly, patience" Dewalt (2002: vii). Participant observation is the process enabling researchers to learn about the activities of the people under study in the natural setting through observing and participating in those activities.

Observation methods are useful to researchers in a variety of ways. They provide researchers with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how participants communicate with each other, and check for how much time is spent on various activities (Schmuck, 1997).

Observation is more realistic in data collection because it gives firsthand information. Both participant and non-participant observation procedures were employed as a means to collect data. This was done mainly during the initiation rite. The rite lasted for four days. On the first day, devotees were cautious in their quest to give out information, but during the subsequent days, they were at home and gave the researcher the chance to witness every part of the ceremony except the structure which houses the sacred dipo rock. The researcher was only allowed to view it from a distance. Taking pictures of it was also not allowed. Thus Kulbir (2003:163), in participant observation, "the observer



works his way into the group he is to observe so that as a regular member, he is no longer regarded an outsider against whom the group needs to guard itself”.

During the outdoor of the girls, the researcher had the chance to record songs at the Agormanya and Osiekuse durbar grounds as an observer. After the *dipo* ceremony comes the durbar. This is held to outdoor the girls, and present them for suitors. The girls are dressed gorgeously and amidst singing and dancing. They entertain the audience at the durbar ground.

This is where the researcher came face to face with the rich and the best of the dance skills. Since this was the avenue to showcase the girls to prospective suitors, and to present them to the public, the language of these songs were highly coded and full of symbolism in all about 60 songs were collected, some of which have been sampled for analysis.

During the durbar, however, the researcher only stood as an observer to record some of the songs. This, however, did not allow for any interrogation on the songs collected at the durbar. This method was adopted since the researcher wanted to collect facts which are not manipulated. This method of gathering information helped to get firsthand information since the participants are not aware they are being observed. They were therefore free to do what they can do best without restrictions or caution.

### **3.8 Recording**

The human mind has so many things in it that sometimes it is difficult recalling a situation one might have observed. To guard against information lost and difficulty in recall of information, the researcher decided to record every interaction she had. During the interview, and the observation, the researcher could only make brief notes of the conversation as well as the words of the songs. The recorder therefore did the work. The use of the recorder allows for amplification to ascertain the facts. This is effective because it allows for playback, a pause to hear details. Thus Walford (2005), asserts that the recorder “has the effect of turning an ephemeral spoken event into a relatively stable object”.

In most of the cases, the researcher went with her husband who did the recording using a recorder and two mobile phones. This was done as a precaution from losing vital information.

### **3.9 Transcription / Translation / Interpretation**

In qualitative research, recordings of interviews and other forms of data must be transcribed into written forms so that they can be studied in detail. Transcription involves reduction and representation to make the written text readable. To achieve this, the researcher adopted her own method to reduce the raw data into codified data for easy analysis.

Since this was the major thing which will aid understanding and sampling of songs for easy analysis, the researcher chooses what she refers to as the ‘factor-tree method to analyse data. First a song is selected and then the researcher looks for the meaning,

literary devices, present, its thematic concerns, and most and most important is the elements of satire in the song. If it has elements of satire and humour, the researcher goes ahead to look out for the reason and aim of the satire or humour, the tone, and the form it takes.

Since the major concern of the study is satire and humour, the researcher sampled those songs that contain them for further study and analysis. This was not an easy task since the researcher collected about 70 songs. This analysis helped in classifying the songs under types, satiric and humorous songs, it also brought out their aesthetics as well as the devices and techniques used in satire.

Translation into English has been made as faithfully as possible to the meaning of the original text. The researcher sought the expertise of Miss Regina Caesar, a lecturer at the Dangme department of the University of Education, Winneba and Otsam Boatey, a scholar and the linguist to the paramount chief of Many Krobo, who helped in the translation from Dangme to the English language. Otsame Boatey was consulted for the interpretation because he is abreast of the customs and traditions of the people. He is also the one who translated the 'asempa hymns' from English into Dangme. The researcher has no regrets for giving him that task. The translation was made bearing in mind the poetic nature of the songs as well as the truth about the customs and traditions of the people. Interpretation has been made based on the meaning and other aesthetic qualities of the song using qualitative approaches.

### 3.10 Validity and Reliability of Data

Qualitative research is aimed at fact finding and for that matter, no matter the methods used by different researchers researching on the same topic, they must come out with the same or similar conclusions. This is why any research must be valid and reliable. Validity is the extent to which data is plausible, credible and trustworthy; and thus can be defended when challenged. Reliability on the other hand is the degree to which an assessment tool produces stable and consistent results. Without validity and reliability, research becomes fiction and data may lose its usefulness. Thus a great deal of care must be taken to ensure that data is valid and reliable. Credibility thus depends on the ability of the researcher to spend more time on the field to collect data and also to employ various techniques to gather data to make it credible. Thus to Guba and Lincoln(1981:75): “all research must have ‘trust value’, ‘applicability’, ‘consistence’, and ‘neutrality’ in order to be considered worthwhile...”

The data was collected through personal contacts, interviews and writing. The data was collected from the right sources as far as the Krobo and *Dipo* are concerned. The songs were given to Otsam Boatey a seasoned man who knows the traditions of the people for checking and translation to make sure that no falsehood was spread about the Krobos. The data collected is, therefore, valid and reliable and can be used as reference point for other researches. The songs, therefore, represent in whole what *dipo* aims at achieving.

### 3.11 Challenges of Data Collection

Collection of data for the study was not as easy as the researcher envisaged. Factors include difficulty in getting respondents to co-operate. Due to negative attitude of people towards *dipo* in recent times people are suspicious of those who claim to be researchers. The researcher can recall on the first day of the observation when people; the mothers of the initiates and family members were casting insinuation like ‘Ada FM’, ‘Angels’ meaning that I had come to serve as a mouthpiece for the radio station and as a holy person to expose their pagan practices. It took the intervention of one of the devotees who told them the recording was going abroad and that changed their perception.

Most people collect a fee for any service rendered. Anybody who performs any service does that for a fee. The researcher on some occasions had to hire a taxi to send people leading her to the source of data no matter how short the distance. There was also an instance when the researcher had to pay the transportation of an interviewee who claimed she was going to a village and would come back on the same day of the interview.

People really did not understand the purpose of the research. During the ceremony, the researcher saw some church members and the look on their faces and their attitude told it all; what was a Christian doing in the midst of idol worshippers?

The fact that *dipo* was performed yearly also posed a challenge to the researcher who could not have access to the durbar again; an avenue which showcased rich *klama*. The researcher, therefore, has to be directed to individuals. All this notwithstanding, the

researcher was able to collect seventy songs. Some of which have been sampled for analysis in chapter four.

### **3.12 Conclusion**

A foreknowledge of the data I needed where to locate it and how to collect it coupled with good planning made the research less cumbersome. Though I faced some challenges, I remained undaunted as I got help as and when necessary from others to bring the work to fruition.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter looks at the peculiar aesthetics of *dipo* songs which makes the songs a unique genre worthy of study. Aesthetics here is discussed under two distinctive headings. The chapter first discusses aesthetics using Gyekye's model for the appreciation of a song, the singer's voice, composition, and style, significance of the words, and suitability and appropriateness. Other aesthetics include audience involvement and dance. The researcher also considers aesthetics in terms of the devices used in the songs. Devices like metaphor, symbolism, repetition, personification, allusion and euphemism are discussed. The chapter discusses briefly the themes the songs address. Finally, it looks at the elements of satire and humour in the songs.

#### **4.2 The Aesthetics of *Dipo* Lyrics**

African traditional art is striking in its presentation and objectives. For any work of art to be appreciated, it has to be understood in the context of its cultural origin and culturally-cherished values. In fact, it would be appropriate to say that sometimes the culture speaks through art, and art helps us in understanding a particular culture better, in whatever form it may be. The beauty of African art can convey various feelings and messages to the casual observer. However, true appreciation can only be done through an understanding of the culture and environment that influenced the art. As a sense of perception, aesthetics can be defined only within particular cultural systems. This is because African arts communicate messages of cultural significance. In the performing arts, the quality of the presentation forms the basis of aesthetic judgment.

According to Gyekye (1996:128),

The aesthetic appreciation of singing derives from the quality of the singer's voice and composition, style, significance of the words, and

suitability and appropriateness. The aesthetic value of a song derives also from the level of audience involvement, which is a reflection of the amount of enjoyment generated by the performance. To be aesthetically appreciated and valued, a musical performance must arouse the involvement of the audience, because in the traditional African society music-making is a participatory communal activity; everybody takes part in it.

#### 4.2.1 Composition

Musical composition can refer to the structure of a musical piece. *Dipo* song is always in a cantor/ solo or solo/ chorus form. The composer is the lead singer in the performance, but she could sing already existing songs to suit her purpose. As the chief singer, she is usually the instructor of the performance. She must however be competent to choose and to conduct the performance of the song. As a soloist cantor she begins each song with a firm, clear voice, at a reasonable pitch and an appropriate tempo, she indicates the melody, pitch and rhythm to be used, enabling all those present to sing together. It is always in the form, ‘Eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee’ and the response is ‘eeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee’. The cantor has a voice that is adequate to be heard. The cantor is open to manipulation during performance while the refrain remains relatively stable. Thus to Finnegan (1970:259), “Songs in Africa are very frequent in antiphonal form. That is there is response of some kind between soloist and chorus, and the song depends on the alternation between two parts”.

The leader decides when the performance should start and end. She could introduce variations depending on the target for that performance. This makes *dipo* songs formulaic as mentioned in Chapter Two. For this reason, no woman is considered a professional *klama* singer though some are endowed with the skill of composition and singing. The variation is done to suit societal needs as well as recent occurrences in the



community. The variation may be seen in the texts as well as other mnemonic features of the song, like mood, facial expression, and many others. For this reason, no two performances are ever the same, even of the same song. The example below shows the performance of the same song on two different occasions,

- Nɔ n I na nɔɔ  
I hɛ ja we nɛ nɔ ko he

---

I am content with my lot  
I shall not rely on anybody

- Nɔ n I na nɔɔ  
I hɛ ja we nɛ nɔ ko he  
kɛ I de jaa I jɛ we nɔko  
kloli nɛ a nɛ nɔɔ a nya tɛ nɔ he  
kɛ o pee nɔ nɛ hi klolihi ma de  
kɛ o pee nɔ nɛ hi klolihi ma de  
kɛ oyi wia pe wia ooe  
kɛ oyi wia pe wia ooe  
kɛ oyi wia pe wia ooe  
kpomo!

---

I am content with my lot  
I shall not rely on anybody  
Saying this, I have not insulted anybody  
Krobos are quite talkative  
If your deeds are good, they will say it  
If your deeds are bad, they will say it  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
Sorry

It is obvious that the second form of the song has a mocking intent, which is the preoccupation of the singer. The repetition of ‘if you crack your head, it is just cracked’, is, employed, sometimes profusely, to mark a feeling of excitement or agitation, whether in the sense of utmost delight or deepest anxiety and fear.

Thus the singers have the license to manipulate the lyrics of the song to suit the prevailing circumstance. This explains why the language of *klama* is proverbial, allusive and poetic. Since a good singer wins an emotional appeal and should be able to move her audience, these features put in by the singers help them to achieve that purpose.

One important thing to note is that in some cases, the song is not composed prior to performance. What is important is that the composer must be aware of events in the community which serve as a source for the composition. This is the quintessential evidence that the singer like any other artist is a social critic.

Since oral literature is dependent on the performer or singer, the use of the voice, tone, gestures and other non-verbal features help to manipulate the audience in the way of the performers. In some cases, the audience have influence over the performance and always join in the song during the chorus. This makes direct references to the behaviour of the audience possible. The audience on hearing this may break into the performance with additions and criticisms. In this way, the audience participation in the presentation of the song improves the performance as it adds to the mockery.

#### **4.2.2 The style**

Meyer B. L. (1956:45) defines musical style as “more or less complex systems of sound relationships understood and used in common by a group of individuals.” He further reiterates that styles provide the norms against which ensuing musical events can be heard by a listener as expected or unexpected.

The performances of dipo songs follow a formulaic style which is a distinct mark of oral literature. The performance always has a preamble, ‘eeeeeeeeeeee’. This helps the lead singer to give the tune for the song. This is followed by the invitation of God to join in the performance. This is expressed in these songs,

Ajɔ lee  
ba jɔɔ o ma

---

Blessing  
come and bless your people

This expresses the people’s belief that God is the giver and sustainer of life. He is the only one who has the power to grant success. The Krobo, therefore, begin every activity with him.

This is followed by the main performances. The performance, however, always closes thus,

kɛ I de jaa I jɛ we noko  
kɛ o pee nɔ nɛ hi klolihi ma de  
kɛ o pee nɔ nɛ hi klolihi ma de  
kɛ oyi wia pe wia ooe  
kɛ oyi wia pe wia ooe  
kɛ oyi wia pe wia ooe  
kpomo!

---

Saying this, I have not insulted anybody  
Krobos are quite talkative  
If your deeds are good, they will say it  
If your deeds are bad, they will say it  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked  
If you crack your head, it is just cracked

### Sorry

The rich lyrics of *klama* distinguish it from other song forms. Because the language of the Krobo is tonal, the lead singer adopts a high trembling voice, the effect of which is to provide the right pace and level of excitement for the words which are sung. *Dipo* songs, therefore, satisfy one of the basic requirements of poetic forms which is to touch life emotionally so that the reader or audience feel either delight or pain. The use of the high pitch and the variations, sometimes, is to create humour. This is meant to soothe the effects of a direct attack on the satirized.

#### **4.2.3 The Significance, Suitability and Appropriateness of the Words**

Music is often used to transmit messages and ideas. Consequently, the meaning of the texts and their relation to the music is important. The words in a particular song are supposed to reach the audience to achieve the intended purpose. It, therefore, behooves on the singer to choose the appropriate words to carry the particular message. The *klama* singer, therefore, selects words to suit the occasion and the purpose of the song and to reflect the importance of the songs.

However, the texts are sometimes cryptic; meaning is obscure or difficult to understand because of the symbolism, denotative language and the ambiguity created by some words. The text is marked by brevity and conciseness. This helps to conceal an otherwise vulgar language. Thus decoding the message in some songs is restricted. Since the words

are heavily loaded with coded messages, their interpretation goes beyond rendition. An example is seen in the song below

I huno alitse  
Wa bio wa

---

My lazy husband  
Our daughter is of age

This song on the surface means that their daughter is of age and would therefore have to undergo the *dipo* rite. On the contrary, the meaning is farfetched. The issue of sex is regarded a taboo in Africa. An African woman must not openly express her desire for sex. In the above song

‘Our daughter is of age, means the woman is ready to give birth to another child yet the husband is not up and doing. The desire for sex which is seen as a means of procreation is expressed by the womenfolk.

Due to the tonal nature of the language, there is sometimes constraint on the melodic patterns. The words of *dipo* songs are highly influenced by the environment and the current happenings in the society. The lyrics are repeated; repetition of musical units of the composition. They are also organized in a call and response pattern. The content of the texts are geared towards social control. This makes *dipo* songs a responsive genre to everyday life and to the ever-changing circumstances. It must be said here that, the words in themselves have no beauty. It is the rhythm, tone and the creativity of the singers that leads to the enjoyment of the songs, even when the content of the song lacks seriousness.

#### 4.2.4 Singer's voice

The use of the voice in *dipo* songs cannot be overemphasized. The singer's voice could be regarded as the vehicle which carries the bare words to the audience. If the meaning of the words is to get to the audience, then it must be through the singer's voice. The voice is, therefore, a major aesthetics of *dipo* songs. Writing on the use of the voice in the performance of songs, Dolar (2006:15-16) opines,

What singles out the voice against the vast ocean of sounds and noises... is its relationship with meaning. The voice is something which points towards meaning. It is as if there is an arrow in it which raises the expectation of meaning: the voice is an opening towards meaning,...the voice is the instrument, the vehicle, the medium, and the meaning is the goal.

#### 4.2.5 Audience Participation

The bare words in a song cannot speak for themselves hence the need for audience participation in any oral performance. Usually, moved by the music, singing, and emotion of a performance, it is not unusual that many a member of the audience would leap forward and join the performers in their song and dance. In order for the singer to involve her audience, and to fully communicate her message and to entertain them, she becomes creative with both words and rhythm. The lead singer's ability to respond to situations and the creativity always keep the audience alive to enjoy the performance.

The audience play a very important role in the performance of *dipo* songs. Their excitement, level of energy and facial expression contributes to the humour in the songs. The audience may sometimes sit down quietly to enjoy the words of the song. At other times they will roar with laughter especially when they are aware of the antecedent leading to the composition of the piece.

#### 4.2.6 Rhythm

The rhythm of *klama* is very intricate. This has added to the melody of the songs. Oral traditions had it that during the migration of the Krobos, they passed through Dahome where King Apertesukrukru denied them passage through his land to continue their journey. Not even the ten virgins given him could soften his heart. They, therefore, decided to use what they know how to do best to win the heart of the king. The people gathered to sing *klama* one night. The rhythm of the songs 'pierced' the heart of the king though he never understood the words of the lyrics. He, therefore, decided to grant them passage through his land.

#### 4.2.7 Tone

Africa traditions emphasize singing, because song is used as an avenue of communication. As many African languages are "tone languages," in which pitch level determines meaning, the melodies and rhythms of songs generally follow the intonation, contour and rhythms of the song texts. Melodies are usually organized within a scale of four, five, six, or seven tones. In group singing, some societies habitually sing in unison or in parallel octaves with sporadic fourths or fifths; others sing in two or three parts, using parallel thirds or fourths. Songs generally are in a call-and-response form.

#### 4.2.8 Dance as an Aesthetic Device of *Dipo* Songs

African traditions also greatly emphasize dance, for movement is regarded as an important mode of communication. Dance is a celebration of freedom from fixity, a

momentary triumph over gravitational pull, a symbolic conquest of gravity. Dance is often accompanied by song, itself a celebration of sound, motion. And motion is the fundamental to change, growth, development in nature and nurture. Life is motion for we know that a thing is dead when it ceases movement.

For this purpose, the dance utilizes symbolic gestures, mime, props, masks, costumes, body painting, and other visual devices. The basic movements may be simple, emphasizing the upper body, torso, or feet; or they may be complex, involving coordination of different body parts and intricate actions such as fast rotation, ripples of the body, and contraction and release, as well as variations in dynamics, levels, and use of space. The dance may be open to all, or it may be an activity in which one, two, three, or four individuals (regardless of sex) take turns in the dancing ring. Team dances also occur. The formations may be linear, circular, serpentine, or columns of two or more rows.

Naturally, singing is very important to the African society because the melody and rhythm follow the intonation of the song text. A repeated music is a form of communication and it plays a functional role in African society. Songs accompany marriage, birth, rites of passage, hunting and even political activities. Music is often used in different African cultures to ward off evil spirits and to pay respects to the ancestors.

Dance is a major part of the celebration. As the girls are dressed and walk majestically to the dance floor reminding the whole world that life is just about patience. As they move the hand and feet forward and not backwards, it simply means life must move forward.



The celebration attracts people from both far and near; those with good intentions and vice versa. As the celebration goes on, the women in charge of the *klama* seize the opportunity to preach good morals through their songs. It is for this reason that *klama* is highly corrective.

#### **4.3 Allusion as an Aesthetic Device in *Dipo* Song**

Kennedy (1987:453) defines allusion as “an indirect reference to any person, place, or thing-fictitious, historical, or actual”. The use of allusion in any work of art is to enrich the meaning of the work. Allusion could be made covertly or indirectly to an object or circumstance that has occurred or existed in an external context.

Scholars have distinguished six categories of allusive reference, which are applicable to a wider cultural sphere. These types are casual reference, "the use of language which recalls a specific antecedent, but only in a general sense" that is relatively unimportant to the new context. Single reference, in which the reader is intended to "recall the context of the model and apply that context to the new situation. Self-reference, where the focus is in the poet's own work. Corrective allusion where the imitation is clearly in opposition to the original source's intentions. Apparent reference "which seems clearly to recall a specific model but which on closer inspection frustrates that intention" and multiple reference or conflation, which refers in various ways simultaneously to several sources, fusing and transforming the cultural traditions.

*Dipo* songs are highly allusive. Unlike the *halo* and *kpanshimo* the allusion in the songs are rather indirect. A song may be referring to a particular person or situation, but will not state it directly. Example is this *ha*

Mayo nɛɛ nue oo  
Ehi ba mi  
Mayo nɛɛ nue oo  
Mayo nɛɛ nue oo  
Ehi ba mi oo  
Mayo nɛɛ nue oo

---

mother can hear everything  
but cannot come  
mother can hear everything  
mother can hear everything  
but cannot come  
mother can hear everything

*Mayo nɛɛ nue oo, Ehiba mi*, may refer to an initiate whose mother is dead. During the performance of the *dipo* rite, it is the duty of the mother of the initiate to play an active role. It is a must that they accompany them to the riverside and to the stone<sup>1</sup>. This is because men are not allowed to witness every part of the celebration. A woman who fails to follow the daughter will not be spared by other women. Thus during the performance, the researcher observed that the lack of active participation on the part of the mothers attracted this *ha*;

Dipo yihi a nyɛ mɛo  
adɔdɔli  
Dipo yihi a nyɛ mɛo  
Dipo yihi a nyɛ mɛo  
adɔdɔli  
Dipo yihi a nyɛ mɛo

Mothers of the dipo girls  
They are not active  
Mothers of the dipo girls  
Mothers of the dipo girls  
They are not active  
Mothers of the dipo girls

It is, therefore, not possible for a mother not to be present at her daughter's initiation. It could only happen for two reasons: where the mother is dead or is a *dipo* outcast. In the case of the death of the initiate's mother, it becomes a song of sorrow indicating that it is because the mother is dead that she could not come for her daughter's initiation.

It may also refer to a mother who has been expelled. In this case it becomes a song to satirise those who could not stay for the rite to be performed for them. They could only stand at a distance to watch the rite, yet they cannot take active part.

The performance of dipo is a family affair which is accorded much respect. Like the other cultural practices; *lapomi*<sup>1</sup>, marriage<sup>2</sup>, festivals<sup>3</sup> and funerals<sup>4</sup>, family members must be duly informed.

*Lapomi* is a cultural practice typical of the Krobo and performed by a father to claim a child born out of wedlock and has been named by his/her mother's family. According to Krobo custom, a child born out of wedlock does not belong to the father unless he performs this ritual called *lapomi* (that is to cut the thread tied around the wrist of the child during the naming ceremony). This custom was put in place to sanction young men who would not marry but take advantage of the young women. It must, however, be

noted that most victims of this “*lapomi*” custom do not perform the ritual because they consider it very expensive. Moreover, they believe that the child/children will by all means look for their fathers in the future when they are old. Such children are called, *plabihi* (children born out of friendship or casual sexual relation) or *yo bi* (a woman’s child). Such children cannot inherit their father if the *lapomi* is not performed.

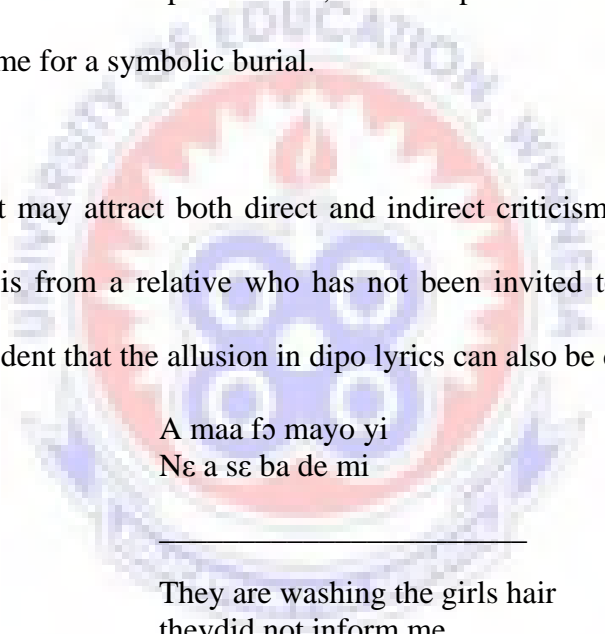
Marriage is a cherished institution by the Krobo. The community expects all its members to get married upon reaching a certain age, so as to procreate and perpetuate the existence of the community. For the Krobo, marriage takes place between a man and a woman through an elaborate customary rite involving the families of the would-be couples. When a marriage is contracted, the couples in particular and the community in general expect a child or children to come out from it. If that does not happen, pressure mounts on the couple (especially the woman) which results in anxiety, stress and depression with some cases leading to illness. If a child is born, she/he is outdoored and given a name to be part of the community. During the naming ceremony, the family head ties a thread (la) with cowry around the wrist of the child to register its membership into the family. Until the outdooing and naming ceremony such a child is seen as a stranger. Besides, if the child is a male he is circumcised but the females grow up to adolescent age when they undergo dipo initiation rites.

*Kloyosikplemi* and *Ngmayem* are celebrated by the people of Yilo Krobo and Manya Krobo respectively. *Ngmayem* is celebrated to commemorate the end of famine that occurred hundreds of years ago and as a means to foster unity among the Krobo. The

festival derives its name from the historic importance of *ngma*, millet in the survival story of the people.

Krobos perform funeral for their departed souls. They believe that funerals offer smooth transition for the departed souls into the spiritual world. In the past, departed Krobo were buried and funerals performed in Kroboland. However, in recent times this cultural practice has been relaxed due to financial constraints so that burial and funeral rites can be performed anywhere for departed souls, however part of the deceased (nails and hairs) would be sent home for a symbolic burial.

Failure to do that may attract both direct and indirect criticisms from family members. The song below is from a relative who has not been invited to witness the ceremony. From this it is evident that the allusion in dipo lyrics can also be direct.



A maa fɔ mayo yi  
Nɛ a sɛ ba de mi

---

They are washing the girls hair  
they did not inform me

Another use of allusion is seen in this song,

Yuda lee  
mɔɛ o tɔɔ I se blɔ

---

Its you, Judah

Who betrayed me?

‘Yuda’ as used in this song alludes to the Bible where one of Jesus’ disciples betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver. Since then Judas has been a symbol of betrayal and a

traitor. Today Christianity has taught people to do *dipo* secretly for their daughters. Yet people betray them to the church for the possible sanction which is suspension in church. These are the people the song refers to as ‘Yuda’. Being betrayed by one of your own is very painful.

One dangerous thing about this song is the intention behind it. According to Mathew 27:5, Judah hanged himself upon realizing the effect of his actions. The song, therefore, declares the punishment for these traitors especially when to them *dipo* is a worthy cause.

The song mocks the traitors, calls on them to change from their wicked ways or face the consequences of their actions as said by Jesus in Mathew 26:24, “For the son of man must die, as the scripture declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for the one who betrays him. It would be far better for that man if he had never been born”.

#### **4.4 The Aesthetic Use of Repetition in *Dipo* Song**

Repetition is a major rhetorical strategy for producing emphasis, clarity, amplification of emotional effect. Sackey (2010) identifies the various forms of repetition in literary works; recurrences, parallelism, balances, apposition, antithesis, refrains, duplication, juxtaposition and parataxis. In stressing the importance of repetition in oral performances, he notes, “repetition is crucial for the ephemeral and unwritten nature of oral poetry, especially in sustaining the thematic and narrative focus of the story and thereby enhancing memorization..., in composition repetition is both an aesthetic and a creative tool...”

In music repetition occurs, where sounds or sequences are often repeated. However, repetition should be in balance with the initial statements and variations in a piece.

According to Miller (1990:106):

Repetition is a part and parcel of symmetry—and of establishing motifs and hooks. You find a melodic or rhythmic figure that you like, and you repeat it throughout the course of the melody or song. This sort of repetition...helps to unify your melody; it's the melodic equivalent of a steady drum-beat, and serves as an identifying factor for listeners. However, too much of a good thing can get annoying. If you repeat your figure too often, it will start to bore the listener.

This is further explained by Levitin (2007:45) thus

Memory affects the music-listening experience so profoundly that it would be not be hyperbole to say that without memory there would be no music. As scores of theorists and philosophers have noted...music is based on repetition. Music works because we remember the tones we have just heard and are relating them to the ones that are just now being played. Those groups of tones—phrases—might come up later in the piece in a variation or transposition that tickle our memory system at the same time as it activates our emotional centers...Repetition, when done skillfully by a master composer, is emotionally satisfying to our brains, and makes the listening experiences as pleasurable as it is

As has been mentioned earlier on, dipo songs are just two to three lines which are repeated several times but with a change in the tone and pitch. An example is seen in the song below.

A bε dɔm gbleoo (low tone)  
A li ha nɔ  
A bε dɔm gbleeee( high tone)  
A bε dɔm gble  
A li ha nɔoo  
A bε dɔm gble  
A li ha nɔooo  
A bε dɔm gble  
A li ha nɔoooo

A be dɔm gble

---

They are rustic village dwellers  
They do not know enough  
They are rustic village dwellers  
They are rustic village dwellers  
They do not know enough  
They are rustic village dwellers  
They do not know enough  
They are rustic village dwellers  
They do not know enough  
They are rustic village dwellers

To agree with Levitin, this feature of the song makes it pleasurable and also explains why they are easily learned and mastered. The more the repetition, the more the change in tone. This also adds to the beauty. In the case of the allusive songs the repetition is done with a mocking intent which goes with other non-verbal forms to achieve the intended mission of bringing about a change. Thus to Okpewho (1992:72)“Repetition is also employed, sometimes profusely, to mark a feeling of excitement or agitation, whether in the sense of utmost delight or deepest anxiety and fear”.

In the song that follows the singer claims intelligence is not in size and, therefore, mocks those who use their size to molest others. The repetition marks a feeling of excitement.

The emphasis is on the size.

Wɔ ji taxi tsɔwi  
Wa bui lɔle ngua ɔmɛ  
taxitsɔwi  
wa bui lɔle ngua ɔmɛ  
tsɔwitsɔwi  
wa bui lɔle ngua ɔmɛ

---



Call us small l(taxi)  
But we do not count on themami wagons  
small (taxi)  
But we do not count on the mami wagons  
Small small (taxi)  
But we do not count on the mami wagons

Repetition could also be used to express a feeling of fear as seen in, “Yuda lee, mone o tsoo I seblo” which has been discussed under allusion above. The repetition of “Yuda” is to express the fear of been betrayed by one within.

Repetition is another method of satire used in dipo songs. Repetition plays a key role in the judgment of emotion. A song repeated multiple times rate the elicited and conveyed emotion of the pieces as higher relative to participants who hear the pieces once. Repetition is for emphasizing a significant point. According to Okpewho (1985: 9) repetition is an important aspect of a song since it aids in memorization as mentioned in earlier. Repetition, when done skillfully by a master composer, is emotionally satisfying to our brains, and makes the listening experiences as pleasurable as it is.

#### **4.5 The use of Proverbs in *Dipo* Songs**

Finnegan (1970:226) defines proverbs as “a piece of folk wisdom expressed with terseness and charm”. To the Yoruba of Nigeria it is “a horse which can carry one swiftly to the discovery of ideas.” Yankah (1994) sees proverbs as “an algorithm of bits and pieces of wiselore passed on by past generations to maintain or restore equilibrium, or insecure society against the threat”. The skill in the use of proverbs is regarded a hallmark of wisdom.

Proverbs are a very important part of African orature. Proverbs are used to embellish discourse. Thus to Achebe, ‘they are the palm oil with which words are eaten’. The Krobo will, therefore, not waste the chance to throw in a handful of proverbs in any oral performance. To Yankah (2012:21) ...the skill in the use of proverbs involves as much aesthetic pleasure as in other forms of verbal art’. This is because proverbs are a means of alluding to values and norms accepted by society. Thus proverbs provide hard hitting messages in a profound way rather than a nasty or demoralizing manner. This is to say that proverbs subtly warn people of the consequences of their actions. Using proverbs is an entertaining way to put one’s point. They can also give a greater potency to any message you are trying to convey. Proverbs are a means of social control. Proverbs are used to express the importance of singing to the African, hence the proverb, ‘music speaks louder than words’. Owing to this, during the performance of *klama*, the women cleverly weave into the fabric of the performance a handful of proverbs to probably create an allusion. Examples of the use of proverbs are shown in the songs below.

Ko wu laga dɔ  
Laga dɔ lɛɛ mio nɛɛ mi

---

Don’t swim in the *laga* stream  
there are thorns (its full of thorns)

This is a proverb especially to caution the youth to stay out of trouble.

In the song below, a parent expresses through the medium of a proverb the reason why she has to perform *dipo* for a child who is not of age. Her reason is to nip in the bud the risk of expulsion.

Gbogblotonye lee!  
kle no ma tse mi  
lohe I ko nya

---

Mother!  
This arrow will hurt  
so I have broken the tip

Through the use of proverbs the women are able to attack the vices of society involving both young and old explicitly without fear of damage.

Proverbs have been used extensively in *dipo* songs because of their euphemistic effect. Proverbs are characterized by a certain terseness and a certain allusiveness. They are used as a way of attacking gently, in a veiled way yet placing more weight on the message. Proverbs, because they are indirect, allow the singers to disagree or give advice in a way that may be less offensive usually to support and promote changes in society for community development. As proverbs are often characterized by their didactic and agonistic function, they engage others in verbal and intellectual combat. Proverbs provide hard hitting messages in a profound way rather than a nasty or demoralizing manner. They can also give a greater potency to any message you are trying to convey.

By the use of proverbs the women have the ability to explain a thousand words in one simple sentence or statement. This makes proverbs an excellent tool for social control. It provides the women with the platform to allude to values and norms accepted by society without offending. Also it creates the avenue for offensive message to be hidden from the ears of foreigners. An example is seen in the song below,

Gbogblotonye lee!  
kle no ma tse mi

lohe I ko nya

---

mother!

I risk being hit by this spear  
so I broke it

As was explained earlier in this work, the song illustrates a parent who fears a daughter might get pregnant, and for that reason performs *dipo* for her at a tender age. This is a message which the singers would not want every ear to hear. The use of the proverb is to limit the audience. Apart from this, the song is to shame parents who for such flimsy excuse will perform *dipo* for infants.

Thus the use of proverb in *dipo* songs is meant to limit the audience, since songs of social commentary/comedy are more specifically concerned with human relationships and with the evils of hypocrisy and treachery. Thus writing on proverbs Finnegan (1970:410) says, “ridicule and mockery in proverbs are also effective”. She again quotes Smith(1965 ) saying this about Ila proverbs, “...wit has a utilitarian aim; laughter is never far away, and because of their susceptibility to ridicule the Ila, like many others, can sometimes be laughed out of a thing more effectively than deterred by argument or force”.

#### **4.6 Symbolism as a Feature of *Dipo* Songs**

In any piece of literary work, symbolism can be used to add or represent meaning that goes beyond what is literally being said. Symbolism is a fantastic tool for enhancing and clarifying a theme of a literary work. It can weave subtle shades of meaning into the

work, turning what began as a simple rug into a rich tapestry. Symbolism can give a literary work more richness and colour and can make the meaning of the work deeper. A symbol may elicit a lot of meanings from readers and the audience and so it gives them the opportunity to analyse literary texts, and performances critically to get the satisfaction thereof.

Symbolism as a technique has enhanced the aesthetics of *dipo* songs. The use of symbolism is found in the song, the dance and the instrumentation. The rattle is the major instrument used in the performance of *klama*. It is made of a gourd with beads on strings woven around it. The value of the accompanying rattle helps to regulate the words of the song into measured movements. It also inspires both singer and audience to a general enjoyment which results in several lines being sung over and over again. The individual beads symbolize that here are individuals and clans coming together to form one tribe, Krobo.

There are three very valuable beads among the Krobo. These beads have been made and have been used extensively by the priests. They are used in all the solemn rites including the rites of passage. These beads are *kɔli*, *tɔvi* and *nɔli*. They are the symbol of wealth and wherever they are used, it is with the understanding that it will either impart wealth or that the fellow on whom it is used is valuable. Beads are used for naming/outdooring ceremonies, installation of the chiefs, queens, priests and other rites. Beads can also act as a symbol of purity or symbolises the expectation of goodness from the person it is given to. These facts are confirmed by Huber vol. 6 (1993).

When we refer to the social grouping of the Krobo, the various individuals first forms a household –‘we’, a group (*ku*) of houses form the lineage. Hence the name *weor kasi*; a group of people who eat from the same pot. A *weku* is headed by a *wekumatse* and members of a *weku* are believed to have come from one ancestor. In times of both success and failure, they come together to help one another. In fact, it is mandatory to inform other members of an intended activity like, rites of passage and others.

The concept of family among the Krobos is very unique. Distinctions are not really made among family members because everyone is either a mother, father, sister or brother. A father is *tse* and uncles are either *tse ngua*(elder) or *wayo* (younger). Mother is *nye* and aunties are *nye ngua* or *way*.

This informs songs like,

Weku bi a dipo  
nye se ne e nyo

---

This dipo is a family affair  
Let the celebration be jubilant

Ayaa fo mayo yi  
ne a se ba de we mi

---

They are going to wash our daughter’s hair  
But they did not inform me

In this song, a family member is aggrieved that *dipo* is been performed for a member and she is not aware of it. The use of ‘our daughter’s hair’ here is very significant. This expresses the belief that a child does not belong to the parents alone but the entire family. This is seen in the expression of kinship<sup>7</sup> ties by the Krobo.

The use of the beads on the rattle, thus symbolises the bead wealth of the Krobo. Since beads are used for adornment. They are also a means of reflecting prestige and for protection. The use of the beads reflects the importance attached to the performance of *dipo*.

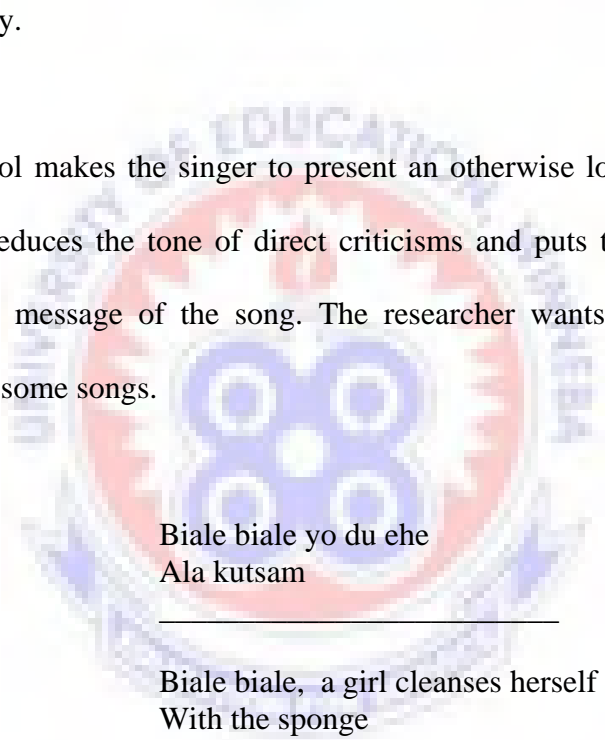
While playing the rattle or *dipo tɔ* in the local parlance, the player mostly a woman sits on a low stool while she alternates the hands on the *dipo tɔ*. The low stool is a symbol of humility which the girls are expected to show towards their husbands, family, children and the community as a whole. The alternation of the hands simply means in life one has to take one step before another. This teaches the girls to have patience. As it is said, with patience one can dissect an ant and will be able to locate its intestines. This is expressed by this proverb; ‘a deɔ kake loko adeɔ enyɔ’ literally meaning, ‘you say one before two’.

As they play the rattle, they at the same time send messages to the women who lack humility in their marriages to learn from the player of the *dipo tɔ*. Sometimes the different skills of playing the rattle are to elicit humour which is supposed to embellish the performance.

Dance is a major part of the ceremony. Dancing is a style which heightens the effectiveness of a song. The gestures and dramatic body movements contribute to the beauty of the performance. As they have graduated from childhood to join the family of adults, they must always remember that they will never become children again.

The graceful steps they take tell the audience and, especially, suitors that a Krobo woman who has come of age is graceful and priceless. The gracefulness attached to the dance, in a way, is to shame the *dipo* outcast, and to tell promiscuous girls how useless it is to become a *dipo* outcast. In effect, the performance wants the girls to yearn for this gracefulness. This is to promote chastity before marriage; the only 'medicine' to curb teenage pregnancy.

The use of symbol makes the singer to present an otherwise long message using just a symbol. It also reduces the tone of direct criticisms and puts the audience into a deep thought over the message of the song. The researcher wants to illustrate the use of symbolism using some songs.



Biale biale yo du ehe  
Ala kutsam

---

Biale biale, a girl cleanses herself  
With the sponge

*Bialebiale* is the name of a sacred leaf which is an ingredient of ritual cleansing. *Kutsa* is simply sponge used in cleaning the body or teeth. The song means the *dipo* girls have been made clean since they have been bathed with both *biale biale* and sponge. This makes *dipo* a cleansing ceremony. Hence a girl who has not undergone the rite is regarded unclean and unworthy to be called a Krobo woman. The symbolism in the song



is to taunt the *dipo* outcast and to send a warning signal to girls who have exposed themselves to behaviours which may send them on that same journey.

Adamo fu nge bo he  
Adamo lalii  
nyεε ba

---

Adamo has bloomed  
Come, you who cherish  
Adamocolours

*Adamo* is a fruit normally found during the dry season. It is also found in the forest and that makes it scarce. For this reason, it is only hunters who hunt deep into the forest who chance on it. Its roots (*gba*) are used to balm kings and queens on their death. This makes *adamo* a very important tree. *Adamo* is the symbol of importance, scarcity and preservation.

In the song, the girls are presented as *adamo* and the suitors, lovers of *adamo* colours. The song simply means that like *adamo*, a girl who has undergone *dipo* is invaluable. It will be a great opportunity for a suitor to chance on her. This clearly spells out the role of the woman as a symbol of preservation. The song is a piece of advice to young girls to stay chaste. To anybody who will go contrary, the song becomes a mockery. It is for this reason that symbolism is used in *dipo* songs.

*Adamo* is noted for its scarcity and rareness. It symbolically stands for the pricelessness of the initiates. This symbolism is to ridicule girls who could not perform *dipo* as a result of immorality. It must be said here that it is not everybody who will understand except

those with the artistic ear. The symbolism, however, foregrounds the initiates, places them on a higher pedestal so that they become incomparable to the *dipo* outcast. This foregrounding is to make the satire more bitter, yet gentle. Another example is seen in this song,

ke a se we mo  
o bi nyε hami

---

If you have not undergone *dipo*  
You can't put on the cloth

In the olden days where the cloth was the only covering for women, it was accorded much respect. A young girl would be given the chance to put on a full piece of a woman's cloth when she has come of age; during the outdoorings of the *dipo* girl. Hence the reference to the *dipo* rite as *bobumi* (putting on of the cloth). In this song, womanhood, or being a 'complete' Krobo woman is compared to the art of putting on a cloth to cover one's nakedness. A girl who has not undergone *dipo* is considered naked; the girl lacks the art of womanhood. The symbolism ridicules the *dipo* outcast at the same time taunting the inability of their parents to raise them properly into womanhood.

#### 4.7 Metaphor as a Feature of *Dipo* Songs

Peck (1991: 139) defines metaphor as "... a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another". As already mentioned in Chapter One, no ritual, in the life of a female Krobo is of greater importance than or equal to *dipo*. It is *dipo* that makes a female a Krobo woman-*kloyopeemi*. It cleanses and prepares the girl for womanhood. A

*dipoyo* is worth thousands of rubies. Hence the *dipo* girls are likened to so many important things through the medium of *klama* song. In the song,

Adamo fu nge bo he  
Adamolalii nyee ba

---

Adamo has blossomed  
Adamo pluckers come,

Apart from the symbolism which has been discussed, the song is metaphorical. The girls are said to be the *adamo* fruit. This shows how scarce it is to find a true Krobo woman. In the song that follows the girls are regarded beauty itself.

Afeu ni nye lee  
Afeuni je kpo

---

Mother of beauty  
Beauty is here

#### 4.8 Personification in *Dipo* Songs

Another method of satire in *dipo* songs is the use of personification. Kennedy(1954) defines it as “a figure of speech in which a thing, an animal, or an abstract term is made human”. Personification is used in literary works to emphasise meaning and description. It gives the reader or audience a reference to compare to. Personification not only creates a connection with the reader, or listener, but also highlights certain features the persona wants to highlight through the work.

Good writers use figurative language like personification to give their writing life and to connect with their audience. By giving inanimate objects human qualities, personification

helps to relate the reader/ audience to the world of the writer. In *dipo* songs, however, personification is used to create a sharp contrast between the world of humans and the world of the inanimate. An example is seen in the song below

Apetesukuku lee  
jeo nge se ke nya  
ke o yaa o se bo  
mo ba o hekpe

---

Apetesukuku  
life is unpredictable  
while moving forward  
think of what's behind

*Apetesukuku* is a wormlike animal which is noted for only moving backwards. The song personifies it to draw a contrast between it and humans. While humans move forward *Apetesukuku* will rather move backwards. The meaning this personification is to create is that life is not only about moving forward alone or backwards alone. It is about both movements. This is a song satirising those who travel to foreign lands forgetting their root. Life can be unpredictable is the message of the song to them.

The Krobo, like other Africans, value human life and thus frown on members who rate money higher than human life. For the Krobo, humanity and brotherhood are among the moral or human values that constitute the basic, perhaps the ultimate criteria that not only motivate, but also justify human actions that affect other human beings hence the maxim, “Humanity has no boundary”.

Thus, even though the African people traditionally live in small communities and are divided into different ethnic or cultural groups and into clans and lineages with complex networks of relationships, nevertheless, they perceive humanity to embrace all other peoples beyond their narrow geographic or spatial confines, to constitute all human beings into one universal family of humankind.

‘To enjoy a human being’ also means you should recognize the other person as a fellow individual whose worth as a human being is equal to yours and with whom you undoubtedly share basic values, ideals and sentiments. Thus, the main intent of the maxim is to point out the worth of a human being and the respect that ought to be given to her by virtue of her humanity. Recognition of the worth of a human being is, according to the maxim, more important than caring for wealth.

The value of the human being is expressed also in the following Akan maxim: *Onipa ne asem: mefresika a, sikannye so, mefrentama a, ntamannye so; onipa ne asem*). ‘It is the human being that counts: I call upon gold, it answers not; I call upon cloth, it answers not; it is the human being that counts’.

It is, therefore, sad that today, people value money more than man. This song satirises by personifying money referring to it as a stranger who will be there, but, for a moment. The personification helps the singer draw a parallel between man and wealth and calls on the satirized to change their ways because money is just, but for a moment.

onyemi ji onyemi  
sika le nubwo

---

value your brother  
money is but a stranger

Another use of personification is seen in this song:

Ahlabataba  
nɛ nyu hwɔ ba  
wa hla nyu  
wa nɛ nyu  
wa na Dede Yomɔ  
kɛ e bi nɛ ɔmɛ  
a na nyu, a du, a ba  
yo lee hmm!  
Yomɔ hi tsɔ  
Ma ngɔ Yomɔ kɛ e bime  
Yomɔ hi tsɔ  
Ma ngɔ Yomɔ kɛ e bime

---

Its dry season  
Water bodies have dried up  
We searched for water  
There was none  
But Dede Yomɔ  
And her children got water  
Indeed you are a mother  
Mother you are good  
I will marry you and your children  
Mother you are good  
I will marry you and your children

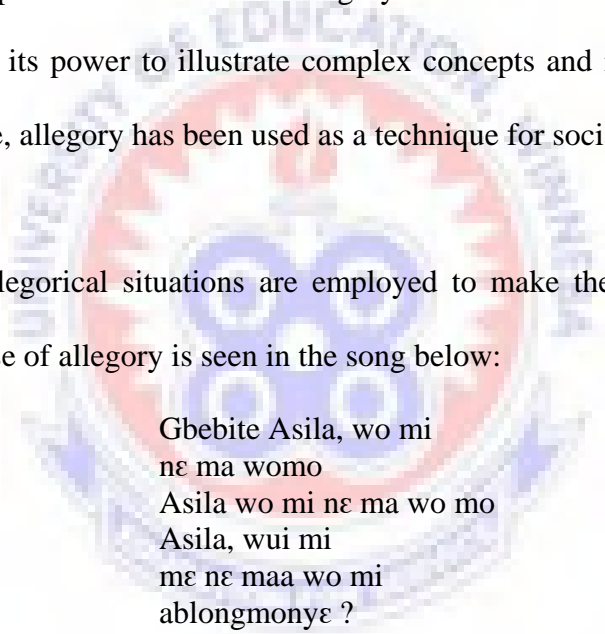
This song is from a folktale. Dede Yomɔ is actually a pig which has been personified because of its ability to bring forth a lot and its ability to care for the young ones. The song likens a good mother to a pig who will carry its household in search of water and not leaving them behind. Today's woman lacks the attribute of the pig in this song. Women run away from home in the name of seeking greener pastures, leave their children behind. Even if a pig knows better than what should be expected from a human being. The song, therefore, mocks this attitude. Satire is, therefore, about the problems of

life. Hodgart (2010:11), therefore, sees satire as a way of looking at life. He goes on to say that satire is “responding to the world with a mixture of laughter and indignation...”

#### 4.9 Allegory as an Aesthetic Feature of *Klama*

Allegory is a literary technique often employed in novels where characters or events represent ideas and concepts. Commenting on literary allegories, Kuiper (1995:35) refer to allegories as a means to “...express situations, events or abstract ideas in terms of material objects, persons and actions”. Allegory has been used extensively in the literary circle because of its power to illustrate complex concepts and ideas in an easy way. In Ghanaian folktale, allegory has been used as a technique for social comment.

In *dipo* songs allegorical situations are employed to make the satire more subtle. An example of the use of allegory is seen in the song below:



Gbebite Asila, wo mi  
ne ma womo  
Asila wo mi ne ma wo mo  
Asila, wui mi  
me ne maa wo mi  
ablongmonyε ?

---

Gbebite Asila, oblige me  
that I may oblige you  
Asila oblige me that I may oblige you  
Gbebite Asila, oblige me  
who will oblige me  
mother of Ablongmo

*Asila* is a bird reputed for its skill in whistling like a man. Proverbially, it is regarded as eloquent and wise. Allegorically, it said to have acquired its virtues as a result for its respect for elders. In the first part of the song, *asila* offers to endow with wisdom

whoever would oblige him with respect. In the second part, a child laments that she has been denied wisdom by *asila* and asks who will give her wisdom. Like any allegory, the song has two meanings. It is a direct piece of advice to initiates to be respectful so that they may be wise. The song is also satirizing the present generation for their lack of wisdom. This is attributed to their lack of respect for the elderly. Unlike *Asila* they have no respect for elders, and thus lost wisdom which is a reward for respect. The aim of the singers is to bring a reformation in the youth, since the aim of the satirist according to Wight (1956: 8) is 'reformation'.

#### **4.10 Satire and Humour in *Klama***

*Klama* as has been discussed earlier in this work as a performance to celebrate victory. During the performance of *dipo*, *klama* also serves as a medium through which the girls are educated, the audience are entertained, issues in society are expressed as well as maintain the stability of the people's culture and ensuring its continuity. Through the medium of these songs, issues which otherwise could not have been addressed overtly are addressed.

In recent times, the authentic *klama* has given way to songs of insinuation. Christianity and modernity have taught people to throw away these rites which fostered unity among the Krobo. *Dipo* has been replaced by church confirmation. The authentic *klama* songs full of values which the younger generation must imbibe have given way to rap and other forms of music. The compact society has become porous. The result is that 'locusts' have invaded the good societal tree. These 'locusts' have eaten the original tree. What is left



now is a shadow of the ancient Krobo culture. It is the attempt to address this canker that has given rise to the much satire and humour in *dipo* songs now. Songs of this nature are characterized by wit, figurative use of language and humour. The following songs express the use of satire in *dipo* songs.

Aposiwoyo lee  
A pee we ha mo lo?

---

Apostolic priestess  
Did you not undergo *dipo*?

The rhetorical question explains the reason for the satire. The song is a mockery on women who have undergone the *dipo* rite, but, who because of Christianity, teach others to shun it. The womenfolk consider this outrageous and, therefore, will waste no time in pointing it out. The gestures, facial expressions and other non-verbal elements associated with the performance tell the message overtly. The satire is also found in the use of ‘Apostolic priestess’. How can somebody be a Christian and at the same time a fetish priestess? The satire comes out through the use of the oxymoron.

Osofo  
kε o kε o daa  
po mi ngε hiowe

---

Pastor  
if you claim to be righteous  
let us meet in heaven

Songs of this nature mock the hypocrisy of Christians represented by “osofo” who preach against *dipo*, but who secretly perform it for their daughters. These Christians also refuse to marry those who are not “*kloyihi*”. The effect of this cannot, however, be felt in this

write-up, but in performance. The gestures, body language, tone, facial expression, the wit and humour accompanying these songs are designed to be observed. The humour allows the women to ‘pierce’ the deviants by expressing deep-seated feelings. Yet those criticized are not supposed to take offence, or even defend themselves, they are just expected to mend their ways.

Osa ne i ke i bi juae heo

lo heo ne i ke ma hi si

---

I refuse to sell oyster

That is I kept myself well

Girls who because of their pregnancy have been expelled from the tribe, often went to the Volta region, where oyster selling is the only means for them to make a living. The song mocks those who have become outcast and at the same time serve as a warning to other young girls. Thus it is much better for a girl to practice abstinence than to risk expulsion. Looking at these songs, one can say without contradiction that satirical songs always have an element of humour. To Okumpa (1994:74), “Humour is a convenient conveyance of satire”. Because these songs aim to entertain while teaching, the singers tactfully present controversial issues in a non-threatening manner. Examples are seen in these songs.

Oli ha do mio

ne o fo bi yo

---

You don’t know how to dance ha

Yet you’ve brought forth a girl

This song ridicules mothers whose daughters are not able to dance. Their inability is blamed on the mothers who should have taught them. It is a wake-up call on parents that the best education is from the home.

Mo ne o li do mi  
O maa kpe kungwo nane

---

You don't know how to dance  
You will chew the chicken's foot.

During the out-dooring of the girls, they are expected to show their skills at the dipo dance considering its importance. A girl who fails to prove herself is not spared by the women. The song, therefore, ridicules a girl who, at the end of the initiation, acts clumsily and does not know how to dance.

The Krobo as a people take much delight in the family, and believe in members of the family playing their respective roles. The man is the head of the family; hence, he is responsible for the upkeep of the family. Irresponsibility on the part of some men is on the rise, and the only medium through which this can be addressed is through public performance. It is the duty of the oral artist to expose ill-behaviours in society so as to produce a closely-knit and coherent society. Some fathers shirk the responsibility of taking care of their children yet want to benefit from them by taking their bride price. The women, therefore, mock such men. An example is seen in the song below shows that

I huno a litse  
Wa bi o wa

---

My lazy husband  
Our daughter is of age

During the *dipo* ceremony, it is the family and, especially, friends of the initiates who prepare food for them and other chores. Any initiate whose friends do not show up is regarded to have a questionable character which does not attract friends. The women, therefore, waste no time addressing such character. The song below is an example of such a satire.

Mayo lee  
Jije o hue ɔme nge

---

My daughter  
Where are your friends

The Krobos are a polygamous people. On an occasion of a marriage ceremony, the bride's father advises the daughter not to oppose her husband's choice of taking additional wives. The first wife, however, is accorded some special privileges and authority in domestic affairs. Her co-wives owe her respect as a rule. Society thus frowns on a husband who despises his first wife because of a new wife. This song criticizes men who despise their wives because of a new wife.

ke o na yo he  
ne o ke o sume yo ngua  
Afani kpam

---

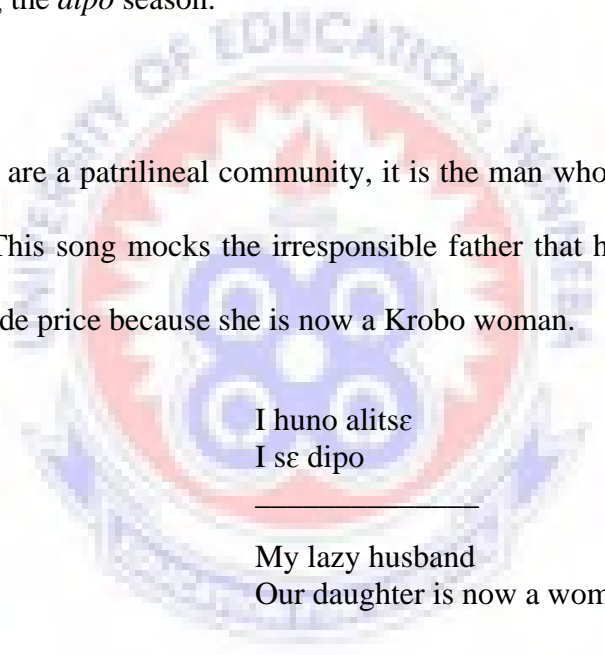
If you disdain a first wife  
Because of a new one  
Then sorry for you

The song mocks such a husband and tells him that women are all the same. This example explains the purpose of satire: it has a didactic purpose. A satirical work hopes to criticize people who fall short of some standard which the critic desires that it should reach. *Dipo*

songs, therefore, make use of satire to ridicule as a means of correcting or reforming. Thus to Swift (1793), satire is, “To cure the Vices of Mankind”.

Men are seen as very important members of the Krobo community with a crucial role to play. The man is seen as the family provider, teacher, and an advisor of the family. The man is supposed to farm to feed members of his household and his in-laws. A man who fails to perform this duty is not spared by the womenfolk. He is taunted with songs especially, during the *dipo* season.

Since the Krobos are a patrilineal community, it is the man who takes the bride price for his daughter(s). This song mocks the irresponsible father that he should prepare to take his daughter’s bride price because she is now a Krobo woman.



I huno alitse  
I se dipo

---

My lazy husband  
Our daughter is now a woman

According to Lusweti (1992:20), “Oral literature also helps to maintain cultural values and accepted ways of social behaviour. It is widely used to express social approval and disapproval and to exercise social control”.

*Dipo* songs sometimes arise from particular circumstances. This, the researcher refers to as the situational nature of the songs. Thus, these songs are based on current events and

are composed with the purpose of influencing people. These songs are easily composed on the spur of the moment, mostly attacking social vices, since to the composers, virtue is better than gold because the decline of a nation begins in its homes. Such songs include;

Sieku nɛ da be nɔɔ  
Kɛ o ye ta pɛ  
Nɔ nu

---

gossip is without reward  
after gossiping  
you will be exposed

This song may arise out of something the lead singer might have heard concerning herself or about a member of the community.

Sika lɛɛ nubwɔ  
O nyɛmi ji o nyɛmi  
Sika lɛɛ nubwɔ

---

Wealth is temporary  
Give regard to your neighbour  
Wealth is temporary

The repetition of “onyɛmi” is to emphasize the importance of man over money.

The above song is a caution to any member of the community who is suspected to have placed money over human life. The saying “A man must depend for his well-being on his fellow man illustrates this”. Society frowns on those who claim self-sufficiency because of their wealth hence live as islands in the society. Krobos are communal by nature, and thus frown on any member who wants to be an island. Such behaviours are quickly corrected through the communal performance of satiric *klamaas* we see in the examples above and below. To the Krobo, solitariness is a pitiable condition. There is another *klama* song about boasting.

I bi ko fo ya nge bo he  
Bo lɛɛ tako

---

My child do not crave for cloth  
It is but rag

This means personal possession is not everything. Gloating over them is not worth it.

A bu kaa i bi nyɛ peemi  
Pi mi nɛ i nge muɔ

---

They thought I can't do it  
Here I am, smiling

This arose from a member aggrieved because she was despised either because she was not wealthy or because they thought the daughter would become an outcast. When finally, she was able to go through the rites, she surely casts insinuation. These songs are composed as when something happens in society. They are sometimes short-lived. They are characterized by humour, but they are intended to achieve the desired result. Songs of this nature are what the researcher calls new breed of *dipo* songs.

Yaka nɔ hie liɔmɛ!  
Yaka nɔ de li ɔ mɛ!  
Nyɛ ba hie  
Yaka biyo wami!

---

Scandals expectants  
Scandal gossips  
Come and see  
Scandalous girl is grown

In this song, the mother of a *dipo* girl challenges and mocks the slanderers who used to accuse her daughter of bad conduct. The song also seeks to vindicate the girl of the accusations.

Wangɛ noko nɛ wa peeɔ  
nɛ wa kɛ ngɔɔ no  
ngɛ no dɛ

---

We have our way of doing things  
through which we seduce a person

The song refers to young men who through their pleasant singing, try to win the love of a girl from other lovers. This is intended to mock the young men and also to entertain the audience.

Among the Krobo, women are accorded respect because of their special roles as supervisors of the home. This notwithstanding, there are few men who think women are objects and, therefore, could be manipulated. These men forget that it is this same women they find pleasure in at night. The *dipo* singer will not spare such men and thus mock them through the song below. The song in general calls on the men folk to place value on women.

E du nɛ e sa e he bo  
Jije e maa hwɔ ?  
Yihi ɔmɛ a koto kpɛ

---

He has bathed and girded his waist with cloth  
Where will he sleep  
“Midway” among the women

Man is believed to be a stranger on earth because he will one day leave its four corners when death visits him. Many people have devoted their lives to amassing wealth that they forget life is very short. The *dipo* singer as mentioned earlier is a physician and is to cure



the vices of men. Through the song, the singers mock the attitude of those who think the world is a permanent place. No, “We sojourn awhile and leave it”.

Jeɔ pi wanɔ  
Wa ma je jua mi

---

The world is no abiding place  
We sojourn awhile and leave it

Society has become so liberal that respect for elders is a thing of the past. Children no longer have respect for their parents though bible says “... is the first commandment with a promise, that it may go well with you and that you may have a long life...”. Interestingly, they run to their mothers when life turns its back on them. It is this attitude of some youth that the song satirises. Friends may fail, but a mother’s compassion will never fail.

Hue momo le nge  
Se nye momo be

---

Friends abound everywhere  
But it is only one person to call mother

In as much as evil must not go exposed or punished, the one who does good must not go unacknowledged. The Krobo will not wait for the least opportunity to praise those who live up to societal expectation. By so doing they are ironically casting insinuation at miscreants.

In order to achieve the satire without stepping on toes, the songs are interspersed with wit and humour. The bare words in the *dipo* songs do not induce laughter. However, humour is created through the use non-verbal features. Mnemonic features are techniques that aid information retention. This Stewart (1974:149) refers to as non-verbal cues which include facial expression, eye contact and body movement. Their use is based on the observation that the human mind more easily remembers spatial, personal and humorous information rather than the abstract. In the performance of *dipo* songs, the mnemonic features used include facial expression, gestures and body movement. Others include paralinguistic features like voice modulation, eye contact and movement, and prosodic features such as rhythm, intonation and stress. These are meant to induce laughter thereby easing the pain of criticism. The use of humour is to allow for distortions in an otherwise bitter message.

As discussed in Chapter Two, *dipo* songs follow a solo and chorus pattern. The chorus can be manipulated for a humorous effect. In that case, the performance is characterized by repetition of the chorus over and over again. The manipulations together with gestures and other mnemonic features is enough to send one down with laughter. One feature of songs of this nature is that the performance must surely end with the added chorus below:

kɛ I de jaa I jɛ we nɔko  
klo li nɛ a nɛ nɛ ɔ a nya tɛ nɔ he  
kɛ o pee nɔ nɛ hi klolihi ma de  
kɛ o pee nɔ nɛ hi klolihi ma de  
kɛ oyi wia pe wia ooe  
kɛ oyi wia pe wia ooe  
kɛ oyi wia pe wia ooe  
kpomo!

---

What I have said is no insult  
Krobos are quite talkative

if your deeds are good, they will say it  
if your deeds are bad, they will say it  
if you crack your head it is just cracked,  
if you crack your head it is just cracked  
if you crack your head it is just cracked  
Sorry

After the laughter, one is expected to go home and reflect. This brings about the reformation envisaged. Stress is another element of humour in *dipo* songs. In a song that was discussed above, *I hunoalitseɔ, wa biɔ wa*, the *alitse* is sung *alitse ooooo*. The stress is on the 'laziness' to emphasise the vice. The second line is sung placing the stress on each of the syllables. Since this is a direct attack, the stress produces humour which turns to over shadow the bitter effect.

Repetition is another technique of humour in the songs. Some aspects of the song are intentionally repeated to create humour. This, at the same time, brings the message to the forecourt of the listener. Thus to Leech as cited in Yankson (2011:23)

...repetition is a fundamental if primitive device of intensification...by underlining the message, rather than elaborating the message, it presents a simple emotion with force, it further suggests a suppressed feeling, as it were, for which there is no outlet but a repeated hammering at the confining walls of language.

It is the hope of the individual that humanity is improved despite its frailty. This is what Swift refers to in the *Intelligencer, Number III* "...since the best satire does not seek to harm or damage but to create a shock of recognition and to make vice repulsive so that the vice will be expunged from the person or society". This is what Swift means when he says,

Yet, Malice never was his Aim;  
He lash'd the Vice but spar'd the Name.  
No Individual could resent,

Where Thousands equally were meant.  
His Satyr points at no Defect,  
But what all Mortals may correct. . . .  
(ll. 313-16, 459-64)

#### 4.11 Conclusion

The chapter looked at the aesthetic value of dipo songs. *Klama* addresses major thematic concerns which can be further studied by researchers. Some of these include education, discrimination, betrayal, going back to our roots, among others. The use of literary techniques as well as mnemonic features help to make the use of satire and humour in the songs very effective at addressing social behaviour since morality to the Krobo is a societal rather than an individual issue. Thus to Bejiwaji (2004), “It is not unusual to get the impression that African cultures extol the virtues of community, that moral obligations are primarily social rather than individual, and that communal factors often take precedence over individual rights or interests.”

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5.0 CONCLUSION, SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Summary

The study attempted investigating the aesthetics of *dipo* songs. The researcher found out that song is an inseparable aspect of the Krobo. For this reason, there is hardly any gathering of the Krobo that is not embellished by the use of songs.

In discussing tradition and poetic development in Ghana, Angmor (1996:95) says “indigenous Ghanaian poetry is expressed through three media; the spoken word, songs and surrogates such as drum and the horn. It features both on light and serious occasions...” This supports the fact that the song can never be absent in the gathering of the Krobo.

Over the years, their literariness has been a problem to scholars in the field of literature. This, notwithstanding, oral literature has been on the heart of African scholars who value these art forms and hope for their preservation and continuity. The researcher noted that song as a genre of oral literature has played a major role in the history and life of the people. Songs serve as a reflector of the people’s philosophy and aesthetics, as a medium of culture, historical record, means of entertainment and as a means of castigating evil doers and for the enhancement of positive behaviour.

Initiation rites among the Krobo are the avenues for promoting and projecting this art form. Among the Krobo, *klama* songs sung during the *dipo* ceremony serve as an avenue

to educate the initiates. The Krobo as a people admire such qualities as generosity, hard work, kindness, honesty, responsibility and many more. Thus *klama* songs are, therefore, used to express social approval or disapproval and to exercise social control. Through songs of ridicule, people who misbehave are criticized publicly. This allows the singers the opportunity to 'pierce' people by expressing deep-seated feeling against those who deviate from the accepted social norms. In order not to offend, the songs are given humorous tone to lessen the effects of the words on the offenders. Those who are criticized are not supposed to take offence, or even defend themselves; they are only to mend their ways.

Since *dipo* songs are satiric in content, aimed at social control through ridicule, the performer or singer often exaggerates song incidents or particular actions of an individual during crises that gives rise to the composition. This provides the lead singer a framework around which to build up other details from her own already existing song repertoire. The lead-singer is able to comment, not only on the consequences of such actions to the community if it goes unchecked, but also on society's reaction to such actions. The *klama* song provides ample opportunity for the singer to comment on the consequences of such actions. The singer may sometimes address the audience directly pleading for a stop to the moral laxity. Thus, the singer plays the role of a social reformer.

In order to avoid been direct, she employs the use of stylistic features like repetitions, exaggeration, wit and sarcasm. As a social critic, the singer becomes an active bearer of the traditions, a versatile and highly responsive creator whose skills are often enhanced

towards capturing contemporary realities within the community. Ogunjimi (2005:226), therefore, describes the oral poet as one who “detests the evil and malaise that plague a society”.

## 5.2 Findings

*Dipo* is a very important aspect of the culture of the Krobo. *Dipo* songs create awareness or educate; spell out the dos and don'ts of life. These songs stimulate the observation and imaginative skills of the audience. Over the years, these songs have helped to produce a conscientious and productive people since any deviation from the normal way of life is held up for ridicule.

In recent times, the tone of the lyrics has become more bitter, biting and humorous. The study reveals the reason for this, which is, the negative impact of Christianity, and modernity. *Dipo* songs, therefore, satirize thoughtfully and mercilessly the frailties of life among the Krobo. Satire in *dipo* songs come in two forms; direct and indirect. Direct satire is where the satirised is mentioned without hiding behind words or images. The satire is, therefore, directed towards an individual or group. It has an ironic/ sarcastic tone. It is directed towards pretence and hypocrisy, irresponsibility on the part of parents. Songs of this nature are more humorous so as to lessen the effect of the damage. This is because ‘those who are ashamed of nothing else are so of being ridiculous’. The disadvantage of direct satire is that it does not seem to affect others outside the intended target group.

In indirect satire, the satirist makes use of characters or events who/which represent particular points of view and are made ridiculous by their own behaviour and thoughts, and by the narrator's usually ironic commentary. The tones of songs in this category are a bit harsh because they are directed towards society in general. It is, therefore, a form of social commentary.

### 5.3 Recommendations

Oral literature has been the centre of debate in many literary circles in Ghana. In all this, its relevance in building of our nation cannot be questioned. This has been confirmed by the various publications on the subject and its introduction in the Senior High Schools, Colleges of Education and the University programmes in the country. For most Ghanaians the oral art is their first encounter with literature hence it has served as a source of material for the new literature and has also influenced its spirit and style. It is not surprising to note the dirge-like tone of Awoonor's<sup>1</sup> poetry and the song-like tone of Atukwei Okai'

The poetry of Awoonor has as its material the traditions of his people; Ewes. Born to a grandmother who is a dirge singer, Awoonor incorporates this idea into his poetry. Mention can be made of poems like *A Death Foretold* and *Songs of Sorrow*.

Atukwei Okai is another Ghanaian poet who has also written bearing in mind the oral tradition of his people. The title of his poems speak for themselves; *oath of fontomfrom and lorgoligi logarithm*. In fact his poems are not meant to be read but to be performed.



This is because they are songs. This explains the reason why they are in movements and not stanzas. One feature of his poetry which makes it songlike is the refrain.

Mention could be made of J.H. Nketia whose source of materials for his artistry were in the wellsprings of the traditional songs the young Kwabena Nketia absorbed from his grandmother, Yaa Amankwaa, and her cousin, “Adowa hemmaa”. “The stimulus began in small, pure streams; but he expanded and spread them out like winged rivers cascading into wider channels; he made his new stuff fit the old pieces like puzzles. The secrets were in his improvisations and innovations; they both sported his considerable qualities, and hatched a brave new genre – the contemporary African art music” (www.ghanamusic.com).

It is in the spirit of this discussion and in the effort of contributing to the understanding of Ghanaian literary forms that this research was carried out. The researcher, believes that researches that contribute to the understanding of our communities are useful and worthy of study. Thus to Bukenya (1994:2) ... “oral literature should make the learner more keenly observant, more sensitively and sensibly responsive...”

Based on the findings of the research, it is recommended that the study of African music be given a priority in the country’s Universities and Colleges of Education. In-depth study should be made into the various forms which should include klama. The Ghana Dance Ensemble<sup>3</sup> should also consider showcasing songs like klama during national performances. The focus should not always be on *adowa* and *kpanlogo*.

The researcher through this medium calls on the *Konor* and people of Manya Krobo to redirect their attention to *dipo* songs because they have the ability to address the vices they have to contend with in recent times. It must be studied in relation to other forms of oral forms in schools in the Manya Krobo municipality. The songs should also not be made seasonal; it must be made part of all public gatherings.

The researcher would also appeal to the organisers of Ghana's Most Beautiful whose main aim is to project African values to project some of these art forms. Finally, the onus lies on the National House of Chiefs. They should ensure that these important aspects of the literature of our people do not die off.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

Satire has been regarded as the most effective source to understand a society, and the oldest form of social study. Satire's job is to expose problems and contradictions. For this reason, it has enjoyed in many societies a special freedom or license to mock prominent individuals and institutions. Satire is a powerful tool which has the ability to point out deficiencies in issues of human life. It has the ability to protect its creator's culpability or criticism because in most cases the messages are implied. Satire is much alive today because messages that would be ignored or attract no sanction are declared through the use of satire.

From the study, it is evident that the *klama* singer is poised on seeing vices and follies fleeing the Krobo society. As guardians of the moral code of society, they address these

vices and follies in an attempt to finding a solution to the canker. The satirist is never an enemy but a reformer. Thus in the words of Nwajego (2003:6) "... the satirist cannot be called an enemy to the offender just as the physician cannot be called an enemy to the patient when he prescribes an aggressive therapy in lieu of surgery".

It is this importance of dipo songs that the study has tried to unearth. It is, therefore, a wake-up call to the whole Kroboland not to throw these songs to the drain, but to make in-depth study into their composition and lyrics so as to preserve them for posterity.

Finally, the satire and humour come out through the use of various aesthetic elements as well as the various non-verbal cues employed. These features have over the years serve as an element of social control, as a means to preserve the moral fibre of society, and to cure members of their follies. It is, therefore, undoubted that *dipo* songs or *klama* are an important aspect of literature which must be studied.

As has been discussed earlier in this study, mankind is always plagued with evil and it is the duty of the satirist to cure this. This is the reason for the satire and humour in *dipo* songs. Since people are aware that they are been watched and certain attitudes may be laid bare one day, most people exercise a bit of restraint as they journey through life. The effectiveness of the satire and humour in dipo songs would have been enhanced if their performance were a daily and not a yearly affair.

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## **GLOSSARY OF KROBO TERMS USED**

Adowa- traditional dance of the Akans

Dipo- a puberty rite performed for Krobo girls to usher them into womanhood

Dipo yo- dipo girl, a girl who is undergoing the dipo rite

Dom-valley, a term used to refer to Odumase i.e. the major towns

Halo- song of insinuation among the Ewes

Kpanshimo- song of insinuation among the Gas

Kpanlogo- a traditional dance of the Gas

Kono- the paramount chief of the Krobo

Klama- songs sung to mark the success of the Krobo

Kloyo- a Krobo woman i.e one who has undergone the dipo rite

*Kloyihi*-plural of klo yo

*Kloyopeemi*-making a krobo woman

*Dipoyo*-dipo girl( a girl undergoing the dipo rite)

Kloweki- the priestess who led the Krobo during their migration. She is the mother of the dipo ceremony

Oglojo/ohuesabe- traditional song and dance groups

Otseame- linguist

Tɛgbɛtɛ- sacred dipo rock

Kplɛ/ohiɔkpo, ha- forms of klama

Yifɔmi- washing of hair

*dowomi lahi* –songs for merry- making

*we*- household

ku- a group

*kasi*- a group of people who eat from the same pot.

Weku-family

*Wekumatse* – head of family



**APPENDIX A (HA)**

1. Djangma ke waa ya  
Wa ya wa ba  
noko be blo no

---

Djangma called on us to go  
We have gone and come  
There was no impediment

2. ke wa yaa nomo weo  
ago wa deo

---

When entering the old man's premises  
We announce our presence with 'agoo'

3. I bi Dede lee  
O se dipo

---

My sweet daughter Dede  
You have undergone dipo

4. I huno alitse  
I se dipo

---

My lazy husband  
I have performed dipo

5. Weku bi a dipo  
nye se ne e nyo

---

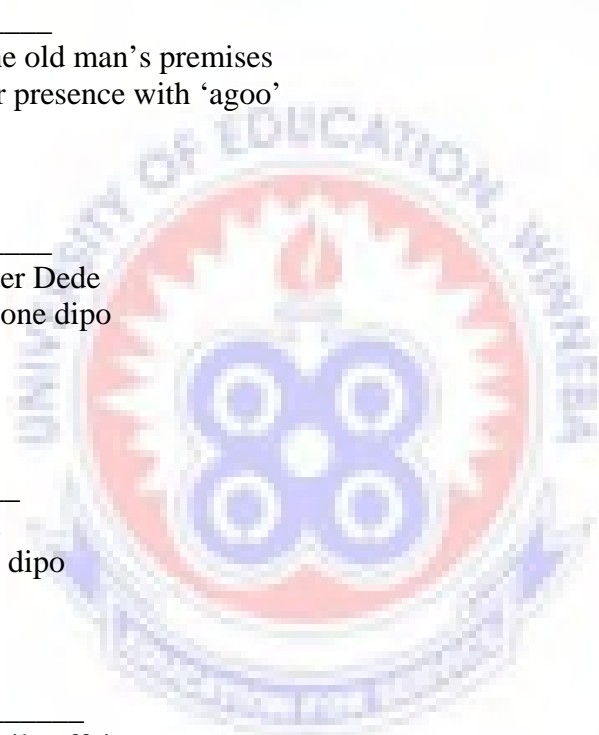
This dipo is a family affair  
Let the celebration be jubilant

6. Oli ha do mio  
ne o fo bi yo

---

You don't know how to dance ha  
And you have brought forth a girl

7. Mayo nge nue oo  
Eh iba mi  
Mayo nge nue oo  
Mayo nge nue oo  
Ehi ba mi oo



Mayo nɛɛ nue oo

---

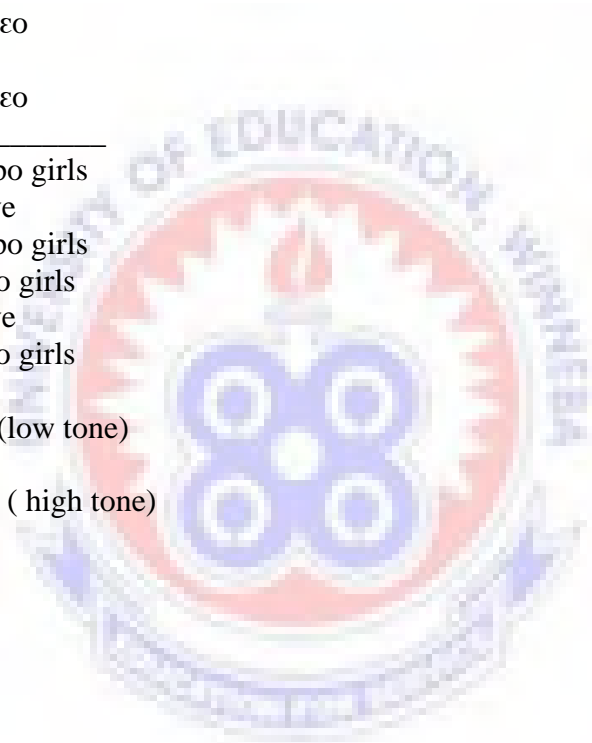
Mother can hear everything  
but cannot come  
mother can hear everything  
but cannot come  
mother can hear everything  
but cannot come

8. Dipo yihi a nyɛ mɛo  
adɔdɔli  
Dipo yihi a nyɛ mɛo  
Dipo yihi a nyɛ mɛo  
adɔdɔli  
Dipo yihi a nyɛ mɛo
- 

Mothers of the dipo girls  
They are not active  
Mothers of the dipo girls  
Mother of the dipo girls  
They are not active  
Mother of the dipo girls

9. A bɛ dɔm gbleoo (low tone)  
A li ha nɔ  
A bɛ dɔm gbleeee ( high tone)  
A bɛ dɔm gble  
A li ha nɔoo  
A bɛ dɔm gble  
A li ha nɔooo  
A bɛ dɔm gble  
A li ha nɔoooo  
A bɛ dɔm gble
- 

They are rustic village dwellers  
They do not know enough  
They are rustic village dwellers  
They are rustic village dwellers  
They do not know enough  
They are rustic village dwellers  
They do not know enough  
They are rustic village dwellers  
They do not know enough  
They are rustic village dwellers  
They do not know enough  
They are rustic village dwellers



**APPENDIX B (HAYE OR DOWOMI LA)**

1. Gba saa yo  
lɔ heɔ mo hi si ne  
a bu mo bo

---

Marriage is the woman's glory  
So stay chaste until  
You become a woman

2. nɔ ne i na nɔ heɔ  
i he ja we nge nɔko he  
nɔ ne i na nɔ heɔ  
i he ja we nge nɔ he

---

I am content with my lot  
I shall not rely on anybody  
I am content with my lot  
I shall not rely on anybody

3. Gbogblotonye lee  
Ke pi o heeɔ  
Jine hwɔ ko gbe wɔ

---

Gbogblotonye  
Had it not been you  
We would have gone hungry

4. Mau le nɔko ko pia le oo  
Mau le nɔko ko pia le oo  
le ke e peeɔ nɔ nɔ  
ne ke e woɔ nɔ bua  
Mau le nɔko ko pia le oo  
Bua wo lo

---

Nobody should blame God  
Nobody should blame God  
He punishes  
And he comforts  
Nobody should blame God  
Comforter

5. Sieku ne da be nɔ  
Ke o ye ta pe  
Nɔ nu

---

Gossip is without reward

after gossiping  
you will be exposed

6. Sika lee nubwo  
O nyemi ji o nyemi  
Sika lee nubwo

---

Wealth is temporary  
Give regard to your neighbour  
Wealth is temporary

7. I bi ko fo ya nge bo he  
Bo lee tako

---

My child do not crave for cloth  
It is but rag

8. A bukaa i bi nyee peemi  
Pi mi ne i nge muoe

---

They thought I can't do it  
Here I am, smiling

9. Yaka no hie li ome!  
Yaka no de li ome!  
Nyeba hie  
Yaka biyo wami!

---

You who are out to see scandals!  
You who are out to talk about scandals  
Come and see  
How the scandalous girl has grown

10. Nonne o pee mi ne o  
A pee we no bi ja  
lo ke o pee mio  
ma ngma ngo wo tso he

---

what you did to me is a taboo  
it is forbidden  
Thus as you caused such sorrows to me  
I shall scribe it on the tree

11. A maa fo mayo yi  
ne a se ba de we mi
-

They are washing the girl's hair  
they did not inform me

12. I nui o nane  
Nge Abidjan yamio he

---

I do not prevent you  
Travelling to Abidjan

13. Muase su la ha Maja  
ne e ke hie yoo  
ne Maja ke e yo  
se Muase ji yo tse

---

Muase lighted the torch for Maja  
Maja discovered the mountain  
Maja claims that the mountain  
But Muase is the owner

14. Nako nge wemi  
ne Kloweki ye nye

---

Nako was first to settle  
But Kloweki was accorded popularity

15. he ne Siako da  
Dome ta

---

Where Siako stands  
Dome people fight

16. Anikika, waa ka ne waa hie  
ne suo nya ma yo

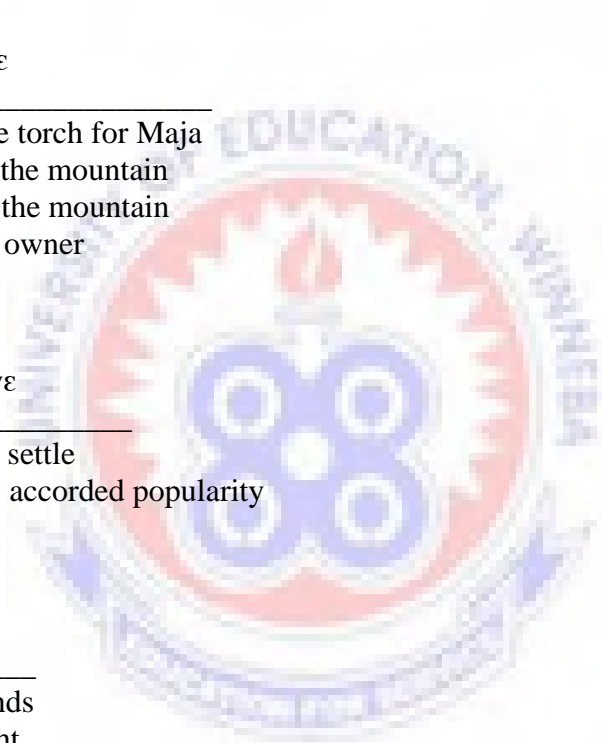
---

Anikika let's try and see  
that the elephant may shut up

17. Tete Okum ya Ayigbe  
ne wo lo ba

---

Tete Okum sojourned to Togoland  
And brought sea fish





18. Kloweki je ohuε kε ba  
Dipo he
- 

Kloweki came from Togoland  
because of *dipo*

19. Adali ma kε a dε tsine  
Ningoli ma kε a dε hokpa  
Kloli ma kε a dε okadi
- 

The Adas are coming with calabash  
The Ningoos are coming with occult powers  
The Krobos are coming with a sign

20. Mo yabu nɔɔ  
kε onyemi ngmε hlui
- 

If your friend lays an egg  
Hatch it

21. Kε mo nε o li domi  
O ma kpe kungwɔ nane  
Kε mo nε o le domi  
O ma kpe kungwɔ fiɔ
- 

The one who cannot dance  
Chews the leg of the chicken  
The one who dances gracefully  
Will enjoy the thigh

22. Wa ngε nɔko nε wa peeɔ  
nε wa kε ngɔɔ nɔ  
ngε nɔ dε
- 

We have our way of doing things  
through which we seduce a person

23. Nɔ n I na nɔɔ  
I hε ja we ngε nɔ ko he
- 

I am content with my lot  
I shall not rely on anybody

24. Ajo lee  
ba joo o ma

---

Blessing  
come and bless your people

25. Yuda lee  
Mo le o tsoo I se blo

---

It's you, Judah  
Who betrayed me

26. Wo ji taxi tsowi  
wa bui lole ngua ome  
taxi tsowi  
Wa bui lolengua ome  
tsowi tsowi  
wa bui lole ngua ome

---

Call us small (taxi)  
but we do not count the on mami wagons  
small (taxi)  
but we do not count on the mami wagons  
small small (taxi)  
but we do not count on the mami wagons

27. Ko wu laga do  
Laga do lee mio nge mi

---

Don't swim in the *laga* stream  
There are thorns (it's full of thorns)

28. Gbogblotonye lee!  
kle no ma tse mi  
lo he I ko nya

---

Mother!  
this arrow will hurt  
so I have broken the tip

29. Biale biale yo du ehe  
Ala kutsam

---

Biale biale, a girl cleanses herself  
With the sponge

30. Adamo fu nge bo he  
Adamo lalii  
nyee ba

---

Adamo has bloomed  
Come, you who cherish  
Adamocolours

31. ke a se we mo  
o bi nye hami

---

If you have not undergone dipo  
You can't put on the cloth

32. Afeuni nyeele  
Afeuni je kpo

---

Come admirers of beauty  
Beauty is on parade

33. Apetesukuku lee  
jeo nge se ke nya  
ke o yaa o se bo  
moo ba o he kpe

---

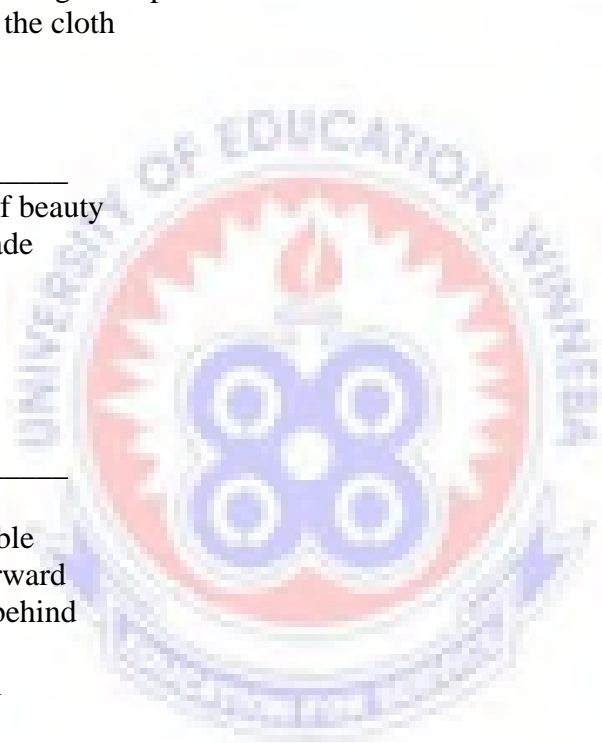
apetesukuku  
life is unpredictable  
while moving forward  
think of what's behind

34. onyemi ji onyemi  
sika le nubwo

---

value your brother  
money is but a stranger

35. Ahlabataba  
ne nyu hwo ba  
wa hla nyu  
wa ne nyu  
wa na Dede Yomo  
ke e bi ne ome  
a na nyu, a du, a ba  
yo lee hmm!  
Yomo hi tso



Ma ngɔ Yomɔ kɛ e bime  
Yomɔ hi tsɔ  
Ma ngɔ Yomɔ kɛ e bime

---

Its dry season  
Water bodies have dried up  
We searched for water  
There was none  
But Dede Yomɔ  
And her children got water  
Indeed you are a mother  
Mother you are good  
I will marry you and your children  
Mother you are good  
I will marry you and your children

36. Aposiwoyo lee  
A pee we ha mo lo?
- 

Apostolic priestess  
Did you not undergo *dipo*?

37. Osofo  
kɛ o kɛ o daa  
Po mi ngehiowe
- 

Pastor  
if you claim to be righteous  
let us meet in heaven

38. Osanɛ i kɛ i bi juae heo  
lɔheɔnɛ i kɛ ma hisi
- 

I refuse to sell oyster  
That's why I kept myself well

39. Mo nɛ o li do mi  
O maa kpe kungwɔ nane
- 

You don't know how to dance  
You will chew the chicken's foot

40. Mayo lee  
Jije o hue ɔmɛ ngɛ?
-

My daughter  
Where are your friends?

41. kɛ o na yo he  
nɛ o kɛ o sume yo ngua  
A fani kɔam

---

If you disdain a first wife  
Because of a new one  
Then sorry for you

42. Gbebite Asila, wo mi  
nɛ maa womo  
Asila wo mi nɛ ma womo  
Asila, wui mi  
mɛnɛ maa wo mi  
ablongmonyɛ ?

---

Gbebite Asila, oblige me  
that I may oblige you  
Asila oblige me that I may oblige you  
Gbebite Asila, oblige me  
who will oblige me  
mother of Ablongmo

43. Atu ngɛ sowe nɔ  
mɛnɔ maa he  
wa ngɛ juae

---

It is put on sale  
who will buy  
we are selling it

44. Otsimeku ywia i lɛɔ  
Otsimeku ywia i lɛ ngua

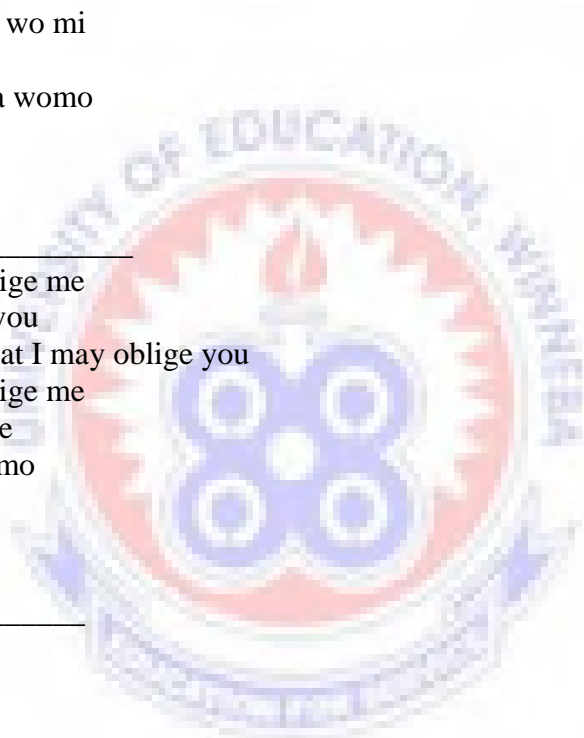
---

Otsimeku ( death ) has broken my canoe  
Otsimeku ( death ) has broken my big canoe

45. kɛ mayo lɛ ngɛɔ  
ji nɛ i ko pee pe ja

---

If mother had been alive  
I could have achieve more



46. wa ma ya Nuku  
Wa ma ya bi maa yo  
wa mi si

---

We shall inquire  
Of her destiny  
From Nuku

47. ke o ngo ho ko je  
Bi le ha no wami

---

if you become pregnant, do not abort  
Children lend life

48. he mo o su we he  
ne waa gble ngma

---

come to the mill  
that we may grind millet

49. I na noko kaa i hue  
Kpaako I bua ba

---

I have found someone like a friend  
Now I am consoled

50. Koko Yowe lee  
Mami jimo

---

Koko, woman of distinction  
I call you friend

51. E du ne e sa e he bo  
Jije e maa hwo ?  
Yihio me a koto kpe

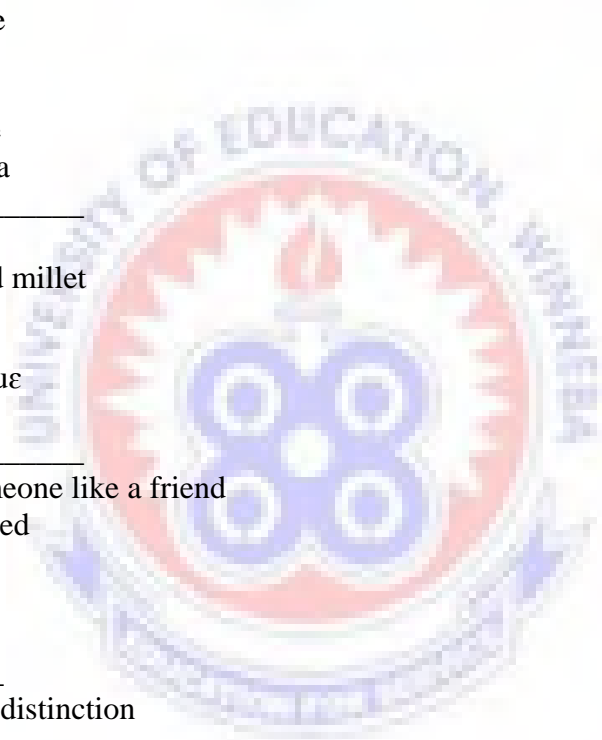
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He has bathed and girded his waist with cloth  
Where will he sleep  
“Midway” among the women

52. No biyo heo  
E hi ma je gba

---

For the sake of darling daughter



I just cannot divorce

53. I wo kɔdu fu  
nge ngma we mi  
nyɛɛ ba nɛ waa ye

---

I have stored banana  
in the 'giant' pot  
come let us enjoy

54. nyɛɛ ba nɛ wa hla je  
Je sɛ si

---

Come let us seek world  
World has hidden itself

55. Dugbatey nge wosi  
ke o ya tsɔɔ  
moo ba tsɔɔ

---

Dugbatey resides in the south  
May your going and coming  
Be blessed

56. Yuda lee  
Mo nɛ o tsɔ ɔ i se blo

---

It's you, Judas  
who betrayed me

57. wɔji taxi tsɔwi  
Wa bui lɔle ngua me

---

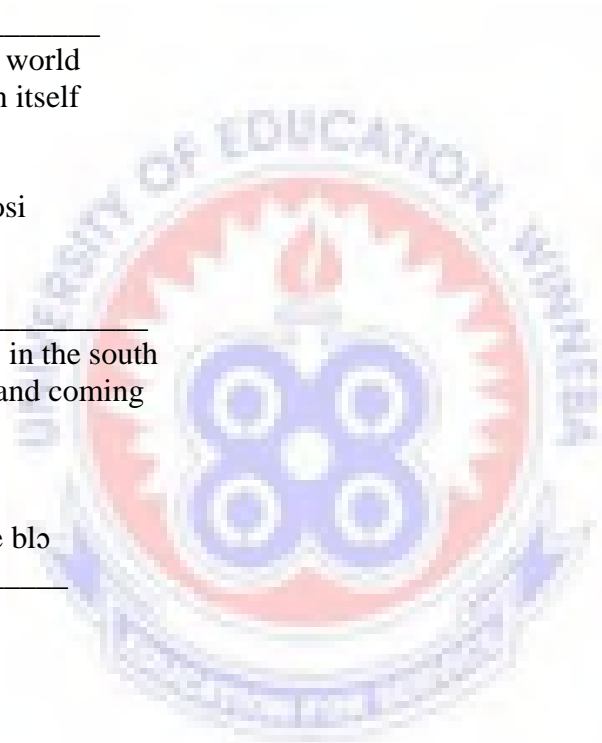
Call us small (taxis)  
but we do not count on the mammy wagons

58. Jeɔ pi wanɔ  
Wa ma je juami

---

The world is no abiding place  
We sojourn awhile and leave it

59. Hue momo le nge  
Se nye momo be
- 



Friends abound everywhere  
But it is only one person to call mother

60. Gba saa yo  
Moo hi sine a bu mobo

---

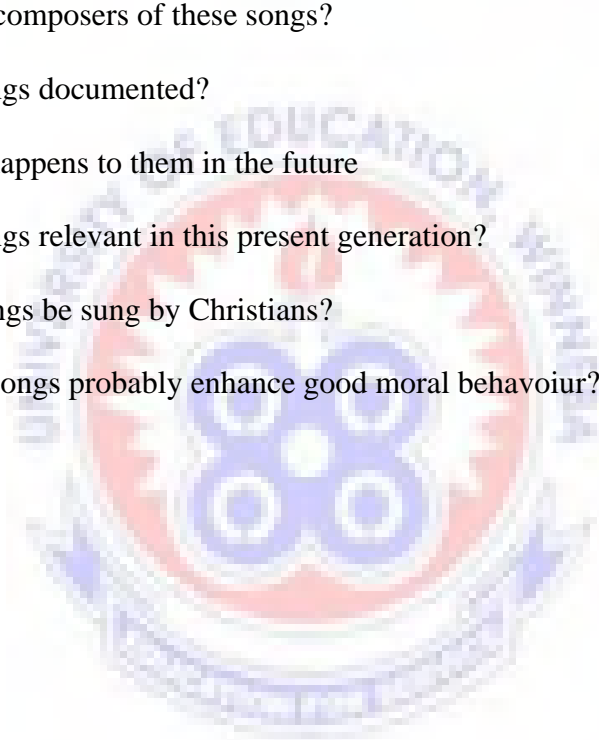
Marriage is the woman's glory  
Practice abstinence





### **APPENDIX C: QUESTIONNAIRE TO AID INTERVIEW**

1. Who are the Manya Klos?
2. What are some of their traditional practices?
3. What is the origin of dipo?
4. What is the importance of the ceremony to the Krobo girl?
5. Why are songs part of the ceremony?
6. Who are the composers of these songs?
7. Are these songs documented?
8. If not, what happens to them in the future
9. Are these songs relevant in this present generation?
10. Can these songs be sung by Christians?
11. Could these songs probably enhance good moral behaviour?



**APPENDIX D**

A MAP OF EASTERN REGION SHOWING THE LOCATION OF MANYA

KROBO

