

RECORDED BY JOHN TANSON

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FW 8858

# Traditional Drumming and Dances of Ghana



M  
1838  
G4  
T763  
1976

MUSIC LP

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FW 8858

**SIDE 1**

- Band 1. BORBOBOR  
(Durbar and other festival music)
- Band 2. ASAFO DRUMMING  
from the Volta Region
- Band 3. APITIM DRUMMING  
from the Ashanti
- Band 4. FONTOMFROM DRUMMING  
Chiefs state music
- Band 5. KETE DRUMMING  
from the Akan Clan
- Band 6. NYAMKORO (Adowa)  
women's music
- Band 7. ADOWA DRUMMING
- Band 8. LOBI DANCES

**SIDE 2**

- Band 1. BAMAYA GROUP
- Band 2. ADENKUM
- Band 3. KPANLONGO  
from the Greater Accra Region
- Band 4. GONJI
- Band 5. KRAMA  
from the Krobo Clan
- Band 6. TALKING DRUMS

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

COVER DESIGN BY RONALD CLYNE

COVER PHOTO BY JOHN TANSON

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SIDE 1

SIDE 1 Band 1

**BORBORBOR:** Apart from the joy derived from the Borborbor Music of the Ewes, in the Volta Region of Ghana, this music carries with it a message of love and the spirit of oneness. The Ewes are probably the most talked about tribe in Ghana and have unity as their symbol, since they migrated from Notsie under the tyrant ruler Agorkoli. This music is played at durbars and festivals on happy occasions.

SIDE 1 Band 2

**ASAFO:** War between tribes is a thing of the past now in Ghana but Asafo Music still rings the bell of power of each tribe. Bravery is a quality that each warrior should possess and it turns out that this dance is mainly done now by various Asafo (infantry) men. (Traditional Asafo Drumming from the Volta Region, it is played during festival celebrations or ceremonies.)

SIDE 1 Band 3

**APITIM:** Chiefs command a very high position even in today's Ghana and their respect and power is judged from many things, including his followers and even the palanquin in which he rides. As such no chief goes out without his drummers, horn blowers, stool carriers and guards to state functions. Ashanti Chiefs are mostly accompanied by Apitim drumming. (Traditional Drumming from the Ashanti Region. It's drummed for prominent Chiefs when riding in a palanquin for durbar, or any important gathering.)

SIDE 1 Band 4

**FONTOMFROM:** Durbar of Chiefs cannot be complete without Fontomfrom Drumming. This is played when a Chief is dancing in state with his graceful movements synchronizing with the exotic beat of heavy drumming. (Traditional Drumming from Ashanti Region. This is played for Prominent Chiefs, when dancing in state, either during the riding in a palanquin or in front of the drummers.)

SIDE 1 Band 5

**KETE:** Ashanti Chiefs are noted for bravery and their influence on all other chiefs in Ghana. Kete is the dance of the Asantehene who commands the respect of every Ashanti.

(Drumming from the Akan Clan (Ashanti). It is played at the final of chiefs or at Joyful celebration.)



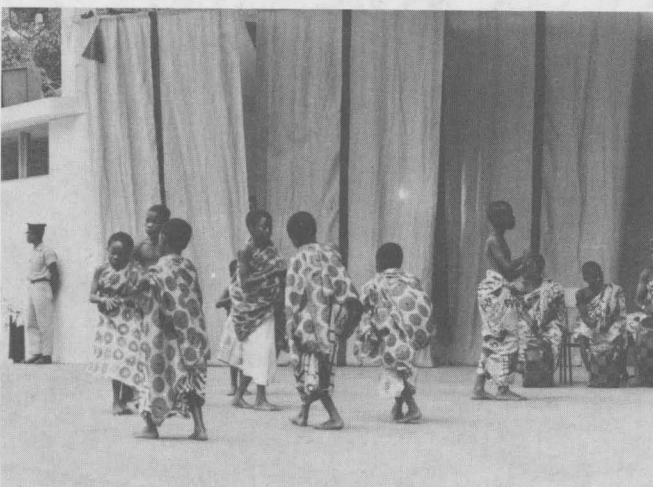
SIDE 1 Band 6

**NYAMKORO (ADOWA):** The graceful movements of this dance music, mainly by women of the Ashanti Region, express a courting story when being danced with a male partner. With the movements of the hands and feet and turning of the head according to the beat of this music, the old folks express their love desires which, when accepted, leads to a more gentle finish.

(Drumming from the Ashanti Region. It's especially for women, to express their support or love in a song form. It has the time of Adowa.)

SIDE 1 Band 7

**ADOWA DRUMMING:** Drumming from the Ashanti Region for any celebration, i.e., durbar, funeral, etc.



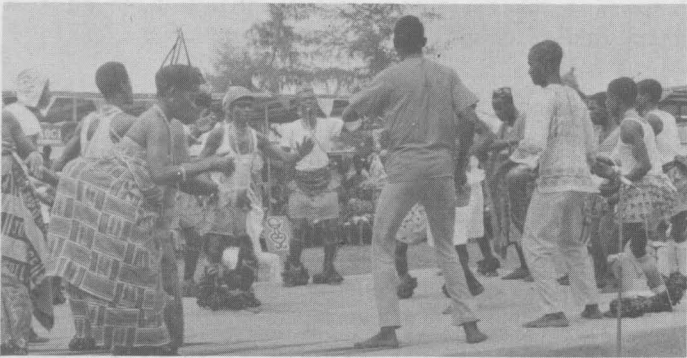
SIDE 1 Band 8

**LOBI DANCE:** This mainly dance music is done for joy. The Lobi people are muscular, tall and handsome, from the Upper Region. In this dance the young folks express their valour with the stamping of feet and body swearing. The women are always there to yell for joy.

SIDE II

SIDE 2 Band 1

**BAMAYA:** Traditional Drumming from the Northern Region. The people of the northern region are noted for their flexibility and this dance which they term a love dance is done gracefully by men and women. The very young are allowed to do this dance.



SIDE 2 Band 2

**ADENKUM:** This music is the expression of love the people of the Central Region of Ghana have for the learning of their ancestors, therefore in this dance or music every movement or beat is an imitation of what the ancestors were doing at that time.



SIDE 2 Band 3

**KPANLONGO:** This is the latest craze in traditional music of the people from the Greater Accra Region for social activities. Both men and women take part in Kpanlongo, and it is a mixture of traditional music from almost all the regions of Ghana.

SIDE 2 Band 4

**GONJI:** It looks more as if the drumming of the Northerners is geared to carry a message, and this message is carried in proverbs and understood by the elders of this northern state.

(Traditional Music from Northern Region for social activities.)

SIDE 2 Band 5

**KRAMA:** When a girl is of age, a custom of teaching the young girl the requirements of womanhood and exposure to the new world she is about to enter is a must. The Krobo of Ghana round off activities marking the graduation of the girl with the Krama or Dipo Music, a dance only done by all graduates of this custom. It is only after this graduation that the girl is supposed to marry.

SIDE 2 Band 6

**TALKING DRUMS:** The talking drums can be likened to a telegram or any gadget that sends out messages that can be understood by those who understand the language. It is the oldest form in which our forefathers sent out messages during war or peace times. It carries the message of importance to all who hear and understand the drumming language, and is presently played on all important occasions. Thus, the morning greetings sent out on the voice of the Revolution with talking drums is GHANA MUNTIE? GHANA MUNTIE? LISTEN GHANA-IANS, LISTEN GHANA-IANS.

**JOHN TANSON**

*I entered the Ghana Film Industry in 1964 after leaving College with a Grade V Higher Royal School of Music Certificate. Music Editing has been my interest and it came as no doubt when within a couple of years I became the dubbing editor of Ghana Films. It is my wish to popularize the rich music of Africa, from which the Black people draw inspiration.*

—John Tanson