

ASEMKA

THE BILINGUAL LITERARY JOURNAL
OF THE FACULTY OF ARTS
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

NUMBER 11(1)

JUNE 2021



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GRANT SUPPORT

Asemka is funded through grants from the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Arts; the Publications' Board; and the Office of the Vice-Chancellor, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana.

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The cover and page design elements were inspired by the Adinkra symbols of Ghana.

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ASEMKA: EDITORIAL

The Number 11(1) June 2021 Edition of *ASEMKA, The Bilingual Literary Journal of the University of Cape Coast* contains seven (7) papers centred on diverse areas of teaching and research in the Humanities, spanning between themes in Literature and Religion. This Edition contains only one (1) manuscript in French. The remaining six (6) are in English. The papers span between thematic areas in Literature and Religious Studies. The contributors are from Ghana and Nigeria. These papers were taken through rigorous blind peer-review processes and painstaking editorial work.

First Section

*Britnum, A. G.'s paper titled, "Mariama Bâ/Ramatoulaye en un combat douteux dans *Une si longue lettre* »,*

Second Section

*Nyatname, P. N.'s paper titled "An ecocritical reading of Victor Yankah's *The Pretty Trees of Gakwana and Sikaman*"* examines two plays of Victor Yankah concepts within analytical framework of ecocriticism. It is a critical assessment of Yankah's ecodrama in the light of ecocriticism, a field of literary theory and criticism. It draws on the broader concepts and discourses of ecocriticism and demonstrates how the playwright shares a symbiotic relationship which has become a significant feature of the selected plays. This is to emphasise Yankah's view and preoccupations about the mutual relationship between the human other and nature - the natural world of environment with the view to prove the playwright's concern about the interference of human beings into the world of nature. A situation which adversely results in the disruption of the symbiotic (human-nature) relationship. The significance of the paper lends credence to ways in which Yankah provokes environmental debate and a rethinking in African playwrights concerning environmental issues to raise awareness and inspire environmental consciousness and ecological sustainability among people in Africa, Ghana in particular. The findings reveal both the epistemic and retributive forces of nature as well as raising concerns about the environment, ecological consciousness in advocating for ecological sustainability in modern African theatre and dramatic literature scholarship. The paper offers insight into and expand the frontiers of the discourse of ecocriticism in the global south and adds to the relatively new and developing interest in environmental discourses on the African continent and what they reveal about African environmental consciousness and ecological dimensions.

Amissab-Arthur, H. W.'s paper, "**Examining mothering: Race and abjection in Wilson's *Our Nig* and Walker's *The Color Purple***" analyses the concept race and abjection in African-American women's writings. It specifically emphasizes the idea of mothering during the freedom epoch of the African Americans after slavery. The focus is on mother characters in the novels of Wilson and Walker. The paper borders on some thematic components which come together in unravelling the identities of both the mother characters and their children when faced with issues of race and abjection.

Awojobi, P. O.'s paper, "**The Ministry of Moses Orimolade and the prophetic tradition of Israel: An ecclesio-historical study**", examines the ministry of Moses Orimolade and the prophetic tradition of Israel from an ecclesio-historical perspective. The thrust of his paper is to investigate the origin, and the place of ecstatic prophecy in ancient Israel and its reflections in Moses Orimolade's prophetic ministry in Nigeria. Historical method was used for the research. It uses historicity and ecclesiology as conceptual framework to contend that Israel's prophetic tradition started before Israel settled in Canaan where she interacted with other nations. While it cannot be disputed that Israel must have been influenced by the culture of its neighbours, there were some elements in the religion that were peculiar to Israel. The study concludes that Israelite prophetic heritage cannot be compared with the divination in ancient Near East. There exist a parallel between ecstatic prophetic ministry in ancient Israel and Moses Orimolade prophetic ministry in Nigeria. The paper recommends that contemporary Prophets in Nigeria and beyond must strive to fulfil divine mandate received by them at all cost.

Ofei, D. & Oppong Adjei, D.'s paper titled, "**Sexual Identities in Africa: A Queer Reading of Chinelo Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees***" analyses queer sexual identities in Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*. It draws on the broader concept of queer analysis and demonstrates how *Under the Udala Trees* uses its narrative to conceive space and language whose midpoint encompasses literary innovations and the significance of some experiences of queer individuals within an African setting. Ultimately, instead of simply emphasizing these sexualities as alternative solutions in adverse conditions to some individuals who cannot help being the way they are, the paper unravels the literary merits such as shock, characterization and thematic values of queer sexualities in Okparanta's *Under the Udala Trees*.

Sam, C. A. & Nkansah, S. K.'s paper, "**Evidences of our Inhumanity: Representations of Evil and the Quest for Postcolonial Healing in Tadjoo's *The Shadows of Imana: Travels in the Heart of Rwanda***",

explores the literary representations of evil in relation to the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda while simultaneously looking at therapeutic strategies in healing the wounds of the past as depicted in Veronique Tadjó's *The Shadows of Imana: Travels in the heart of Rwanda* using Kant's conceptions of evil and postcolonial literary theory. The results of the analysis is that hatred, otherness, genocide and remembrance constitute conversations for understanding travel writings and historical violence.

Inusah, A-R.'s paper, "**Lundaa as speech surrogate of Dagbamba**" examines surrogate language in Dagbani, a Mabia language spoken in the Northern Region of Ghana. The paper pays attention to its functions and its transformation from traditional to the contemporary sociocultural issues. Premised on participant-observation, the paper supports the multi-toned language represented on a pressure drum capable of many pitches. It attests that the *lundaa* 'pressure drum' is a speech surrogate used among Dagbani speakers. The *lundaa* has a wide distribution of functions but this paper is focused on the core functions of drum language that include *molo* 'announcement', *salima* 'Panegyric', *ginguani* 'invocation' and *naba* 'proverbs' as examples of drum literature and transformation. The paper suggests that the communication potential of the *lundaa* rhythms and its interpretation leads to an understanding of the sociocultural life of the people.

Lundaa as speech surrogate of Dagbamba

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Abstract

The paper examines surrogate language in Dagbani, a Mabia language spoken in Northern Region of Ghana. The objectives of the paper are in two folds: it pays attention to its functions and its transformation from traditional to the contemporary sociocultural issues. Premised on participant-observation, the paper supports the multi-toned language represented on a pressure drum capable of many pitches. It attests that the *lundaa* ‘pressure drum’ is a speech surrogate used among Dagbani speakers. The *lundaa* has a wide distribution of functions but this paper is focused on the core functions of drum language that include *molo* ‘announcement’, *salima* ‘Panegyric’, *gingaani* ‘invocation’ and *yaha* ‘proverbs’ as examples of drum literature and transformation. The paper suggests that the communication potential of the *lundaa* rhythms and its interpretation leads to an understanding of the sociocultural life of the people.

Keywords: Dagbani, lundaa, lunsi, drum, surrogate language.

Introduction

The paper examines speech surrogate in Dagbani, a Mabia language spoken in Northern Region of Ghana. It focuses on the *lundaa*¹ ‘hourglass shaped drum’ as a surrogate instrument that imitates the tonal patterns of spoken language in Dagbani (Asangba 2021; Salifu & Gurindow 2014; Suad 2011; Albert 2010; Salifu 2008, 2007; Locke 1990). Among the Dagbamba, Mamprusi and

¹ Abbreviations used in this paper include: 1, 2, and 3 = first, second and third person respectively, anim. = animate, conj. = conjunction, emph = emphatic, foc. = focus, rel. = relative, imperf = imperfective, inanim. = inanimate, loc. = locative, neg. = negative morpheme, perf = perfective, pl. = plural, sg. = singular, par t= particle

Nanumba of Northern Ghana, instruments such as *timpana* ‘talking drum’, *lunja* ‘hourglass shaped drum’, *daligu* ‘ancient framed drum’, *goonje* ‘bowed lute’, *chichay’sa* ‘gourd rattle’, *dawule* ‘double bell’, and *kikaa* ‘trumpet’, are commonly used as surrogate instruments. The primary drum of Dagbambga in the past was *daligu*, which was the original talking drum, but it is now practically extinct as observed by Kinney (1970). It is very common to hear the stream of sounds, *luy’mi tiba wum a ba yili yelli* ‘open your ears and listen to matters pertaining to your paternity,’ played to alert a patron or a chief. The *lundaa* among the drums in Dagbani is the only talking drum that is used to communicate this kind of alert. The traditional instrument chosen for this paper is the *lundaa*, which has the capabilities of imitating speech text or the speaking voice and simultaneously serves as a musical instrument in a performance.

Lunja ‘hourglass shaped drum’ is a double-headed hourglass shaped tension drum made up of a wooden frame that is carved from *taan-tia* ‘shea nut tree’ popularly known in Akan as *nkudua*. Each end of the shell is covered with an animal skinhead sewn onto a circular rim made of reed and grass. The two ends are connected by antelope skin tension cords from one end of the shell to the other end as described by Suad (2011). This is presented in Figure 1.



Figure 1: *Lundaa*

Lundaa is one of the *lunsi* ensembles, which consists of the *lundaa* ‘lead drum’, *luy-bila* ‘support lead drum’ and *gun-gon* ‘bass drum’. The *gun-gon* is a double headed medium sized cylindrical bass drum with snares on each head as seen in Figure 2. It produces a rich bass tone when struck in the middle and has a wide array of high overtones and buzz when played.



Figure 1: *guy-gon*

Lundaa is played with *lundɔli* ‘curved wooden stick’ held in the hand while it [*lundaa*] is suspended from the shoulder by a scarf or rope tied to the central cylinder shell that fitted snugly into the drummer’s armpit as seen in Figure 3. The playing is accompanied by skillfully squeezing and pulling the tension cords to change the tension and thus the tone of the drum. The tonal language being played with a natural high (H) and low (L) patterns which is usually not predictable is transposed to the *lundaa* by the ‘drummer’ to imitate the spoken tones.



Figure 3: Lung Bako playing *lundaa* using *lundɔli*

This paper discusses speech surrogate in Dagbani speaking societies paying attention to its functions and transformation from traditional to the contemporary sociocultural issues as the main objectives. It also discusses the communication potential of the *lundaa* rhythms and how the interpretation of the rhythms leads to an understanding of the sociocultural life of Dagbamba.

The paper is structured as follows: section 1 presents literature review and data used in this paper. Section 2 describes the content showing *lundaa* as speech surrogate in Dagbani. Section 3 concludes the paper.

Literature Review and data

Agyekum (2013) states that oral form of literature may be carried out in a non-verbal form in symbols or in a surrogate language like a drum, horn or whistle language and notes that drum language refers to the representation of the spoken language with strokes played on it. Arhin (2009) notes that among the Akan, Ewe and the Ga of Ghana, instruments such as the *atumpan* 'talking drums', double bell, slit gong, and *ntabera* or *aseseben* 'talking trumpets' are commonly used as surrogate instruments. In Congo, *sése* 'bowed lute' serves also as talking instruments while the hourglass drum is used most frequently among the Yoruba and areas of Dagbani ancestry. Arhin (2009) studies the *mmensoun* 'seven horns' as a speech surrogate used among the Fante of Ghana and explains that its ensemble basically consists of seven different horns; namely, *ɛɛɛ-1*, *ɔfar-1*, *agyeso-2*, *abɔso-2* and *out-1*.

Finnegan (2012) mentions that remarkable phenomenon in parts of West Africa is the literature played on drums and certain other musical instruments and notes that drum language is indeed a form of literature rather than music when the principles of drum language are understood. She describes that the expression of words through instruments of which drum is an example rests on the fact that the African languages are tonal. It is the tone patterns of the words that are directly transmitted, and the drum is constructed to provide at least two tones for the use in this way. The intelligibility of the message to the hearer is also sometimes increased by the rhythmic pattern directly representing the spoken utterance of the people. The tonal patterns that are heard as stream of rhythmic sounds from the drum usually provide a slight clue to the actual words being played.

A drum comprises at least one membrane, called drum head or drum skin, that is stretched over a shell and struck, either directly with the player's hand, or with a drumstick, to produce sound. It is a member of the percussion group of musical instruments, technically classified as the membranous (Arhin 2009). Suad (2011) explains that the use of drum as a speech surrogate for communicative purposes is in three rudimental rhythmic procedures:

communication, entertainment and both communication and entertainment. Among the three procedures, the interest of this paper is the communicative function of the drum. Salifu (2008) notes that the drum ‘talks’ when it imitates the tonal patterns of the people and specific drum beats are synonymous with certain signals.

Albert (2010) observes that *lundaa* ‘lead drum’ is placed underneath the arm and it is played with a curved stick (cf. figure 3) by imitating the sounds of spoken language through pitch variation. Locke (1990) acknowledges that Dagbani language played on the *lundaa*, an African drum, has a multi-tone while the Twi language played on the *atumpan* has a single tone. This explains the fact that the *lundaa* is therefore a bi-tonal surrogate instrument as noted by Salifu (2008) that when the *lundaa* ‘talks’, then it is imitating the tonal patterns of the people using some specific drum beats that are synonymous with certain intonations. Suad (2011) observes that the *lundaa* held under drummer’s armpit is pressed and released to change the tension of the drum-head, thus changing its intoned pitches by setting implicit text melodies that closely resemble the sound of speech.

Finnegan (2012) notes that the type of drum communication known to occur widely in West Africa applies the same principle of representing tones of actual speech through stereotyped phrases and that it is also used for ‘spoken’ communication through other instruments such as horns, flutes, or gongs. Among the Dagbamba in Ghana, the drum language and literature are very highly developed (e.g. Asangba 2021) and in such cases, drumming tends to be a specialized and often hereditary activity, and expert drummers with a mastery of the accepted vocabulary of drum language and literature were often attached to a king’s court.

The data for this study was based on the Nayahili dialect of Dagbani obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected using focus key informant interviews and direct participant-observation. I observed some epic narrations during the eve of some festivals (e.g. Damba) and took part in some performances by some male groups in funerals. Some of the musical performances were also recorded during the epic narration at the chief’s court and the durbar grounds. My main interest was on the *lundaa*, which was used apart from the oral singing in the form of narration. The data were recorded with the permission of the chief drummer who also helped to explained most of the sounds played on the *lundaa*. The performances were followed by focus interviews with both the performers and a cross-section of the audience to ascertain the meanings and interpretations of the rhythms. My personal intuitions have been used to complement the information I gathered from the unstructured interviews I had with Iddrisu *luŋa* ‘drummer’ from Yendi and *zaŋ-lun-naa* Sayibu ‘zaŋ’s chief drummer. The

secondary data were collected from Dagbani literature on drum language (Suad 2011; Salifu 2008), which is not Nayahili.

Speech Surrogate in Dagbani

Finnegan (2012:467) explains that “communication through drums can be divided into two types. The first is through a conventional code where pre-arranged signals represent a given message, in this type there is no direct linguistic basis for the communication.” The second type is the one used for African drum literature where the instruments communicate through direct representation of the spoken language itself.” The second type is the form to be considered in this paper. Finnegan believes that in drum language, there are obvious conventional occasions and types of communication for transmission on the drum, so the listener already has some idea of the range of meanings that are likely at any given time. There are significant stereotyped phrases used in drum communications and these are often longer than the straight-forward prose of everyday utterance, but the extra length of the drum stereotypes or holophrases lead to greater identifiability in rhythmic and tonal patterning (Finnegan 2012).

Illustrating this principle in drum language, I observed that in Dagbani surrogate language, single words such as *gbuyin-li* ‘lion’, *wɔb-laa* ‘bull elephant’ which are used by drummers to catch the attention of their patrons have identical tonal and rhythmic patterns. The addition of other words (e.g. *bia* ‘child’) to produce a stereotyped drum phrases such as *gbuyinli-bia* ‘son of a lion’, *wɔb-laa-bia* ‘son of a bull elephant’ results into complete tonal and rhythmic differentiation, which the meaning is transmitted without ambiguity. Verbs phrasing with nouns are similarly represented in long stereotyped phrases which have their own characteristic forms - marked by such attributes as the use of duplication and repetition, derogatory and diminutive terms, specific tonal contrasts and typical structures as in *che_v yuri_N bari_v kɔri_N* ‘leaves horses and rides roan antelopes’. Similarly, in Dagbani, there are stereotyped phrases such *X-dabuyu-lana* ‘inheritor of X’; *Y zuu* ‘Y’s first born son’ that shows a complex structure and other phrases that are used as pet names of patrons as addressives, for example *gɔ mma shaara* for Naa Yakubu and *zɔnjina mankaana* for Naa Muhammadu. Salifu (2008) observes that the phrase sound the drum makes is not the same as the meaning, but they get associated to each other because the people have over the years decided to equate the sound to a specific meaning. The drum for example, makes the sound *pam pam-li*, which has no independent meaning of its own, but has been used as a sign by the drummers to refer to the King of the Dagombas, the Yaa Naa, and cannot be drummed for any other.

Lundaa as explained earlier is an instrument that communicates through direct representation of the spoken language itself, simulating the tone and rhythm of actual speech. The instrument itself is regarded as speaking and its messages consist of phrases through conventional signals which are intended as a linguistic one. The relevance of the *lundaa* for oral literature is not confined to utilitarian messages with a marginally literary flavour. As will emerge clearly from some further examples, this type of medium can also be used for specific literary forms, for proverbs, panegyrics, historical poems, dirges, and culturally, for any kind of poetry.

A key strength of *Dagbamba* surrogate language is that it is orally transmitted through the *lundaa* by *Namɔɔyu* ‘chief master drummer’ across generations, and various genres that exist among the people. Apart from the aesthetic functions of the *lundaa*, it also serves as a storehouse of knowledge and history of the Dagbani speakers. It is also a belief that the *lundaa* is very vital to the survival of Dagban’s culture and it is primarily considered as a tool for entertainment. However, the artistic function is important, not as an end in itself but as a means to achieving a higher end, which is the transmission of historical and cultural information (Salifu & Gurindow 2014; Salifu 2007, 2008).

The *Namɔɔyu* is traditionally recognized by the society as the master of surrogation, so everyone including the Yaa-Naa (literally means ‘King of Power’) respects his role in the society. The belief in surrogate language is part of the tradition among Dagbamba. As part of understanding tradition, it is good for one to learn and understand drum language as form of communication competence in a society. Traditionally, every member of the society is one way or the other is required to understand the drum language especially those from the royal families. *Namɔɔyu* is traditionally described as the ‘wife’ of the Yaa-Naa. Salifu (2008) describes the chief drummer as the beloved of the ruler (Yaa-naa), and each addresses the other in terms of endearment, the chief being the husband and the drummer his wife. There is a hierarchy of prestigious titles within the drummer caste, which makes them chiefs in their own right, so the *Namɔɔyu* well known as *Namo-naa* is said to be the paramount chief of all the master drummers in *Dagbanj*. By hierarchy, *Sanpabi-naa* is the next in command among the master drummers.

Namɔɔyu according to the *Dagbanj* tradition once belonged to the royal hierarchy but got eliminated into the commoner class as contests for ascendancy to the *Yani skin* grew keener with more eligible princes being born to the Kings. He belongs to the *lunsi* ‘drummer’s guild’ family and he was one of the sons of *Naa-Gbewaa* whose mother was not leaving in the palace. The origin of *lunsi* ‘drummer’s guild’ is traced to the story of *Bizɔɔɔ* ‘an outcast’ who played empty tins to praise his brothers for food. Suad (2011) notes that all

lunsi trace their descent from *Bizɔɔ* who gave up the chance to be a chief in favour of becoming a master drummer. He was then charged to organize drum guild purposely to tell the political history of the *Dagbamba*, and since then *luna* is played by members of a hereditary lineage called *lunsi* who have become a social family whose members are proud of their social status in Dagbaŋ. Salifu (2008) mentions that historically, the great ancestor of all drummers, *Bizɔɔ*, son of *Naa Nyay'si*, was apprenticed to *lun' zaɔ* to be schooled in the art of drumming and praise singing when the young motherless player's music attracted his attention upon hearing his son [Biziŋ] aptitude for music and with time he became the stellar drummer. The people of *Dagbaŋ*, therefore, have the notion that *lunsi* are one of the cultural families in the northern part of Ghana with a very sophisticated oral culture woven around the *luna* and other surrogate instruments. So the history of the people until quite recently has been based on oral tradition with the drummers as professional historians who serve as verbal artists, royal counselors, cultural experts, and entertainers.

Namɔɔ is strategically placed in the midst of this political environment, and everyone has need for his services since he is the most important of the principal communicative officials of the chief. There cannot be a royal house where there is no drummer. Salifu (2007:99) notes "by and large, communicating with the chief involves a process of surrogating either through a musical instrument (drum, fiddle or flute) or an elder ... [and] some messages can only be passed on to the Yaa-Naa by way of drumming."

Drum language and literature are very highly developed as drumming tends to be a specialised and often hereditary activity, and expert drummers with a mastery of the accepted vocabulary of drum language and literature are often attached to a king's court. The drum type of expression is a highly skilled and artistic one and it adds to the verbal resources of the language (Finnegan 2012). In order to acquire this skill, training of a *lun* 'person who plays drum' starts in early childhood as one becomes a *luna* 'drummer' by virtue of being born into the drummer's caste, and starts receiving instructions immediately. It is a general practice by *Dagbamba* to give out a biological son to a colleague drummer to teach the art of drumming since it is a life-long profession and thus needs to be taken very seriously. The young drummer practices his lessons on market days by drumming the stock phrase *dakɔli n nyɛ bia* "the bachelor is inferior" at the market. By way of encouragement, he is given monetary presents by traders who would also occasionally ask him to eulogize their forebears (see Salifu 2008). The people have the notion that any money they get from an outing to the palace or market is brought home for the chief drummer to distribute it among all the drummers including the women who belong to the family since it is ominous to hide such money from the group.

The instructional content of the *lundaa* is esoteric and considered sacred, so magical charms and potions are sought to enhance the learner's prowess and retentive memory, and also ward off the evil-eye of rivals and envious people. The *lunsi* essentially stand to demonstrate the duty as a tool used by the ethnic group to delineate who they are, and every individual must recognize and must respect them as the tradition bearers. They do not beg for money or attention and every *Dagban bilichina* 'conscientious Dagomba citizen' ought to see it as his/her duty to see to the drummers' upkeep just as they (the drummers) have sacrificed over centuries to keep the oral tradition alive by reminding the people of their individual and collective histories.

Functions

This section provides response to the first objective that seeks to examine the functions of *lundaa* as speech surrogate. Drum language fulfills many of the functions of writing, in a form, better suited to tonal languages like Dagbani. The relevance of a drum language for oral literature is a type of medium that can be used for specific literary forms such as proverbs, panegyrics, historical poems, and dirges. Nketia (1974) cited in Agyekum (2013:152) identifies four different forms of drum language based on its core functions and these are: Information and Announcement, Panegyric, Invocation and Proverbs.

The lundaa as a speech surrogate can be used to perform all the four core functions of a drum language identified by Nketia (1974) from traditional to the contemporary social cultural issues. The *lundaa* has a number of possible pitch inflections and based on this characteristic, its primary functions are to describe the lineage of the people and to send linguistic messages. It later found its use in religious chants or poetry, local festivities and dancing. It functions by transposing the spoken language into polyrhythmic framework, which imitates the spoken language, in music. When the strings that hold the heads running the length of the *lundaa* are squeezed under the arm, it builds up pressure within the drum to regulate the resultant pitch sounds; when the drum is squeezed, the pitch is high but when the pressure is released, the pitch lowers (Albert 2010). In everyday drumming, drum music employs a call as in (1a) and response (1b) format, where the *lundaa* 'lead drum' sets the pace and the ensemble responds to its calls in order to create unity of sounds, and it [*lundaa*] again improvises as well as decides when to change tunes.

1. a. ***lundaa* calls**

to zam buyili dapala	'Son of Naa Zangina'
mani mini ŋun kpuɣ-ra	'I know he is the one who takes'
mani mini ni buyili noo	'I know it is the gods fowl.'

b. **repose by *lunsi* ensemble**

mani mini o-kpuyi

‘I know he will take it’.

hoi

hey!

buyili noo ka o kpuyi

‘It is the god’s fowl he took’

zaŋ ti kpim-ba la

‘Take give the ancestors.’

(Locke 2002:1)

Traditionally, the role the drummer plays in relation to the chief is essentially one of mutual dependence. The drummer depends upon the ceremonies and other obligations of the chief in order to fulfill his function as an artist and to gain recognition for himself. The chief, in turn, depends upon the reliability of the drummer to maintain the dignity for both himself and his subjects and the relevance of the traditions. Before the arrival of western formal education in Dagbaŋ, the drummers, keepers of the oral tradition, were both instructors in etiquette and practitioners of performative arts. Salifu (2008) observes that each text played on the *lundaa* is surrounded by a lot of history, which needs to be combined in order to get a holistic theatrical experience and the meaning of a text is negotiated between the drummer and the listeners’ shared history.

Communication

Traditionally, sound was one of the possible ways of communicating in the past. The usefulness of drum language among *Dagbamba* to communicate through sound is undeniable. The *lundaa* as a surrogate instrument for communication is used for formalized announcements in *Dagbaŋ* since the reign of *Naa Nyayisi* (1416-1432), grandson of *Naa Gbewaa*. The *lundaa* is used to give messages about, for instance, arrival, royal births, marriages, deaths, communal labour and forthcoming hunts as its communicative functions.

Arrival

The sub-chiefs and the elders of the villages in the north usually visit the chief’s palace every Mondays and Fridays to pay homage to the chief. When any of the visitors is arriving at the palace, it is a traditional norm to use the *lundaa* apart from the usual *timpama* ‘talking drums’ to announce to the chief about the arrival of the chief or the elder and other guests who also visit the royal palace. The *lundaa* is played by the master drummer to communicate to the chief by announcing the arrival of the visiting elders or guests. The *lundaa* which is the lead drum actually plays a verse that names the visitor and where

the person comes from. The following illustrates how the *lundaa* is used to announce to the chief about chiefs who arrive at the palace as visitors:

- 2a. *kumbuŋu naa paarina nayili*
Kumbuŋu chief arriving palace
'Kumbuŋu chief is arriving at the place.'
- 2b. *kandi nima dabari zaani kuro*
Kandi people deserted-compounds institutor old
'The old annihilator of Kandi people.'
- 2c. *yelizoli naa paarina nayili*
yelizoli chief arriving palace
'Yelizoli's chief is arriving at the palace'
- 2d. *dini m beni sbeli n kani*
what be-there something be-there
'What's there to fear? There's nothing to be afraid of.'

The examples in (2) announce the arrival of Kumbun-naa Zakali and Yelizoli-lana Yidantɔyima to the palace of the Yaa-naa. It also gives the public update of the praise names of the chiefs as in (2b) and (2d) who come to visit the chief. It announces the presents of the people who also accompany him and how long it has been since the last visit to the palace, if time is permitted, it tells the family's history of the visitor. This is significant to the chief because he gets to know who has come to his palace and how to prepare himself spiritually before stepping out. He may also decide not to come out if he senses danger and in this case he will send his elders to meet the fellow. When the chief delays in coming out to see the visitor, the example below is played to persuade him to come out early:

3. *n duma wuntana biira*
my lord sun rising
'My lord, the sun is rising.'

Once the chief receives this message as in (3), then he reacts to it by sending one of his subjects to tell the visitors to wait for him while he prepares or he comes out immediately.

Royal births

Among *Dagbamba*, birth is publicised on the *lundaa* by a special alert signal through the words beaten out in drum language. A message on births through the drum is only done in *Dagban* when a child is born to the *Namɔyɔ* royal

family. Any other child born in the society is not announced through the drum. The *lundaa* is played to inform the society that a new baby is born to the *lunsi* family. It first gives thanks to God as in example (4a); the ancestors as in example (4b) and finally the name of the family member who has been reincarnated in (5a) and (5b). Reincarnation is a specific belief or doctrine about the idea of a rebirth; it is a strong belief of the people of Dagbaŋ. These are the words beaten out in the drum language:

- 4a. *ti paŋi kpiɛŋ-lana naawuni*
we thank Almighty God
'We give thanks to the Almighty God.'
- 4b. *ti zaŋ jilima tiri kpiimba*
we take respect give ancestors
'We give respect to our ancestors.'
- 5a. *jerigu bi mi ni yɛla biɛra*
fool neg know that problems pain
'A fool does not know that problems are painful.'
- 5b. *zuyusun lana yɛli gubra ku nyan ninvusu yino*
head-good owner problem together neg defeat person.sg one
'A good person's problem is fought together by many'

The data in (4a) is played to give thanks to the almighty God for giving them a child while (4b) is played to give respect to the ancestors and gods and to inform the people about the ancestor who has returned as a newly born baby in (5a). The praise name of the ancestor who has returned is presented in examples (5a) and (5b) which also inform the people about the sex of the baby if the praise name refers to a man or woman. The name of the ancestor whose name is played in examples (5a) and (5b) was called *Namɔ-Naa* Issahaku who died in 1999 in Yendi. Mentioning his praise name signifies that he has been reincarnated and his name will be given to the baby. The *lunsi* by tradition attend the naming ceremonies of every child born in the society.

Deaths

Among Dagbamba, it is mostly the chief or the *Namɔyu* whose death are publicized on the *lundaa* by a special alert signal beaten by the master drummer to formerly announce his death to the people though verbal messages will have been sent to the elders and the sub-chiefs. The formal announcement is done when the elders and the sub-chiefs are all gathered at the palace. The words beaten out in the drum language are in the form below:

- 6a. *a che ti zali sochira zuyu ka fo surum surum*
you left us stand cross-road head and be quiet silent silent
'You left us on a crossroad and kept silent.'
- b. *chandi bo ka a chan-ŋɔ naawuni ni kulisi*
going what and you gone God will send
'What kind of journey have you embarked on? God will send you home.'

The examples in (6a) and (6b) are mostly played to communicate with the dead person by asking him why he left without a word and the kind of journey he has embarked as well as wishing him to rest in peace in the hand of God. This is then followed with the formal announcement of the death in a drum language as in examples (7) and (8).

7. *kom bɔriya kom bɔri-ya*
water muddying water madding
'The water has become muddy.' (to mean the chief is dead)
8. *naa bo niŋ ka a fo surum surum*
chief what do and you be quiet silent silent
'Chief, what happened to you and you are silent, silent?'

The words in (7) are played to formerly announce the death of the chief and once it is played, everyone within the traditional area understands that the chief is dead. In example (8), it communicates to the dead by asking him why he is silent by way of lamentations. Just as the chief's death is announced, his praise name is played to remind the people about the departed soul and this is what the *lundaa* says:

9. *buyili kalo ban damda ni wum viri*
shrine plate those shaking will hear noise
'Those who shake the plate of the shrine will hear the noise'

The example in (9) literally means that the chief is like a shrine's plate and cannot be touched; it explains that the enemies who dare him will face it. For instance, when Naa Mahama Bila died, the praise name in example (10) was played to prove that he was the one who died.

10. *ziri layim kɔbiga, yɛlimanli ko n gari.*
lies sum hundred true alone he pass
'When lies sum-up to a hundred, only one truth surpasses all.'

The example in (10) can also mean one single truth is better than a hundred falsehoods. The *lundaa* on this occasion is also used to announce to the dead chief about the other chiefs who arrive at the palace for his burial, it does this by first announcing his praise name as Salifu (2008) notes that at social functions such as funerals, drummers' function by publicizing whoever is present. They 'introduce' each person to others in much the same way as a third-party mutually known to two strangers needs to introduce them to each other in western society. This is illustrated in (10) above and an example of announcing arrival in example (11) below:

- 11a. *Vogu naa kanna*
 vogu chief coming
 'Vogu's chief is coming'
- 11b. *n-duuma-naawuni che'li kpaliga ka bayli paai du*
 my-lord-God leave oak-tree and lizard reach climb.
 'God should protect the oak tree for the lizard to climb and praise God.'

The example in (11a) announces the arrival of a chief and also gives the public update of the praise name of the chief who has come to see the burial in (11b). The activities of the burial are also announced through the *lundaa*. Salifu (2008) observes that at the burial ceremonies of chiefs, drumming the praises of the departed will make the deceased rest in peace. It is believed the soul of the departed will not leave this upper world if it is not given the require drum-dirge accompanied by its praises. So the chief is then told as presented in (12).

12. *don-mi balim ka tiy maai*
 lie down calm and ground cool
 'Lie perfectly down (rest in peace) for calm to prevail'

Among the people, for instance, births, ordinary deaths, and marriages are not normally publicized as it is done for the chiefs.

2.1.1.4 Forthcoming Hunts

Pie'li 'bush hunting' is an annual mandatory hunting by the youth in every Dagbani speaking society. The main purpose is to hunt the bush animals in order to reduce them or chase them to a far place so that there will be little destruction by these animals' activities to farms during the farming season. Other reasons include past-time, hobby, form of exercise and income generation. *Pie'goriba.pl* (pi'eg'ora.sg) are groups of young men who do annual

hunting in every part of the area but they are different from the traditional hunters. This is mostly done during the pre-farming seasons.

A hunter is called *tɔha* in Dagbani but the annual hunt is called *pieli*. The *lundaa* is normally used to announce this event to the public and invites them for the hunting in Yendi but Tamale the *gungon* is used instead. The *lundaa* is used to announce to the people about a forthcoming hunt mostly in the evening before the hunting day or very early in the morning of the hunting day; this is done by providing the name of the place where they will go for the hunt. The location of the hunting is announced by using the *lundaa* by playing the praise name of the chief of the community where they will be going for the hunt as illustrated below:

13. *bɛ bɔli ma tiŋ-ɲmara tinsa ala ka n ɲma*
they call me town-breaker towns how and I break
'They call me a village destroyer, how many of villages have I destroyed?'

Once the praise name is announced as in (13), those who understand the drum language get the meaning right away and understand the location but those who do not understand drum language will have to stop the drummer and then ask him for the location. When it is time for them to go for the hunting, the following is played to prompt them:

14. *piɛgɔriba piɛgɔriba ti chamya wuntan biira*
hunters hunters let go sun rising
'Hunters, let us go for the sun is rising'

The example in (14) is played to invite the people to come out and go for the hunting. Then as they are in the bush hunting the animals; the drummer keeps playing to direct them and keeps updating them about the locations in the bush and the dangers in some places in the bush. But most importantly, the drummer also reminds the hunting group of his reward as presented in (15).

15. *ɲun ku ɲun ɲmai ti ma*
who kill should cut give me
'Who ever kills should cut my portion for me'

The *lundaa* will again announce to the group when it is time for them to go home after a whole day's hunting for animals in the bush, this is illustrated in example (16) below:

16. *Piegɔriba pegɔriba nmalgimya wuntan lura*
 Hunters hunters turn sun setting
 ‘Hunters, let us go home for the sun is setting’

The example in (16) is played to end the day’s hunting by announcing to the people and they respond by gathering where the day’s hunting started. Those who get missing in the bush follow the drum signal to find their way home as the drummer keeps playing.

Panegyric

Panegyric is a praise poetry of which drum poetry is a genre to which public and ceremonial performance in drum language are particularly suited whether the actual medium happens to be in fact *drums*, *gongs*, or wind instruments (Finnegan 2012). In *Dagban* societies, panegyrics drums such as *lundaa* and *timpana* are used to drum praise songs for honouring kings and chiefs both the past and the present. The drum, which is used by the master drummers, tells the history of the past and the present. As stated earlier, the *lundaa* has a multiple tone and can communicate different genres including lengthy histories and genealogies. In most contexts, the material spoken by drums consists of short proverbs that are used as an appellation or a praise name for a particular chief. Like the *lunsi*, the *timpana*, which was borrowed from the Asantes *atumpan*, is also played by a family of master drummers called *akarima* whose lineage is traced to the Asantes. The interesting thing is that the person who plays it may not understand Twi but he is able to play the praise songs in the Twi language of the Asantes and sometimes in Dagbani as well. Though most of the listeners do not speak Twi, they are also able to decode the message of the talking drum. The examples below illustrate praise names using the *timpana* in both Dagbani in (17a) and Twi in (17b):

- 17a. *samban gira gira duu surum*
 outside noisy noisy room silent
 ‘Outside is noisy but the room is silent.’

The example in (17a) is played when a person dies; it is used to announce that there are many people outside the house doing more consultations while the dead is silently in the room.

- 17b. *onipa boni cheri moko*
 person bad forbid pepper
 ‘A bad person is more dangerous than pepper.’

The example in (17b) is the praise name of Kar'naa Ziblim which tells his inner character since some appellations start with a person's behavior. Kar'naa Ziblim was a kind of person who would always want to revenge for any crime that was committed against him by someone.

The *lundaa* on the other hand recalls the origin, the parentage and the noble deeds of the chief who is praised. The following is an extract of *Diari-lana* Bukali's appellation; he was a very strong warrior of Naa Zanjina and the key warrior among Naa Andani Siyili's warriors during the battle with *Kumpatia* (the war between Dagombas and Gonjas). The *lundaa* usually plays the rhythm *Sulugu* 'hawk' to address him before it calls his praise name as illustrated below:

18. *to zam buyili dapal suligu*
sound examine god son hawk
'Suligu, the son of Naa Zangina'

The example in (18) introduces *Diari-lana* 'chief of *Diari*' as the loyal son of *Naa Zanjina* who had *zam buyili* as one of his praise names. He was not *Naa Zanjina's* biological son but a loyal warrior to him. *Diari-lana* Bukali in (18) is addressed as the hawk because it was known that he would kill many people, any place he would passed. The example in (19) is the praise name of *Naa Zanjina*.

19. *zay ba yili diri nam ka zay ma yili puhiri jinli*
take father house eating trone and take mother house greeting mosque
'Inherited father's royalty and used that of the mother's humane.'

The example in (19) is the praise name of *Naa Zanjina* who in history is said to might have brought civilization to Dagbaŋ. The extract in (19) recalls the parentage and the origin of *Naa Zanjina* who by character inherited his father's royalty and used that of his mother's kindness and compassion. Examples in (20-23) are the extract of *Diari-lana* Bukali's appellations that recalls his deeds in the past. The *lundaa* begins with the example in (18) above as a form of introduction just to identify him followed by the examples below:

20. *kayaa buni kayaa buni*
weak person property weak person property
'The property of a weak person'
21. *mani mi ηuni kpuɣira*
me know who take
'I know who takes.'
22. *mani mi ηuni kpuɣi buyili noo*
me know who take god fowl

- ‘I know the one who took the god’s fowl.’
23. *bi yeri ma jɔyi-jɔyi ku kari-matiŋ ni ka m-biɛni*
they talk me anyhow not sack-me town loc and I-stay
‘People talking about me will not sack me from a village but will I stay.’

The example in (20) recalls the *Diari-lana* Bukali’s praise name, refers to him as a chief who takes the property of the weak or the land gods, and gives it to the ancestors. (21) recalls the drummer saying he knows him to be taking the property and provides example of his deeds in (22) indicating that he took the gods fowl and gave it to the ancestors. The example in (23) concludes the appellations by describing him as the one people usually gossip about his deeds but that cannot stop him.

Salifu (2008) observes that many of the praise names draw on a chooser’s ability to coin a proverbial line or text that passes on some wit or advice. For instance the praise epithet of the chief of Tibuŋ Naa-Adama is played as:

24. *Subu-ni kpamli gari paliginli*
heart-inside age better grayness
‘What is in the heart is better than the external features’

While noting the premium placed on the wisdom of the aged, this epithet tells its audience that mere grey hair does not make a wise person. Wisdom is a thing of the heart, and we thus have to look into people’s substance and respect them for what they are worth. Another example is the epithets of Tolin-naa Suleman Bila which is played as:

25. *nun nya biɛla ban malibu, di ni niŋ pam*
who get little know keep it will do plenty
‘One who gets little should keep it well for it will multiply.’

This obviously advises its audience to manage their resources well. They should not be wasteful.

The *lundaa* is also used to give an account of the history of the past and present kings of *Dagban* by drumming praises. This is mostly done in different forms: first, during the palace ritual sessions that symbolically wake the chief up to pray on Mondays and Fridays. It is traditionally called *bieyu naayo* ‘day break’. According to Salifu and M-minibo (2014), the palace is like a shrine where the chief’s subjects go on every Mondays and Fridays to greet and pay allegiance to him. Some of the praise verses played to wake the chief up include the illustration below:

26. *balim n-duma biɛyɔ neɛya ka wuntan biira*
gentle my-lord day break and sun rising
‘The day has broken and the sun is rising my lord, gently, gently.’

The verse in (25) is played to wake the chief up in the morning and urged him to come out by such appellations as ‘The sun is rising My lord.’ The principal players in the praise-game at the palace are the master drummers. The second form is invocation, which has two names in Dagbani depending on the occasion: *gingaani* ‘appellations sung when some specific chiefs like *Gushe Naa*, *Kasul-lana* sit in public’, and *sanban-luy* or *luy-sarigu* ‘praises sung before a festival.

Luy-sarigu is a mandatory traditional norm for every Dagban chief to invite *Namɔyɔ* to sing panegyric that gives the history of the people through appellations offering everyone the opportunity to learn the history of *Dagbamba* including researchers. Traditionally, the choice of master drummer depends on the day; *namɔ-naa* ‘chief drummer’ sings if the day falls on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, but if it is on Sunday, Monday or Tuesday, the *sanpahi-naa* ‘next in command’ is invited. The *lundaa* is used to do much of the talking by way of introduction that comprises praises in the form of invocation which are drummed to the chief. The performance starts with a preliminary stage known as *ziɛri tɔbu* ‘sorting out the recipe’

At this stage, the *lundaa* is played to lead the ensemble in an invocation (see section 2.1.3) and moves on to a second stage where they seek permission from the chief to engage in their enterprise refer to as *nam balimbu* as in (27) and finally delve into the third and final stage, the main story called *mɔni*. This is a metaphor of preparing a meal for a spouse; an important tool for defining the roles of drummer and patron (Salifu 2008). Usually, it begins with *ziɛri tɔbu* ‘sorting out the recipe’ to prepare for the session; it starts with invocations such as *dakɔli n-nyɛ bia* ‘a bachelor is inferior to the married man’ to praise God, their ancestors and the past chiefs.

26. I beseech you!
I ask for permission!! [stylistic element]
Slowly, carefully, owner of the earth, your mercies, please.
The one who owns all, tread softly for calmness on earth.
King of the rear and the fore, tread softly for calm on earth
Earthly intercessor (c.f. Salifu 2008:128)

The episode foregrounds the importance of the drummer as one who persuades the powerful, to balance their power with mercy. When the king

takes his seat, they move to the third stage and play the epic. Lines (27-28) illustrate how the history is presented particularly using the drum, it mostly begin with the praise name to identify whose history is to be told:

27. *Gbewaa zuu gbuɣinli*
Gbewaa first-son lion
‘The son of naa Gbewaa, the lion’
28. *ban malilaamba ba ni ban ka laamba ba*
those have owners father and those not owners father
‘You are the father of all’
29. *cham balim balim ka tin maai*
walk gentle gentle and ground cool
‘Walk gently for the ground to be at peace.’

The examples in (27-28) are the invocation sung to praise only the Yaa-naa and once it is played everyone who understands the drum language knows it refers to him. Example (27) recalls the parentage of the chief, (28) addresses him as the father of everyone and (29) addresses him as a unifier who should walk majestically in peace. The drummer then follows with an epic for example, the story of a Dagomba king Naa Zanjina who is the most popular among the Kings because of the innovations and civilization brought to the people. His reign saw many innovations, thus making him the first choice for epic song (see Salifu 2008).

Invocations

Among the Dagbamba, drum poetry also appears in invocations to spirits of various kinds. Longer Dagbani poems sometimes open with stanzas calling on the spirits associated with the drum itself- the wood and its various components-or invoke certain deities or ancient and famous drummers. Important rituals are also commonly opened or accompanied by the suitable drum poems (Finnegan 2012). In Dagbar, when a drummer first shoulders a drum, custom dictates that an invocation is played as illustrated below:

30. *namɔyɔ mali kɛpiɛn pam*
chief-drummer have strong more
‘The chief drummer is very strong.’

When the example in (30) is played by the *lundaa*, the rest of the *lunsi* ensemble will then respond *jembu* ‘worship’. Invocations align drummers with their history and with spiritual forces. Invocations are also a method of tuning

up and alerting other musicians that you are ready to play (Suad 2011). The invocations also draw the historical past close to the present as illustrated in example (31):

31. *lunsi kali yelmi ka m-bɔhim ɲmebu*
drummers custom speak and I-learn play
'Spirit of oratory, speak so that I may learn to play.'
32. *luɲ-tali nyɛla n kali*
oratory is my traditon
'Oratory is my birth right; I don't claim to be'
33. *ɲun mal-li ɲun dira nyansim*
who have-it who eating sweetness
'The one who possesses it should enjoy it, sovereign one.'

The examples in (31-33) are the invocation played by a drummer at the start of every drumming section that is then flowed by the appellations of the society and the chief as illustrated below:

34. *miri ka ti-zini ka kulikpuni kom zɔnche ɲama*
cautious part sit and river water go-leavehippo
'Be cautious the *kulikpuni* river doesn't run and leave the hippos'

The example in (33) is the praise name of *kampakunya naa Abdulai Yakubu* 'the former regent of *Dagbanj* and current Yoo-Naa. It means that the regent is very powerful but he needs to exercise some restraint in his deeds for the ultimate is still ahead.

ziɛri tɔbu 'sorting out the recipe' is an invocation in which the *lundaa* is used to give an account of genealogies of the drummer's ancestors whose blessings and protection he seeks for a performance. It recounts the histories and reconstructs the family tree, showing the relationship between the kings and drummers, and also it invokes the spirits of these ancestors and the drum spirits (the instrument has a soul of its own) telling them the performance is for them. It challenges them to enable the performers have a "good performance", for failure is unbecoming of them. As it enumerates these ancestors it salutes them with their praise epithets as well.

35. *yɛtɔya yelimi ka n deei m-bɔhim yɛligu*
speech speak and I take-over I-learn speech
'Spirit of Oratory, speak so that I may learn to speak.'

Proverbs

Proverbs in Dagbani are popularly called *ɲaba* which are common sounds performed on the *lundaa*. Among the *Dagbamba*, almost every ordinary proverb can be reproduced on *lundaa* and in drum poetry in general. There is frequent use of proverbs to provide encouragement and incitements. But there are also extended proverbs specifically intended for performance on the drums. The *Lundaa* plays all kinds of proverbs in Dagbani since every chief or family head is characterized with names that are proverbs as illustrated below:

36. *naawuni bɔri maligu ka sali-nim a je maligu*
 God want peace and humans not peace
 ‘God wants peace but humans do not want it.’
37. *naa balimbu ku kɔɲ buni*
 chief praising not forfeit something
 ‘Singing praises to a chief yields some wealth’
38. *kul-noli din viɛla ku kɔɲ nyuri-ba*
 river-mouth that nice not forfeit drinkers
 ‘A source of water that is good will gather people’

The example in (36) is a proverb that addresses a Yaa-naa in the past, the one in (37) addresses *Namɔ-naa* and example (38) addresses another Yaa-naa in the past.

Besides the proverbs, drum language is also used for names. Among the Hausa, for instance, praise names and titles of rulers are poured forth on drums or horns on certain public occasions (Smith 1957: 29). This is one of the most common forms of drum expression, and it occurs even among the people who do not seem to have other more complicated drum poetry (Finnegan 2012). Praise names are part of musical events; they are names that once belong to ancestors and have now become part of the repertory songs played for dancing. Some drum names of the some chief and their forebears are presented in (39-43):

39. *kul-noli* ‘A source of water’
40. *naɣ-biɛɣu* ‘Awesome bull’
41. *janɲun-biɛɣu* ‘Wicked cat’
42. *ɣambalan-tɔɲ* ‘Wicked person’s trap’
43. *naani-goo* ‘trusted-thorn’

The examples in (39-43) are the praise names of individual chiefs and they are also names of dance moves which the chiefs and their forebears used to dance one-by-one to drumming that honours famous chiefs from the past. There is a strong association linking the music to the person who is the subject of the drum language. Often, the dancer is in the family lineage of the historical chief being saluted by the drummers (Suad 2011). In a dance performance, the *lundaa* calls the verses above while the rest of the ensemble respond. The praise names in (39-43) are mostly compound words or phrase forms by putting together two lexical morphemes which semantic realization are different from the compound word as in idioms. When the *lundaa* makes the call, for instance, in (39) and (42), the rest of the ensemble gives the respond below:

44. *kom ka ti nyu*
water and we drink
'Water, and we drink.'
45. *bari ka di gbaai o bia*
set and it catch his child
'Set, and it catches his child.'

The example in (44) is a response given to (39) in a sentence to mean that a clean heart will always win the love of people. Example (45) is a response given to (42) also in a sentence which means that the wickedness one does will be his/her recompense.

Transformation from Traditional to the Contemporary Social Cultural Issues

Agyekum (2013) explains that in the olden days, oral artists played various key roles in the society and they were categorized in accordance with their specific roles. They [oral artists] ranged from griots singers to master drummers at the chief's court and most of them were either professionals or amateurs who worked when the various socio-cultural situations demanded their services. Like the griots at the courts of the Asantes and the Yorubas, the *Namoyu* and his *lunbibi* 'followers' are also at the court of the *Yaa-Naa* and other chiefs in *Dagbanj*. *Namoyu* is the custodian of *Dagbanj* history and he is respected and rewarded in cash, meat, food and clothes for his functions. This function of the chief drummer in the chief's court as a traditional practice has been transformed to the contemporary social cultural context were the *lundaa* being primary surrogate instrument among the traditional people of *Dagbanj*, now provides both drum language and music for all social functions: naming

ceremonies, wedding, outdooring of newly enskinned chief, funerals, festivals etc. Ethnographical research (e.g. Kinney 1970) has shown that among the Dagbamba, there are other instruments that are assigned the talking attributes while the *lundaa* plays percussive roles in the socio-cultural context. The *lundaa*, which is used by the *Namɔyɔ* ‘master drummer’ effectively communicates felt sentiments that are embraced in the sociocultural setup of the Dagbamba. Due to the important role it plays in society, it has survived many generations among the Dagbamba and has not been transformed very much. In this contemporary era, *lundaa* is still practiced in the chief’s courts in the *Dagbani* society. The greatest innovation is the fact that currently it has moved from the traditional courthouses and durbar grounds to institutions, theatre halls, state houses, churches and concert halls (Arhine 2009). Without the society, literature cannot thrive, and any change in the society calls for a change in the dimensions of literary work, which is based on the integrative system of society, cultural and literary works (Agyekum 2013). This section focuses on transformation which is the second aim of this paper seeks to discuss.

The *lundaa* which is formally played by the *lunsi* in the *Dagbani* society is now been used by people who are not even *Dagbamba*. In modern time, the theater has put together *lundaa* and its ensemble, *lundɔyɔ*, *lumbila* and *gun-gɔŋ*, to be learned and used to play traditional dances like *takai* by Ghanaian cultural groups. *Takai* is a popular war dance performed by Dagbamba using metal rods for the purpose of training warriors in the past. In playing *takai*, the first rhythm played is the traditional rhythm of Dagbamba, and the other rhythms are incorporated by the Arts council of Ghana since the 1960s (Suad 2011).

Contemporarily, the master drummer (*namɔyɔ* and his *lum-bibi* ‘followers’) are recognized according to their functions. Most of them have become professional and some now live by their works. Some of them like *luŋ* Abukari bila, Banvim lun-naa, namɔ-naa Issahaku and others have put their works on drum language on cassettes and CDs. Some of the *lum-bibi* ‘followers’ are now freelance master drummers who move to places (markets, weddings, naming ceremonies) where their services are needed even with or without invitation. They use the drum language to sing praise songs for anyone who is present at the place provided they get a cue of one’s tribe or family background. Example (46) illustrates the common praise name of Asantes when cited by a master drummer in public:

46. *kam-bɔn doo ŋmani o ba*
 asante man resemble his father.sg
 ‘Asante man resembles his father’

As the verse in (46) is called by the *lundaa* to praise an Asante man, the ensemble (*lundayyu, lujbila and gungon*) will respond to the call as presented in example (47):

47. *mm zuyu-tain o ymani o ba*
 yes head-big he resemble his father
 ‘Yes, big head, he resembles his father’

Modern African nations can adapt their oral traditions to current realities and utilize them as effective instruments of civic education, especially these days when the entire world has been transformed into a global village (Okafor 2004). The modern techniques of communication and information has transform traditional use of drum language to communicate in different forms into the use of electronic media that allows works to be accessed and assessed at various places by even unknown and unseen users. The proliferation of FM radios and TV has transform the drum language function in communication by sending messages to what is now called radio and TV announcements. But they offer the opportunity of learning other literary works (Agyekum 2013). It is common in *Dagban* to hear drum language been played on a radio that gives information (national, tradition or cultural) or announcements (festivals, funeral, marriage) to the people in or around the society. According to Paul and Seidu (1995), a full ensemble, which includes the *lundaa* and a singer, is necessary to perform at dance occasions. At the market, drummers may go individually or in a group of two to six men. An individual drummer keeps the rewards from the market women. However, drummers may choose to go in a group because each of them may recognize different potential patrons, thereby increasing the total base from which to draw profits that day. At the market, the proverbs can be drummed by the *lunsi* and members of an ensemble often related to each other. A praise singer will normally be present in all of these arrangements, that is, a solo drummer will also be a praise singer. When two or more drummers participate, one can play the *lundaa* while the others sing or play support drums.

Summary and Conclusion

The paper has reviewed surrogate language in Dagbani. It paid attention to the *lundaa* and attested that the core functions of the *lundaa* in Dagbamba societies include: giving information and announcement, panegyric, invocation and proverbs. It also examined the transformation of the use of the *lundaa* from traditional to the contemporary sociocultural issues. The role of the *Namoyu* signifies the use of the *lundaa* as a communication tool to express various

forms of social functions and as a musical instrument for ceremonial purposes and currently for recreation. The *lundaa* has a multiple tone and it is associated with the tradition and preserves the themes that reflect the historical origins, ancestors, wars, appellations, social vices, messages or signals, beliefs and eulogies of communicating in the past. The usefulness of drum language among *Dagbamba* to communicate through the *lundaa* as a surrogate instrument for communication is used for the purpose of formalized announcements, to give messages about, arrival, royal births, marriages, deaths, communal labour and forthcoming hunts as its communicative functions.

Contemporarily, most of the young drummers have become professional and some now live by their works by way of transformation. Some of them have kept their works on drum language CDs while others are now freelance drummers who go round to markets, weddings, naming ceremonies etc. even with or without invitation to make money. The paper revealed that *Dagbamba* accept *lundaa* sounds as direct representation of the words and sounds of the language. They are composed with deliberate goal in mind. For example, in the context of death of a chief, the *lundaa* sound is organized deliberately to announce his death. This explains why the *lundaa* sounds are powerful tools for the communication, panegyric, invocation and proverbs as presented in the data in this paper. The *lundaa* can therefore serve as a solid foundation for sociocultural studies in *Dagbaŋ* and appropriated in other civic educational contexts. I confirmed that the content and style of drum language communication is literature and not primarily as music, signal, and accompaniment to dancing or ceremonies all the time. I however call for the preservation and effective education of surrogate competence and performance with emphasis on the *lundaa* within *Dagbaŋ* and beyond.

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