

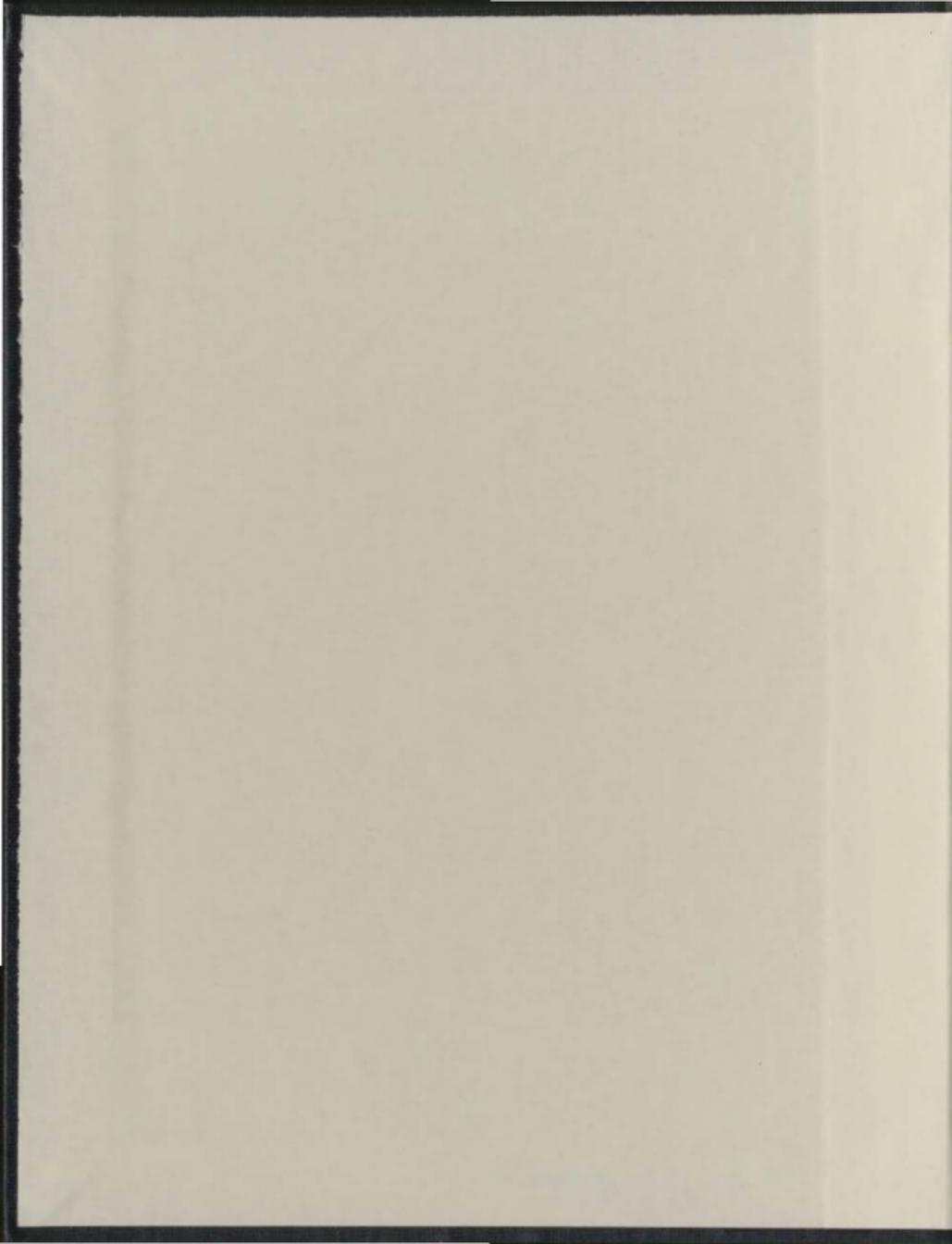
BURA FOLKSONGS: AN ANALYSIS OF THEIR TYPES,
OCCASIONS, THEMES, TECHNIQUES AND FUNCTIONS

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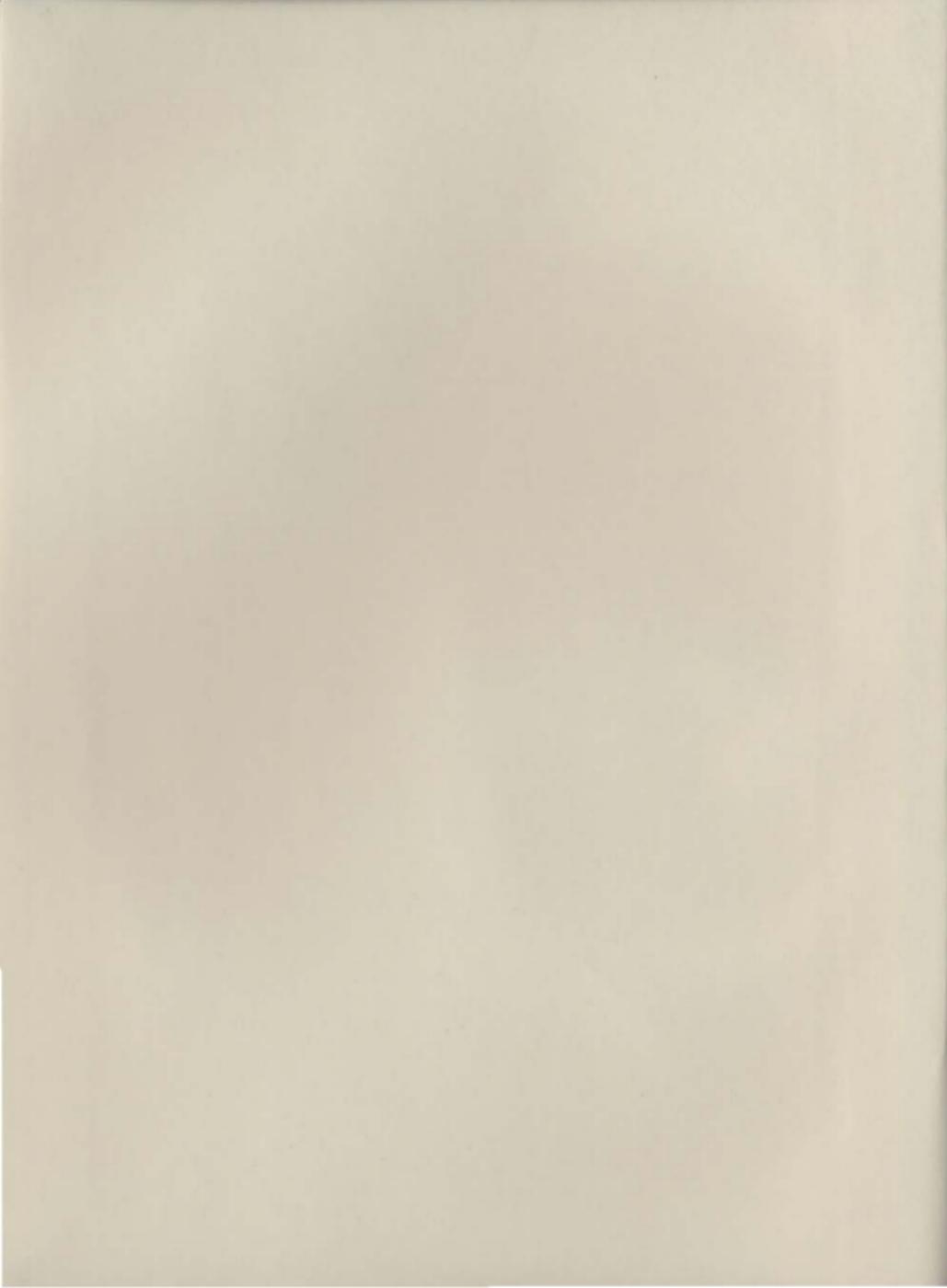
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BURA FOLKSONGS: AN ANALYSIS OF THEIR TYPES,
OCCASIONS, THEMES, TECHNIQUES AND FUNCTIONS

by

Zainab K. Haruna

A thesis submitted to the
School of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Folklore
Memorial University of Newfoundland

April 1998

St. John's

Newfoundland



DEDICATION

To my beloved parents: Lawan Haruna Bdlyia and Shetu Haruna

ABSTRACT

This study attempts to analyze the types, occasions, themes and techniques of Bura folksongs. To provide a better understanding of the dimensions of Bura folksongs, the study describes Bura culture including its historical origins, the current location of the Bura people, their language, political systems and institutions, religions, sociocultural values and occupations.

Analysis of Bura folksongs shows that there are various types of songs that are sung by Bura singers. These include songs of abuse, satirical songs, songs of protest, funeral songs and wedding songs. Others are love songs, work songs, religious songs, political songs and children's game songs.

The analysis of the occasions for performing Bura folksongs reveals that there are many social and cultural frameworks in which songs are sung. Most Bura songs are created for and sung on particular occasions including naming ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, funeral ceremonies, festivals, religious activities, political rallies and campaigns, work and games. The occasions could be formal. This means that they are well planned and organized social events such as naming ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, funeral ceremonies and annual festivals. Or the occasions could be informal, that is, neither planned nor organized, and might include such activities as doing solitary work, putting a child to sleep or drinking beer at a pub.

The themes of Bura folksongs are all-encompassing. The songs express Bura

people's sociocultural values, religious beliefs and experiences. Some songs abuse or satirize individuals or groups of people. Others treat subjects such as love, marriage, death, kinship, religion or politics.

Various techniques are employed by Bura songmakers to compose and perform their songs. The technical features include oral composition of the songs using formulaic words and phrases, oral performance, face-to-face performer and audience interaction and audience participation. Other technical devices are the accompaniment of singing with instrumental music, ululating, dancing, dramatization and work. In addition there are technical features such as figures of sound and figures of speech. Specific application of these technical elements make Bura folksongs unique, but in many ways they provide suitable comparison with songs of other societies of the world.

Transcribing and translating texts of Bura folksongs strip them of some of these technical features associated with live performance, especially the sounds of music, the audience, the dance, the drama and the musical instruments. Thus, one can say that Bura folksongs are more intended for a listening audience than for a reading audience.

Another area which the study examines is the function of Bura folksongs. Folk music is an all-pervading and interdependent aspect of Bura culture. Assessment of the entire Bura song corpus reveals that songs are performed for various purposes. The obvious and recurrent functions of Bura songs include serving as a medium through which individuals or groups can express otherwise suppressed feelings and views. Bura songs also mirror Bura culture, beliefs and values. They provide entertainment to the performers

and the listeners. Bura musicians enjoy financial and material gains from their performances although they are not substantial.

The study reveals that the application of various theoretical perspectives of Bura songs is invaluable. The study also shows the need to apply multi-disciplinary approaches such as anthropology, sociology, history, religion and literature in the study of Bura folksongs. Even with this study, Bura folk music is still understudied. It is therefore important that more ethnographic studies in Bura folk music be carried out by insiders and by outsiders too.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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GLOSSARY

- Anglima:* an ebony key of the *tsindza*
- Angir diffu:* translated as 'big middle.' It is the fifth of the seven *tsindza* keys, with a tone following that of the *angir diffu*.
- Angir mazim:* 'big right.' It is the seventh key of the *tsindza*, with tone next to the first key.
- Bally:* a type of ladies' leather shoes, imported from Italy.
- Bathlir filncabwi:* a funeral dance performed at the final funeral ceremony of an elderly Bura person, during which the deceased's roof is destroyed by the dancers.
- Elang diffu:* the center key of the *tsindza*
- Elang matsikar:* the second key on the left of the *tsindza*.
- Elang mazim:* the second to the last key on the right of the *tsindza*. It is thin, with the tiniest tone.
- Guga:* a container used for drawing drinking water from the well.
- Gwara:* a chronic bachelor.
- Ha:* song.
- Hara ha:* singing.
- Hirdi:* informal music and dance occasion.
- Jijitu:* a type of bird, named after the sounds it makes.
- Kobo:* Nigerian currency coin, the lowest denomination.
- Kubatakiri:* translated as 'I am the meeting point.' It is the third of the *tsindza* keys. It is always beaten with the *kuli tsindza* when the *tsindza* is being played. It has the second tiniest tone.

- Kuli tsindza*: a pair of Y-shaped sticks used for playing the *tsindza*.
- Kura*: iron hook used for bringing out a *guga* that falls inside well.
- Mwala apa timatir*: translated as 'woman like a tomato,' implying that the woman's skin is clean, smooth and light in complexion, hence she is beautiful.
- Mallama*: a lady who has acquired at least a secondary school education and is doing a paid job.
- Mallim*: an educated man.
- Ntilang-ntilang*: a descriptive epithet that implies cleanliness.
- Tsindza*: a xylophone
- Wrapper*: two meter piece of cotton fabric which a Bura woman wears as part of an outfit by tying it from the waist down.
- Zanawa*: a praise title for a king or a lawan.
- Zawar*: a single woman, especially a spinster or a divorcee.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

BURA CULTURE

Culture differs from one society to another and it is a prime determiner of behaviour in any society. The values, beliefs, traditions, customs, social organization and technology of the society in question, all contribute to the cultural concepts of a society.¹ In Bura society, many of these elements of culture are expressed through folk crafts and arts, folk festivals, folk narratives, and often, through Bura songs and their performances.

The idea that songs of the Bura people are strongly informed and influenced by aspects of Bura culture cannot be over emphasized. These sociocultural factors are revealed through ethnographic study of Bura culture conducted for the purpose of this dissertation as well as a few studies of Bura culture done by other scholars.² For the Bura, music and everyday life are indivisible.

... music and life are inseparable, for there is music for many of the activities of everyday life as well as music whose verbal texts express an African's attitude to life, his hopes and fears, his thoughts and beliefs. Music is said to sweeten his labours, to comfort him when bereaved, to keep up his morale at the battlefield, to assist him in the worship of his gods.³

The survey and description of Bura culture in the following sections reveals aspects of Bura culture including historical origin, present geographical location, language, worldview, religious beliefs, occupations, and folk custom such as festivals and rites of passage. An understanding of these aspects of Bura culture is necessary because

they serve an important contextual framework within which readers of this thesis can understand and appreciate Bura folklore, particularly Bura folksongs.

The Bura People

The Bura people are a West African people living within the present-day northeastern part of Nigeria. Available literature and oral traditions concerning the origin of the Bura tribe provides information on the background of the Bura people. According to Rotimi Bedajo and the committee on Bura language orthography, the Bura people, whose population is now estimated to be more than one and half million, are known as a Bantu stock.⁴ It is believed that they started out following the mass movement of people into the Lake Chad area around 500 C.E which was set in motion by the Arab invasion of North Africa.⁵ J.C. Davies reports that the Bura are probably of Kushite origin from Yemen in the northeast of Africa.⁶ But in about 800 C.E., as a result of political upheaval, the Bura together with other tribes that speak Chadic languages (Kanuri, Mandara, Marghi, Chibuk and Kilba), migrated southwest in groups in the form of caravans to find suitable places for settlement. Later, major disagreements occurred between the tribes and the Bura tribal group wandered about in search of a suitable area where they could settle. In the course of the Bura group's further migration southwest, it briefly settled in Mandara-Karwa, an area identified as the present town of Kerawa which is situated on the border between northeastern Nigeria and northern Cameroon. The Bura lived in Mandara-Karwa until their leader died. Two of the four sons of their leader were also later murdered and the remaining two sons and their tribesmen and women decided to migrate

further south to Garkida and Vidau. They settled there, and as their population increased, they continued to migrate southwest in search of better living conditions until they finally settled on the present Biu Plateau in about 500 C.E..⁷ The occupation of the Biu Plateau by the Bura group and their cultural influences on neighbouring tribal groups are also noted by Paul Newman, who reported in 1970 that the Bura language was replacing other languages around it such as the Tera language.⁸

In Buraland, Pabir chieftaincies pose a historical problem. Who are the Pabir? Local legends in the area attribute these developments to a group of Kanuri migrants led by Yamta-ra-Walla (Yamta-the -Great), a hero founder of the Wolviri clan who came from Birni Ngazargamu (City of Ngazargamu) the capital of Borno, where he had failed to gain the throne of Borno after the death of his father Mai Idris Katagarmabe in 1526.⁹ These adventurers subdued many of the Bura locals, married Bura women and settled down in Buraland. They learned the Bura language and customs, but retained their own methods of warfare, their concepts of political centralism, and a sense of superiority to the local population. All Yamta's followers who were products of inter-marriages between his Kanuri followers and the subdued indigenous Bura were called Pabir. This, then, according to legend was the origin of the Pabir, a peculiar group that is culturally related to the Bura, but oppressive and politically domineering to the Bura people.

Location

Today, about half a million Bura people live on the Biu plateau, an area referred to politically as the Biu Emirate. It was formerly referred to as Biu Division until 1976 when

a local government system and emirate councils were introduced by the Federal Government of Nigeria.¹⁰ In Biu Emirate, the area mostly inhabited by the Bura tribal group covers five districts: Biu, Sakwa, Kwajaffa, Kwaya Kusar and Miringa districts.¹¹ Bura speaking people also dominate Garkida town in the present Adamawa State of Nigeria. The Emirate is also inhabited by other tribal groups such as the Tera, the Kanakuru and the Fulani. Biu Emirate is one of the Emirates in Borno State of Nigeria. In its present form, the area covered by the Biu Emirate was a colonial creation by the British. The British first established their headquarters south of the Borno Province at Gujba in 1902-3 and from there they contacted chiefs at Gulani and at Biu. In 1908, the British gave Biu jurisdiction over all Pabir and all Bura. By 1914, the *kuthi* (king) of Biu was the most powerful in the south districts of the Borno Province, at least on paper.¹² The *kuthi* of Biu, now called the emir, was put in authority over a large area by the British in 1918. From about 1908-14 to 1918, the Bura were placed under the developing Native Authority at Biu. This involved the appointment of Pabir officials from Biu, who were responsible for taxation and administration of the Bura areas south and west of Biu. The result of this was a series of armed confrontations and village burnings in which the Bura were forcibly made to accept Pabir rulership. Bura village heads were arrested and brought to trial in Biu where they were given jail sentences. For the Pabir this period represents the utilization of British power to expand their control over all of the Bura speaking area. For the Bura, it represents a war of resistance against colonialism and the unwanted rule of the Pabir from Biu over a previously independent people.

Songs of protest and satirical songs were composed by Bura people to express and describe their resistance against colonial rule, especially the conduct of the Pabir officials who used their positions as colonial agents to oppress and exploit the Bura people.¹³

Topographically, the dominant physical feature of the Biu Emirate is the Biu plateau which is today identified as the land of the Bura people. It is situated in the northeast corner of Nigeria. It lies between 10° and 11 15' latitude and 11° 30' and 13 ° longitude. It is 769 metres above sea-level. It slopes down gradually to the north and maintains a precipitous escarpment to the south. It slopes downward to the east and west. There is an area to the west -- about 800 square metres (500 square miles) in Kwaya Kusar district -- which is relatively a plain compared to the Biu highlands. The plain is about 800 feet below sea-level. Because of its relatively high altitude, the climate of the Biu plateau is relatively cool, and the annual rainfall is adequate for agriculture. Hence the Biu Emirate is among the best habitats in Nigeria for humans and animals.¹⁴

Social Organization

The term Bura often refers to the land, the language and the people.¹⁵ Although the term "Bura" denotes both the tribal group and its language, Bura people identify themselves with the names of their *nyarbwar dur* (clan's lineage). Clans are primary patrilineal group identities in Bura culture. There are approximately twenty Bura clan lineages. They include Malgwi, Bwala, Bdlyia, Ndahi, Mshelia, Mbaya, Gana, Hena, Kwari, Msheliza, Balami, Dawa, Gwari. Most of the clans are subdivided into sub-clans. In Bura kinship tradition a clan consists of people who share the same patrilineal root or

background within the Bura ethnic group. A Bura individual can be called by his or her clan name in place of his or her surname, especially if the person is an adult. Some clans have masculine and feminine names. That is, the clan names for their women are different from those of their male counterparts. For instance, in my clan the men are called Bdyia while their women clan members are called Gwangndi. For the Ndahi clan, their women are referred to as Zoaka. In certain social contexts, clan names are used as praise names to praise individuals for their virtues and achievements through song and speech. In many of the songs used for this study, clan names are used to describe and praise individuals or groups. When a person is being thanked for a kind gesture, usually the "thank you" remark will end with the person's clan name such as *usa Malgwi* (thank you Malgwi). No marriage within the same clan is allowed. Because clan name is often used for kinship identification in Bura culture, when a Bura person meets a fellow Bura for the first time, he or she will first inquire about the clan of the person.

Bura Language

The Bura language belongs to the Chadic language family currently found in the northeastern part of Nigeria. Among the Chadic group of tribes that are currently neighbours with the Bura are the Marghi, Chibuk, Kanuri and Kilba.¹⁶ Bura is a tonal language.¹⁷ In an article on Bura orthography, Dr. Rotimi Badejo, a Professor of Linguistics in the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria, in collaboration with the Committee on Bura Language Orthography reveals that the Bura language operates a system of three level tones: low (v), mid (unmarked) and high (v). Badejo recommends to the Nigerian

National Language Centre that the Bura language be tonally marked.¹⁸ But as at the time of writing this dissertation, Badejo's recommendation has not been implemented by the Nigerian Language Centre. This raises the question of ambiguity, especially in cases where a word has a dual meaning. The reader then has to depend on his or her emic knowledge or intuition in order to determine the correct tone(s), given the particular context. This procedure has been found unacceptable for other Nigerian languages. For instance, Yoruba language orthography has since been regularized by the Nigerian National Language Centre.¹⁹ The following are examples of tonally marked Bura words proposed by Badejo and the Committee on Bura Language Orthography.²⁰

Low (L), Mid (M), High (H).

- (a) i. LM [*bàka*] as in *á bàka* "almost"
- ii. LL [*bàkà*] "dry fish"
- (b) i. LH [*gàri*] "talk"
- ii. LL [*gàri*] "a big flowing gown"
- (c) i. L [*fà*] "to remove or collect"
- ii. H [*fá*] "long life"
- (d) i. LL [*Bàbà*] "father"
- ii. HH [*Bábá*] "aunt"

Because Badejo's recommendations concerning the phonetic symbols for tonal aspects of the Bura language in print have not been officially implemented, they are not used in this dissertation's transcriptions of the Bura language.

Bura language features a variety of consonant clusters such as [mb], [mw] and [kw].

[mb] as in [mbàntà] "to cure"

[mw] as in [mwà] "walk"

[kw] as in [kwàrà] "donkey"²¹

Furthermore, there are cases of word-boundary interactions and deletions of a part or a whole segment of Bura words and phrases when they are used in particular contexts, and when they are used in oral speech and oral songs. For instance in oral communication the phrase *Kila ra* (marry me) becomes *Kilra* (marry me). In this case, the [a] in *kila* (marry) is deleted and *kil* is merged with *ra* to form the compound word *kilra*.

Badejo and the Committee on Bura Language Orthography, has proposed standardized spellings of Bura words as part of the effort to regularize Bura orthography.²² I have adopted the committee's proposed spelling of Bura words for the purpose of this study. The examples of spelling of Bura words provided by Badejo and the committee are not extensive.²³ As a result, I have adopted spellings of some Bura words from Bura translations of the English Bible, Alkwal Bilin (The New Testament in Bura), and Bura Second Reader.

Bura Political System and Institutions

Bura political system and institutions are relevant to Bura folksongs. For instance, local politics and the activities of local politicians form the subject matter and the context of some Bura folksongs. Songs are used as effective media for praising political leaders and political aspirants for their good qualities and successes. Songs are also used to

satirize, criticize and denigrate leaders for their culturally and socially unacceptable behaviours and attitudes.

Biu emirate is hierarchically structured. It is headed by an emir or *kuthli* (king). The emirate is sub-divided in a descending order into districts, villages and wards. Each district is headed and administered by an *ajiya* (a district head). Each *ajiya* is directly responsible to the emir of Biu. In addition to ensuring the social, political and economic well being of the people in his district, each district head must carry out responsibilities designated to him by the emir. A district head who tends to be dictatorial and inefficient in the dispensation of his duties to the people in the district may be criticized and ridiculed in Bura folksongs especially in songs of abuse, protest songs and satirical songs. Good leadership will be praised through praise songs.

Each village is headed and administered by a *lawan* (village head). The *lawan* is directly responsible to the *ajiya* in whose district the village belongs. The *lawan* sees to the political and social well-being of the people living in his village and performs other duties assigned to him by the district head. Under the village head is the *bulama* (ward head). The ward head leads and administers the ward as well as carrying out responsibilities given to him by the village head in whose jurisdiction the ward is situated.

Bura Folk Custom

Folk customs, manners and morés shape both the contexts and contents of Bura folksongs. Although these three concepts are quite different, they are interrelated. Bura folk customs are those established ways of life, traditional practices and behaviour patterns

which include rites of passage, festivals, calendar customs, drama, occupational life, material culture, belief and etiquette. While customs may be fixed or changeable behaviours and attitudes, manners are expected to be fixed. Morés relate to moral values of the Bura people.

It is evident that cultures which are not indigenous to Bura society have come into contact with and have influenced Bura folk custom in various ways. As result, most Bura people speak Hausa as their second language. As Melville J. Herskovits points out:

...if we accepted the proposition that culture-contact produces cultural change, and that cultures of multiple origin do not represent a cultural mosaic, but rather become newly reintegrated, then the next essential step was to ascertain the degree to which these reconciliations had actually been achieved, and where, on this acculturative continuum, a given manifestation of the process of reworking these elements might lie.²⁴

In the case of Bura culture, it has experienced contact and long periods of social intercourse with non-indigenous cultures. Part of the aim of this study is to reveal, through the analysis of the context, theme and function of Bura folksongs, the extent to which Bura culture has been changed as a result of its contacts with non-indigenous cultures. Among the foreign cultural institutions introduced to Bura society and subsequently emulated and adapted by the Bura people include Kanuri, Fulani and Hausa cultures. These are also Bura neighbouring tribes. There are Fulani and Kanuri immigrants living in Bura communities. These groups are now socially and culturally linked with the Bura people either through intermarriages or through learning each other's language. There are few Hausa people who are resident in Bura communities. But the Hausa language is

spoken by most people from northern Nigeria as their second Nigerian indigenous language.

Christianity and Western education which were introduced in Bura society around the 1930s has had a strong influence on Bura culture. As British colonial legacy, today most Bura people are Christians. Christianity was first introduced in Bura land in the 1930s by the Church of the Brethren Mission. The missionaries first established their headquarters in Garkida town where they built a church, a dispensary and a missionary primary school for Bura people living in the area. Later, the missionaries built more churches, schools and dispensaries in other Bura communities including a dispensary and a primary school in Marama, and a secondary school in Waka. As a result, most Bura people are now Christians, and many Bura have acquired Western education. Although Islam was introduced in northern Nigeria before the turn of the twentieth century, it had an impact on the Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri and other tribal groups in the north but it had little impact on Bura people. The Bura resisted the Fulani *jihad* which was fought in the nineteenth century led by Usman Dan Fodio. *Jihad* is an Islamic holy war carried out by Muslims to force their victims to convert to Islam. At the time, most Bura maintained their indigenous religion which was *nua haptu* (the worship of ancestors and natural phenomena) until the coming of the European Christian missionaries to Bura land in the 1930s when many Bura people accepted Christianity, a foreign religion. This was partly because the missionaries did not fight the Bura or forcefully seize their lands and partly because the missionaries provided them with health care. Today, about sixty percent of

Bura people identify themselves as Christians while the remaining are either Muslims or *mjir nuwa habtu*. The *mjir habtu* worship Bura ancestors and natural phenomena such as hills, stones and sacred groves. It should be noted that the attitudes of many Bura Christians and Bura Muslims towards *nua haptu* is ambivalent. Although they consider *nua haptu* to be idol worship or "paganism," some of them either keep idols in their homes for protection or consult secretly *haptuayeri* (idols) or their mediators such as *haptu* priests, for physical and spiritual healing. For these groups therefore, the phrase "*nua haptu*" often carried a negative image.

Perhaps it should be pointed out that the blending of foreign cultures into indigenous Bura culture represents neither a slavish imitation of glamorous but foreign popular culture nor the unthinking rejection of Bura heritage. Rather, like the blending of American influence into black South African culture, it is the result of "a creative syncretism in which innovative performers combine materials from cultures in contact into qualitatively new forms in response to changing conditions, needs, self-image, and aspirations."²⁵ Generally, Bura Christians prefer to observe and celebrate Christmas and Easter than to observe and celebrate Bura traditional festivals such as *Mbal Angiramta* (a reunion of the Bura living with their ancestors), *Mbal Tsuwaha Laku* (Road Clearing Festival), *Mbal Sadaka* (Thanksgiving), and *Janguli Sadaka* (Thanksgiving). *Mbal* is a locally brewed beer used for offering thanksgiving to Bura gods and ancestors. *Janguli* is a cooked mixture of seeds (beans, peanuts, corn, and millet) used as items of offering to Bura gods and ancestors. Both the *Mbal* and the *Janguli* food items are also given to

family members, neighbours and friends to eat. Many Bura Christians consider the observance and the celebration of the Bura traditional festivals as well as the practice of the Bura indigenous religions as "sinful" or "idolatry." However, during Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter, Bura Christians, either consciously or unconsciously, incorporate Bura traditional concepts of festivities and celebrations. For instance, syncretic activities on Christmas Day include performances of Bura folk music accompanied with singing, dancing, and feasting. The music performed include Christian music and secular music. The non-religious folk music is performed mainly for entertainment purposes. There are other social activities during Christmas celebrations that blend Christian, Western and Bura cultural traits such as fanfares, soccer, and folk drama. Also, meals such as cooked rice and beef stew are sent to neighbours and given to visitors. Generally, the participants dress in new clothes and make house visits in their village and in neighbouring villages and they will be given foods, sweets (candies), *kola* nuts, or money as Christmas gifts. Christmas season is also a season for making new friends, for courtship, and for weddings, especially Christian church weddings. Usually, church weddings are not allowed on Christmas Eve and on Christmas Day, but Christian weddings may take place on the other days in December.

Like Bura Christians, most Bura Muslims now prefer to observe and celebrate Muslim rituals, festivals and other ceremonial activities such as the *Ramadan*, *Eid-El-Kabir* and *Eid-El-Fitr* than to observe and celebrate the indigenous Bura traditional rituals, festivals and other ceremonial activities. Nevertheless, syncretism is widespread.

Muslim festivals such as *Eid- El-Fitr* and *Eid-El-Kabir* incorporate Bura traditional ways of celebrating festivals and other ceremonial activities. Bura traditional dances and Bura folk music and *durbar* (a colourful horse riding parade) are performed during Muslim festivals and other Muslim ceremonial activities. There are also house visits and the exchange of gifts in the form of money, *kola* nuts, and *depino* (dates). Meals are prepared in large quantities by each Muslim family and distributed to neighbours and individuals or groups who pay them house visits.

Bura individuals or families who are neither Christians nor Muslims still celebrate the now unpopular but indigenous Bura traditional festivals. Some Bura Christians as well as some Bura Muslims continue to participate in the Bura traditional festivals, but usually as passive participants. Apparently they do not take an active role in the traditional festivals because of the fear that their fellow Christians and Muslims will regard them as idol worshippers or "sinners."

Today, many aspects of indigenous Bura rites of passage, just like the case of the indigenous Bura traditional festivals, have been changed, influenced or altered by Christianity and Islam. For instance, most contemporary Bura Christians have church weddings while most Bura Muslims perform Muslim weddings. However, during Christian wedding ceremonies, there are juxtapositions and blendings of Bura folk music and folk dance with Christian music and European music and dance. In like manner, during Muslim wedding ceremonies, there are syncretic and complementary performances of Bura traditional music and dance and Islamic music.

Christian and Muslim forms of rites of passage such as birth rites, naming ceremonies, circumcision rites, burial rites and funeral ceremonies have been adopted by Bura Christians and Bura Muslims, respectively. However, during Christian and Muslim rites and ceremonial activities, Bura traditional dances and songs are performed in addition to Christian and Muslim songs. Thus, in many instances, there is a mixture or intermingling of indigenous Bura traditional festivals, rites of passage and non-indigenous cultures such as Christianity and Islam. However, it is evident that Christian festivals and ways of performing rites of passage and other ceremonial activities are increasingly becoming more valuable and more dominant in the lives of most Bura Christians than the indigenous Bura traditions. Bura Muslims also prefer to observe and perform the Muslim festivals and Muslim ways of performing rites of passage and other ceremonial activities more than the indigenous Bura traditional rites of passage and other ceremonies.

During Bura traditional festivals and rites of passage which have resisted influence by Christianity and Islam - especially the rituals of ancestor worship and the worship of natural phenomena such as hills and sacred groves - the songs that are performed are neither Muslim songs nor Christian songs but Bura songs about Bura deities and Bura ancestors.

Bura Occupations

Although many Bura people now engage in modern occupations such as working in modern industries, businesses, academic settings, the military, the civil service and financial institutions, there are some Bura people who still engage in Bura traditional

occupations such as *tsuwaha* (farming), *kidla kum* (hunting), *hina tuhum* (pottery making), *tsa zhabi* (cloth weaving) and *bdla* (blacksmithing). The Bura peoples' main occupation is farming. Many of the Bura traditional occupations shape the context and content of Bura songs. That is, the occupations of Bura individuals are described or praised in songs. Furthermore, work such as farming and blacksmithing are occasions for singing Bura folksongs.

The foregoing survey and description of Bura culture reveals some aspects of Bura culture, including their historical origins, present geographical location, language, festivals, rites of passage, religious beliefs, and occupations. All have, in some ways, determined, informed or influenced the context, content, structure and functions of Bura folksongs. Furthermore, many aspects of Bura indigenous culture such as wedding custom, funeral, religious belief, festival, music and dance have undergone acculturation as a result of the introduction and establishment of foreign and other non-Bura indigenous cultural institutions in Bura society such as Christianity, Islam, Western education and Hausa culture. The influence of these foreign cultures on Bura culture is also reflected in the context, content, structure and function of Bura folksongs.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY OF BURA FOLKSONGS

As an insider, by virtue of my being Bura, and as a folklore scholar, I have observed problems pertaining to studies of Bura folklore, especially Bura folksongs. I know for instance, that the Bura, like other groups in Africa have a folksong tradition

through which Bura singers express Bura people's views, social and cultural values, religious beliefs, aspirations and experiences. But to my disappointment, only a few scholarly studies have been done on Bura folklore, particularly Bura folksongs. Most of the studies on Bura folklore were done by non-Bura scholars who discussed ideas mainly from exoteric perspectives. Even the few studies on Bura folksongs done by Bura scholars who applied esoteric perspectives are neither mainly folkloristic nor very extensive.²⁶ A brief review of pertinent literature on Bura social studies will illustrate this problem.

Pertinent Literature on Bura: A Review

One of the few studies on Bura folklore is J.G. Davies' Biu Book (1956).²⁷ This anthropological study of Bura traditions is useful because it is broad and comprehensive in its subjects. But Davies gives no consideration to Bura folksongs. He focuses exclusively on Bura origin, religious beliefs, geography, language, rites of passage and material culture. Davies's study also seem to reflect mainly the point of view of an outsider.

In his article, "The Evolution of Hierarchical Institutions: A Case Study from Biu, Nigeria," Roland Cohen describes the various types and levels of political institution and administration in Bura society.²⁸ Cohen describes aspects of Bura culture such as kinship relations, and mentions briefly that in the 19th century, disputing villages in Biu area would satirize each other through songs. This type of Bura song is analyzed in this study. In another article, "Dynastic Traditions and the State," Cohen focuses on Bura social and political institutions and the Bura language but overlooks Bura folksongs.²⁹

Paul Newman in Quarterly and Annual Reports for Biu Division describes the origin and development of Bura language from the perspective of a colonial officer.³⁰ J.H. Greenberg in Languages of Africa, provides generic information about the Bura and their language, but without using folkloristic methods.³¹ Rotimi Badejo and the Committee on Bura Language Orthography in an article titled "Bura Orthography," in Orthographies of Nigerian Languages Manual V, describes Bura orthography using mainly a linguistic approach and methodology.³² No consideration is given to Bura folk music in the study.

The Church of the Brethren Mission (CBM) has published a number of works on Bura health care and Bura folktales but neglects Bura folksongs. The studies include: Preliminary Remarks on Bura Sounds, Spellings, Accents and Tones, Bura First Reader,³³ Bura Second Reader, Bila Nggakur na tang Kuma (Health Care), and Ka Kadu Ar ha ka sur Vinkir Sili Aka Hyel (Christian Songs and Psalms of Praise).

The British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) has also translated the Bible from English to Bura. The Bura versions of the Bible include: Alkwal Bilin a Mthlaka Yesu Kristi (New Testament Bible) published in 1950, Labar na Pdaku Rubutur Luka (St. Luke's Gospel) published in 1950 and Labar na Pdaku Rubutur Yohanna (St. John's Gospel), published in 1950. Albert D. Helsel in his book African Stories documents Bura folktales, foodways and folk beliefs but does not address the subject of Bura religious songs.³⁴ The Scripture Gift Mission (SGM) published a Bura myth about how the world was created but no attention was given to folksongs. The story book is titled Baditar Duniya (no date). In an unpublished paper titled "Bura People and Their Language,"

Nwua Balami discusses the historical origin of the Bura tribal group and the Bura language.³⁵ Also, Idrissa Diggira Mshelia in a paper titled "Past, Present and Future Development in Bura Language" discusses the development of the Bura language and its influence on other languages in Biu area.³⁶ Although insiders, neither Balami nor Mshelia discussed Bura folksongs.³⁷

I can only speculate as to why Bura folksongs, a strong media for communicating Bura culture, have not been studied extensively by previous scholars. Perhaps they were not very interested in Bura folk music. Probably, observing and analysing aspects and dynamics of Bura folk music were not their main priority.

One of the few studies on Bura folksongs is "Borno Music Documentation Project", a study of traditional folk music in Borno State of Nigeria done by German scholars, W. Seidnesticker and R. Vogels in collaboration with Christopher Y. Mtaku, a Bura man who teaches in the Creative Arts Department, at the University of Maiduguri, Nigeria.³⁸ Because the study is not restricted to Bura folksongs but encompasses the folk music of many tribes in Borno State, Bura folksongs are not treated in-depth. The authors do discuss Bura musical instruments, give biographies of a few Bura musicians, and offer brief analysis of the textual contents of a few Bura songs. In a paper titled "Music of the Bura People," Vogels also documents and describes a selection of Bura musical instruments and the music of a few Bura musicians including Bukar Bishi, *m̄dir tsa ganga* (a drummer); Avi Pwasi, a *gulum* (guitar-like chordophone) player, and Usman Boaja, a *tsindza* (xylophone) player.³⁹ But Vogel's study does not include women musicians and

their music. Furthermore, the study is not an in-depth study of the context, content, techniques and function of Bura folk music. In the same vein, Isa Audu in an essay titled "*Tsinza -- A Monograph of the Bura Xylophone*," describes aspects of the Bura xylophone instrument including its origin, development, how it is made, how it is played and the occasions at which it is played. Audu also describes other types of Bura musical instruments, but gives little or no consideration to analytical study of the context, content, technique and function of Bura song corpus.⁴⁰ An unpublished paper on aspects of Bura folksongs written by Zaynab Alkali titled, "*Tua, Sardzi, Kertukur: A Descriptive Analysis of Three Genres in the Oral Poetry of the Bura/Babur Ethnic Group*," offers valuable information.⁴¹ Its analysis of Bura folksongs is very brief, apparently because the topic chosen for the short paper is broad: types of Bura folksong, style of Bura folksongs performance, Bura folksingers, Bura musical instruments and analysis of Bura satirical songs, eulogies and dirges. A relatively more detailed study of Bura folksongs is my Masters thesis, "*Bura Oral Poetry: An Analysis of its Themes and Techniques*."⁴² However, little consideration is given to the types, occasions, functions of Bura folksongs or their makers.

From the foregoing review, it is obvious that although the studies done so far with respect to Bura folksong are useful, none of them is devoted solely to an in-depth study of Bura folksongs. In addition to this gap in the literature, another reason for my decision to conduct a study in Bura songs is my long time exposure to Bura song performances. In order to set my role in context, I offer the following description. My father is the *lawan*

(village head) of Kidang and its surrounding villages. As tradition demands, all musical performances marking all festival celebrations and *hirdi* in his jurisdiction usually take place in the large square in front of our house. The only exceptions are musical performances at funerals, weddings and funerals of people who are not immediate members of the *lawan's* family. As a result, I have been exposed to Bura folk music performances from my childhood. I have always been interested in observing and understanding the aspects and dynamics of Bura folk music. But as a woman and as a *lawan's* daughter, culturally, I am only allowed to be an audience member, not an active participant in Bura folk music performances. Thus I did not have the opportunity and the skill to fulfil this dream until I began to study folklore at university. The main objective of this work, therefore, was to do an ethnographic study of Bura folksongs using folkloristic approaches and methodologies, from the point of view of an insider. In the process, I have accomplished the following:

- a. Collected Bura folksongs, transcribed them into texts, translated them into English, and analyzed a selection of the songs with a view to explicating their types, themes, techniques and functions.
- b. Through the study of the context, content, technique and function of Bura folksongs, my main goal was to throw more light on the dynamics, occasions, meanings, performance techniques, artistic complexity, aesthetics and relevance of Bura folksongs in particular and African folksongs in general.
- c. Substantiated the idea that folksongs of a particular folk group can be used to

- express or understand the group's sociocultural values, beliefs and worldviews.
- d. Made Bura folksongs available to non-Bura individuals and groups.
 - e. Provided relevant materials and perhaps a guide for future researchers in the field.
 - f. Placed Bura folksongs in the mainstream of folklore scholarship.

RESEARCH PLAN

Scope

Bura folklore is not limited to folksongs. Many and various folklore genres can be found in Bura society, including folktales, folk drama, legends, myths, proverbs, riddles, jokes, foodways, folk belief and material culture. However, this study focused mainly on Bura folksongs due to my knowledge and interest in this genre and also because I know that Bura folksongs are relatively still understudied.

Eighty-seven Bura folksongs have been documented and analyzed in the study. The selected songs are representative texts for all Bura folksongs. In the selection process, the main determining factor was the songs' relevance to the issues studied: context, content, technique and function. I have observed and listened to the songs of many Bura singers. I have also discussed the songs of many Bura singers. But I was only able to interview four Bura folk musicians owing to time constraints and other limitations on my resources, about their performances and repertoires, as representative of all Bura folksingers.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

I conducted the field research in Biu Emirate in Borno State of Nigeria. Biu Emirate is the area or the constituency where the makers and the owners of Bura folksongs are predominantly found. My first field research on Bura folksongs in Biu Emirate was in 1988 and my second field research on Bura folksongs in Biu Emirate was conducted from December 1994 to April 1995.

I used various methods to collect data for this study. I have classified these approaches into two main categories: field research and library research. Both the field research and the library research involved methods used for eliciting or collecting information in folklore.

Field Research Methods

Of the several methods and techniques used by the collector in fieldwork, two provided me with practically most of the data I needed for the study. These two methods were observation and interview.⁴³

Observation

The observation method involved obtaining data by direct observation, looking from “the outside in and describing the situation” as I saw it.⁴⁴ During my observations of Bura musical performances, there were times when I participated in the events as a participant observer. There were times when I danced and other times I joined in singing choruses. This participant observation method has its advantages and its disadvantages. One of the advantages is that, I was accepted as an equal in most of the situations I was observing.

As a result, I was able to study the performances in as natural an unaffected a state as possible. In so doing, not only was I able to observe what went on around me, but I was able to feel through experience the actual role which I assumed. Another positive aspect of my participating in the musical performances is that, I was able to identify with other participants in the same role; and therefore able to obtain from them additional information on the internal content of the situation. Such insightful information gave me greater grasp of the situation, which in turn assisted me in formulating meaningful questions to be asked during interviews with other audience-participants and with Bura musicians.

But I must admit there are disadvantages in being a participant observer, at least from my personal experiences. One main problem with my assuming the role of participant observer is that I was unable to take notes during a performance, and had to delay putting my impressions on paper until the performance was over. When a music event was long or had a large number of separate actions, it was not possible for me to retain in my memory all the many things that needed to be remembered and recorded. This happened especially when the performance was part of activities marking wedding ceremonies, funeral ceremonies, festivals and Sunday church services. One of the things that helped me was that I realized the problem early and I stopped participating and just observed the performances. I was then able to view clearly and as objectively as possible the entire “kaleidoscope” of the activities, and take notes.⁴⁵ If the performance was either at a church wedding or a church service I would sit in the audience and when there was need for me to write down an impression, I would bring out my notepad from my handbag

and take notes. After taking notes I would put the notepad back in my handbag till the next impression to avoid drawing many people's attention. If observing a music event in an open space with a large crowd of people, some standing or walking around and others dancing, especially in the front yard of a community leader, I tried to avoid creating self-consciousness in the participants to a degree which may radically affect the situation.

Therefore, when the performers are on break I would either go and sit in my car or go to the bathroom and put my impressions on paper. Also, because I was an insider by virtue of being Bura, born and bred in Bura society, I was able to fill out the minute details I missed as a participant observer by relying on my previous understanding of aspects of Bura folk music performance. Furthermore, I had the assistance of trained recording artist, Richard Gana Malqwi, who accompanied me to social events such as wedding ceremonies and recorded for me the music events I observed during my fieldwork from December 1994 to April 1995. Through the recorded performances, I was able to refresh my memories and also identify things that I overlooked during the performances. The songs I collected doing fieldwork in Bura communities from December 1994 to April 1995 were recorded on tapes. But the songs I collected in the 1980s were not recorded on tape. I wrote them in notebooks.

Beside collecting songs performed both in natural and artificial contexts, I also obtained Bura songs and other relevant information for the study from Bura individuals who are neither recognized in Bura society as composers and performers of Bura folksongs nor frequent attendees of Bura song performances; they are recognized as gifted

or talented memorizers and good conduits of Bura songs.⁴⁶ These active bearers of Bura songs learn songs on occasions such as wedding ceremonies of their friends, family members, or funeral ceremonies of acquaintances. They reproduce the songs in versions; either to teach other people or to entertain their relatives, friends and neighbours. I recorded some of these memorized songs on tape and others on note pads. In the process, I observed that most of these informants are not only good conduits of the songs they recited to me but they also have beautiful singing voices. Some of them could pass for musicians except for the fact that they do not always repeat the songs exactly as they hear them. Some words or formulaic phrases were added or removed, either due to memory loss or were done deliberately to suit the existing social context. Moreover, they often sing on informal occasions, and without the accompaniment of instrumental music. The fluidity and variations which occur as the songs are transmitted orally from one singer to another are in keeping with the principles of oral transmission.

I observed that makers of Bura songs mostly tend to perform their songs for the appropriate social contexts. But many of those who learned songs orally from the makers sing them on occasions other than those on which the songs are supposed to be sung. For instance, dirges are not supposed to be sung outside the context of bereavement, but many of my informants in this category sang dirges to me in the privacy of their homes. Other types of song which they sang to me for the purpose of this study include political, wedding, love, satirical and work songs.

As a folklore scholar, I am as interested in songs of the past as of the present for the two together give me an opportunity to study the forces of change.⁴⁷ As well, I am interested in the folk music situations and materials which I was unable to observe. I am interested for instance, in Bura music fans' reports of folksongs performances where I as a collector was not present. I am also of the opinion that songs that already exist in Bura song corpus can form a useful part of the data that I am using in the study. This is because the "old" songs high light some of the thematic concerns of Bura singers in the past such as colonialism and struggle for independence. They also provide clues as to the kinds of context existed in the past and possibly in the present, for folksong performances. In view of the relevance of "old" Bura songs, I decided to collect video and tape recordings of Bura folksongs which have been previously recorded at various Bura folk music events by various individuals, institutions and organizations. For example, I was given tape and video recordings of Bura songs by Bura individuals which they recorded during their own wedding ceremonies, the wedding ceremonies of their relatives or friends, or during the funeral ceremonies of their relatives. I also obtained copies of video recordings of Bura songs from the Department of Creative Arts, University of Maiduguri, Nigeria. The songs were recorded for a research project on the folk music of Borno. In addition, I got copies of video recordings of Bura folksongs from Nigerian Television Authority Maiduguri (NTA), and from the Borno Radio Television (BRTV), Maiduguri. The songs were recorded previously on various Bura folk music events for radio and television documentaries. All songs discussed in the dissertation are documented in Appendix I.

Perhaps I should point out that in collecting Bura songs, rather than being selective, I used “vacuum cleaner” collecting method.⁴⁸ That is, after telling my informants the type of songs I wanted to record, I let them determine their own natural order for performing the songs in their repertoires. I think that while it is not always possible to allow the informants the full freedom of ordering their songs, even performances in which the collector is seeking to obtain specific type of songs should be flexible enough to allow the singers to perform songs as they come to mind. Because I recognize this need for flexibility, I allowed Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri to sing Christian religious songs, wedding songs, and funeral songs as they came to mind, when I recorded her songs on January 22, 1995.

It should be noted that the Bura folksongs I recorded during the fieldwork were performed in the Bura language not in English. None of the musicians I recorded speak English. Bura musicians’ language proficiencies are discussed in detail in this chapter in the section devoted to the biographies of four Bura musicians. The occasions at which Bura folk music is performed are discussed in detail in Chapter Three.

Interview

Interview is the method used by folklore fieldworker to obtain data about ideas or events outside the context of the interview itself through questioning individuals believed or known to have the required information.⁴⁹ I conducted interviews with four Bura musicians on a one-on-one basis. I interviewed Musa Gwoadzang on December 31, 1994 at his house in Gwoadzang village. I interviewed Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri on January

22, 1995 at Kidang village. As well, Anthony Audu was interviewed on January 22, 1995 at Kidang. In the case of Usman Boaja, I interviewed him on January 26, 1995. With the exception of my interview with Usman Boaja, my interviews were recorded on audio tape. I wrote down Boaja's information on paper because the tape recorder I was using broke down. Details of my interviews with the four Bura musicians are discussed in the following section which focuses on my fieldwork experiences. The transcripts of the interviews are documented in Appendix II.

It should be noted that, because none of the four Bura musicians speak English, our conversations took place in Bura. But in the transcribed texts of the interviews I provided both the Bura version and the English translation of the interviews to make the texts accessible to readers who do not speak Bura.

I should also point out that although I interviewed only four Bura musicians, since the early seventies I have had informal conversations with many other Bura singers and have observed their performances for many years. Thus, my analysis of Bura folksongs will not be limited to the songs of the four informants I interviewed. Rather, the songs of other Bura musicians are also analyzed.

During my formal interviews with the four Bura musicians, they described situations, materials, attitudes and ideas about their music from the perspectives of insiders. I interviewed them about their biographies, occupations, social status, and their music. With reference to their music, I interviewed them on various issues including the genesis and the history of their music careers; their methods of composing and performing

their songs; their song repertoire; the themes of their songs; the occasions on which they perform their songs; and, their social roles as musicians in Bura society.

I also interviewed some Bura folksong fans and audience participants, regular attendees of Bura folk music performance. The Bura folksong fans are individuals who frequently attend musical performances whether invited or not. Some of them specialize in frequenting the folksong performances of particular Bura folksingers. For instance, some of them would ensure that they attend all of Usman Boaja's folk music performances if they are aware of them. It does not matter if Usman Boaja is going to perform his folksongs twenty kilometres away or in a thunder storm; they will still trek to the village where Usman Boaja will perform his songs. Also, it does not matter to them if Usman Boaja's particular folksong performance is at a wedding, funeral, festival or installation ceremony of a new traditional ruler; they will still be there. It may not be inappropriate to say that some of these types of Bura folksong fans are addicted to attending the folksong performances of particular folksingers.

Then there are some Bura folksong fans who frequent all performances of any Bura folksinger.⁵⁰ They do not limit their patronage to the folk music performances of a particular Bura musician. Generally the Bura folksong fans and regular attendees tend to be useful informal conduits and transmitters of Bura folksongs. This happens because when they attend Bura folksong performances, they listen to the songs that are sung by the folksingers, and they often learn and memorize the songs. Sometimes they act as audience participants during Bura folk music performances and they sing the chorus while the lead

singer sings the main parts of the songs. I observed these trends not only during my field research for this study but also when I was growing up in my village, Kidang, in Biu Emirate. I used to attend Bura folksong performances as an audience participant, although not as a regular attendee. At that time, being a girl and as someone from a royal family, it was considered socially and culturally unacceptable for me to be a regular attendee at Bura folksong performances.

During my informal interviews with some Bura folksong fans and regular attendees, they recited for me the Bura folksongs which they had learned and memorized in the course of attending Bura folksong performances. I recorded some of the songs recited for me on tapes and wrote others on note pads. Interestingly, the reciters still remembered the folksingers who composed and sang the songs which they recited. Some of the songs recited have been documented and analyzed in this study. The role of Bura folksong audiences and audience participants are discussed in detail in Chapter Five -- the chapter in which I outline and analyze the performance of Bura folksongs.

MY FIELDWORK EXPERIENCES: DECEMBER 1994 TO APRIL 1995

My field research on Bura folksongs in Biu Emirate (Bura society) from the month of December 1994 to the month of April 1995 was typical of field research conducted by folklore scholars in that I had both good and bad experiences.⁵¹ I have had some failures as well as successes in my attempts to collect data. The discussion that follows is a description of my fieldwork experiences.

Expected Experiences

Prior to my trip from Canada to Nigeria to conduct fieldwork on Bura folksongs in Borno State of Nigeria, I identified my informants, and I obtained their consent -- through writing -- to be interviewed. I also outlined my field research processes and procedures as follows:

- Phase I: By December 31, 1994
Meet with all my informants to let them know that I have arrived; fix date for tape-recorded interviews with them on one-on-one basis.
- Phase II: By January 31, 1995
Complete tape-recorded interviews with each of my informants.
- Phase III: February to April 1995
follow-up interviews
- Phase IV: March to April 1995
Video recordings and tape recordings of my informants' music performances as well as any other Bura folk musician's performance on occasions such as weddings, festivals and funerals.

My informants and I agreed that I would conduct tape-recorded interviews with them in order to gather information about their life stories, their music, music performances and their views of Bura folksongs. As well, I would record their musical performances on video tapes and audio tapes. My informants were also aware that I would take photographs of them as well as of their musical instruments.

I arrived at Maiduguri, the capital of Borno State, on December 17, 1994 and I

spent four days in Maiduguri. On Thursday, December 22, I travelled to Biu Emirate where I was to conduct my field research. While in Biu Emirate, I started with the processes of the field research. First, I attended a Christian wedding ceremony at Kidang, my hometown, and I observed the musical performances which took place during the wedding reception. I took photographs of the music event including the performing musicians as well as the participating audience. I could not record the music event on video or audio tapes because at that time I had not yet rented a video recorder and a tape recorder. On Saturday, December 24, 1994, I sent my cousin Idirsa Usman to Gusi and Gwoadzang, the two villages where two of my four informants live, to inform them that I had arrived. Usman Boaja lives in Gusi while Musa Gwoadzang lives in Gwoadzang. I also told my cousin to ask them to fix the date on which I could visit them in their homes and possibly conduct the tape-recorded interviews with each one of them. Gwoadzang is about ten kilometres away from Kidang and Gusi is about fifteen kilometres away.

My cousin met Musa Gwoadzang at home and he informed him of my arrival. When asked when I should visit him, Musa Gwoadzang told my cousin that I could visit him on any day. When my cousin went to Usman Boaja's house in Gusi, Usman Boaja was not at home; he had gone to perform music at a wedding ceremony in another village. My cousin left a message with Usman Boaja's elder son that he should tell his father that I have arrived. I was a bit disappointed that my cousin did not meet Usman Boaja at home, especially because it is very difficult and expensive to get a bus that travels from Kidang to Gusi and vice versa, even though the two villages are only about 15 kilometres apart.

On December 31, 1994, my sister, Mrs. Salamatu Joel S. Billi, her husband Pastor Joel S. Billi and I drove in their car to Gwoadzang to visit Musa Gwoadzang. Fortunately for me, we met Musa Gwoadzang as well as his three wives and most of his children at home. To my great delight, after exchanging greetings and other pleasantries, the atmosphere was conducive for me to conduct the tape-recorded interview with Musa Gwoadzang. I had also borrowed a tape-recorder from my brother-in-law at Biu, Mr. Bata Ndahi, and loaded the tape recorder with new batteries. I bought three new blank tapes at Biu Market and I took them along with me for recording the interview.

My interview with Musa Gwoadzang lasted for about three hours. The interview took place in his house inside his guest room. My sister (Mrs. Joel S. Billi) and her husband (Pastor Billi) were present in the room during the interview. I was pleased with how the interview went. At the initial stage, my informant was a bit shy and inhibited but I tried to apply my skills as a folklore fieldworker by making him feel that he was the "master" of the occasion. I was anxious him to provide me with answers to the questions I planned to ask him, I did not want to be disappointed. First, I started reminiscing about his music performances in the past and how my friends and I used to be participant audiences at his musical performances when we were teenagers. I sang to him a love song which he composed about a girl he fell in love with in my hometown, Kidang. The girl's name is Yarami Audu. At this point, he started to laugh and to feel relaxed. He even took over the conversation and gave me his own interpretation of the "Yarami" love song. I made him feel that I was not a stranger to his music and music performances. When I saw

that he was absolutely ready to have open and free conversation with me about his life, his music and his musical performances, I then started to ask him some specific questions. I asked him questions about his life, his views about his music and his music performances. Gwoadzang's answers were usually detailed, clear and informative.

When I listened to the tape-recorded interview afterwards, I realized that some of the questions I asked him were not satisfactory because they were either too lengthy or were dichotomous questions, prompting "yes" or "no" answers. When the interview was over, his wives invited my sister, her husband and me for lunch but we were not hungry so we refused to eat the food, but we refused with humility and gratitude. As a folklore fieldworker, I am aware of the ethics of reciprocity. Therefore, after my tape-recorded interview with Musa Gwoadzang, I gave him five hundred Naira (N500.00), equivalent to about fourteen dollars and fifty cents Canadian and I gave fifty Naira to his mother. At first because the value of the Naira had recently dropped, I felt the money I gave Musa Gwoadzang was too little, but he did not consider it that way. He was very grateful and happy about it. On April 10, 1995 we organized *hirdi* in front of his house so that I could video tape his musical performance in context. *Hirdi* is an informal musical event organized in a particular Bura village or community at night to provide an opportunity for members of the community to socialize, dance, sing and have fun. During the *hirdi*, Musa Gwoadzang composed songs including a song about me, in which he expressed gratitude to me for giving him money.

In addition to conducting interviews with Musa Gwoadzang, I was able to tape record his music performance in context on video tape in front of his house on April 10, 1995, and I was able to take photographs of him and his *yakandi* (banjo-like instrument). One thing which I could not accomplish was observing and taping his music performances on occasions such as weddings, funeral ceremonies or festivals because he was not invited to any of these occasions to perform at the time I was conducting field research. However, he told me during my interview with him on December 31, 1994 that he performs music on these occasions as well as on informal occasions such as the *hirdi* which we organized in front of his house. I have personally observed and participated in his music performances on these types of occasions before I came to Canada in 1992, and have audio recordings of his songs. His songs which are used as primary texts in this study are therefore collected from two main sources: first, the songs which he composed and sang during the *hirdi* in front of his house on April 10, 1995 which I recorded on video tape; second, songs recorded on audio tapes which he composed and sung at previous wedding, funeral and festival occasions.

During my field research on Musa Gwoadzang's folksongs, I got to know him better. I discovered that my earlier perception of him as a shy, quiet, intelligent and articulate gentleman was actually correct. I also got to understand and appreciate his points of view regarding his music and music performances. On my subsequent visits to his house I became better acquainted with him and with members of his family. They all became not just my new acquaintances but my friends as well.

After completing my interview with Musa Gwoadzang on December 31, 1994, I went to Gusi to meet with Usman Boaja. Unfortunately I did not meet Usman Boaja at home. One of his children told me that he had gone to perform music at a wedding occasion in another village. I left a message for him with three of his children. I was a bit worried about not being able to meet him and fix a date with him for the tape-recorded interview. I was worried that my fieldwork with him may not be successful. Afterwards, I decided to put aside my worries because I knew that once we met he would want the interview to be conducted at the earliest possible time. I knew that he was the kind of person who would be interested in sharing his views with me, especially his biography, his music and music performances. I was not the first person to interview Boaja about his music and his music performances. He had even been interviewed by outsiders such as German scholars, as well as by Nigerian television and radio reporters. Since he had agreed to be an informant to outsiders, being an insider, I was quite confident that he would be willing to openly and freely share his views with me. Boaja also knows my father and they both have mutual respect for each other. As a result, I was sure that he would try to be available for the interview, at least for the sake of my father.

My much anticipated interview with Usman Boaja took place Wednesday, January 25. Earlier on that day, he sent a man from his village of Gusi to come to my house in Kidang to inform me that he was on his way to see me in my parents' house at Kidang. About three hours later, around twelve noon, Boaja arrived for the interview. I considered his coming as a great honour, first, because he is an elderly person and second because I

should have been the one to go and meet him at his house. As custom demands, he did not see me immediately but went and stayed with my father in my father's sitting room. After he had exchanged greetings with my father, my father sent one of my junior brothers to go and inform me that Usman Boaja had arrived. We had eagerly awaited Usman Boaja's arrival. I was therefore very happy to see him. It was like a dream come true. He did not recognize me immediately. Jokingly, he said I have changed greatly, I have become like *baturiya* (a woman from the West). It was a complimentary remark. I then went and cooked some food for him, my father and the other male visitors sitting in my father's sitting room. After they had finished eating, my father sent for me and told me that Usman Boaja was ready to talk with me about his music. I then went into my room and brought out the equipment which I would use for the interview, including my note pad. Usman Boaja and I then went and sat in my brother's house which is only about twenty metres away from my father's house.

The people living in my brother's house had all gone to a nearby village market so the house was quiet and conducive for conducting an interview. Because Usman Boaja had been interviewed before, he did not show any sign of shyness or timidity. On the contrary, he looked at me with direct eye contact. His answers to my questions were clear and straightforward. The information he gave while answering each question was detailed and chronological. Sometimes he would smile as he talked and other times he would appear to be serious, depending on the nature of the subjects of our conversation. The interview lasted for about two hours and thirty minutes. As a result of the interview, I got

to know Usman Boaja better, learning about his personality, his family, and his music.

I used the interview to obtain Usman Boaja's interpretation of some of the songs in his repertoire which I had listened to and had learned when I was an audience member during his music performances. There was a particular metaphor which he used in one of the songs he composed and sang in the 1980s which I did not understand so I asked him to interpret it. Furthermore, I used the occasion to ask him to express his views about some critical public allegations made about him. For instance, some people in the community have complained that the invitation fees he charges are too high, and that he demands excessive beer and other material gifts from people who invite him to perform. His responses to these allegations were quite insightful. When the interview was over, I gave him five hundred and fifty Naira (about sixteen Canadian dollars) for which he was very grateful.

On Friday, April 10, 1995 I went to see Usman Boaja in his house in Gusi. One of the purposes of my visit was to take photographs of him and his family, and his *tsindza* (xylophone) instrument. I went with Richard Gana Malgwi who was to assist me in recording Usman Boaja's performance on video so that I could concentrate on observing the performance. Richard is a specialist in video recording and documentary. He is often hired to record people's wedding ceremonies on video. We did not meet Usman Boaja at home: we were told by his son that he had gone to Mbulatawiwi market. Actually we drove past the market when we were going to see Usman Boaja at Gusi. So we drove back to Mbulatawiwi market to look for him. After a long search in the crowds of people,

we eventually saw him. I told him we had been to his house and he told us he was in the market to buy prescribed drugs for his child who was sick. After he had bought the drugs, we went back to his house. My goal was to get acquainted with his family, especially his wives and his sons whom he earlier told me were learning how to perform *tsindza* (xylophone music). But I only met with two of his four wives. His other two wives were shopping at the Mbulatawiwi market. I also went with a video camera so that if possible, I could video tape his music performances. He was willing to perform music for me to record and video tape. People gathered in his front yard to listen to his music performance. However, after playing for about ten minutes, he said he was feeling tired, and as a result, he could not compose and sing songs at that time. He did not want me to feel disappointed so he told me that he had been invited to perform music at a wedding occasion in Bindirim village on the following day and that I should go to the wedding and video tape him there. He said he would be at the junction of the road that leads to Bindirim by 9:00 waiting for us to give him a ride. Richard and I then drove back to Kidang and slept at my parents' house. The following morning, April 11, 1995 we drove to Bindirim where the wedding was taking place. By 9:00 a.m. we were already at the junction of the road that leads to Bindirim but we did not see Usman Boaja waiting. I was surprised and a bit worried, but again I thought probably he had gotten to the road junction early and he took a ride with someone else to the venue of the wedding. My research assistant and I then decided to go to Bindirim and hopefully meet Usman Boaja there.

Unfortunately, when we got to the house where the wedding was taking place, Usman Boaja was not there. I was wondering what might have happened to him. "Could it be that his child's sickness got worse?" I asked myself. Meanwhile, Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri, who was also my informant, had told me that she was going to perform music at the wedding ceremony at Bindirim. She told me about it when I went to document her music performance photographically at Marama church on April 9, 1995. We both arranged that I would record her music performance on video at the wedding occasion at Bindirim. I was worried when I did not see Usman Boaja but I became less worried or at least relieved when I saw Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri at the wedding. Later in the day she performed music for the wedding audience and I recorded her on video.

Up to the time I finished with the video taping of Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri's music performance, Usman Boaja had not appeared at the wedding. It did not immediately dawn on me until late at night that day, that when Usman Boaja said we should meet him at the road junction at 9:00 he probably meant 9:00 p.m. and not 9:00 a.m. By then it was too late for me to go back to Bindirim because I had to return the video camera which I rented for only twenty-four hours. I later realized when reviewing my five-minute recording of his music that, there was confusion over the time. I felt disappointed and I blamed myself. However, I had observed him perform music on several occasions including wedding, festivals and funerals, and I have recordings of his music on video and audio tapes which I am using for this study.

January 22, 1995 was a good day for me because on that day I conducted a tape-recorded interview with two of my informants, Anthony Audu and Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri. It was a pleasant experience for me because each one of them decided to come to Kidang for the tape-recorded interview instead of me going to meet each one of them in his or her place. Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri lives in Marama which is about four kilometres away from Kidang. She walked all the way. Anthony Audu lives in Labu which is about ten kilometres away from Kidang. Like Saraya Mwarinkir, Anthony walked all the way from Labu for the interview. In the case of Anthony Audu, I did not make prior contact and arrangement with him to be my informant. It was after I had started my fieldwork in Bura communities that I decided to include him among my informants. Fortunately for me, he consented. I was grateful to both Anthony Audu and Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri for their cooperation and their enthusiasm.

During the tape-recorded interviews with both Anthony and Saraya D. Waziri, I had trouble with the tape recorder which I was using. Although the batteries were new and the tape was also new, sometimes the tape would stop recording during the course of the interview. I had to hit it or tap it with my hands before it would resume recording. I found that situation very frustrating and embarrassing. Nevertheless, I was able to record most of the interviews on tape. I was also glad that they understood the problem I was having with the tape. Each time the tape resumed recording, they would try and repeat at least some of the things they had said earlier.

Anthony Audu was the first person to be interviewed. Even though I had listened

to Anthony Audu's music performance as an audience member, I had never had a conversation with him until the day I interviewed him. Nevertheless, he felt very free and relaxed, and he was open and friendly to me. He answered the questions which I asked him without inhibitions or hesitations. Some of the things he said were so funny that at times I found myself laughing. He came to the interview with his *tsindza* (xylophone). He was accompanied by one of his apprentice-assistants. He was prepared to perform music in front of my father's house that evening for me to observe and to record on tape. Unfortunately, I made a huge mistake which I will never forget. Considering that he had walked all the way from Labu to Kidang, and considering that we had spent about three hours doing the interview, I thought that he would be too tired to perform music, that he would need some rest. I was wrong. I should not have discouraged him from performing when he told me that he was going to perform music in front of my father's house that night for me to observe and record. Because of my suggestions he did not play. It would have been a big musical event with a large audience from Kidang and the surrounding villages because people love to listen to his music performances. I felt unhappy with myself afterwards. I tried to arrange for him to come over to Kidang to perform music but he already had been invited to perform music on wedding and festival occasions in far away towns, some of which are outside Borno State. However, I have previously observed his music performances on festival, funeral and wedding occasions, and I have video and tape recordings of his music performances.

Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri arrived for an interview at my parents' house while I was still conducting the interview with Anthony Audu. She came with two of her friends who are also singers: Zainabu Mallam Daniel and Shetu Alasa. I briefly suspended my interview with Anthony Audu in order to go and welcome them. After exchanging greetings with them I requested them to give me time to complete my interview with Anthony. Meanwhile, my mother and the other women around already knew Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri and her friends so they kept them company and conversed with them until I finished the interview with Anthony. My mother and her friends prepared some food for Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri and her friends. I also bought *uwaha mumwasu ka tikira* (yogurt and spicy millet dough) as appetizers for Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri and her friends. I was glad that every one around seemed to be happy and jovial. When I was about to start the interview with Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri the other women left the room except the two women who came with her. Their presence during the interview was helpful to me because they provided answers and ideas to Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri whenever she had trouble with answering some of my questions. I also experienced problems with the tape recorder during this interview, but the problem was rectified when my uncle gave me another tape recorder. The interview lasted for about three and half hours, during which I had the opportunity to know Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri better, just as I did with Musa Gwoadzung, Usman Boaja and Anthony Audu. I discovered that Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri is much more humble, friendly and intelligent and funny than I thought. I really enjoyed the interview. I also found that her ideas and her thoughts were

philosophical and tended to be inspiring and educational.

After my interview with Saraya Mwarinkir, the Kidang Christian Women Fellowship were invited to our house and Saraya Mwarinkir performed her music with them. Many people in our house and the neighbourhood came to watch and listen to Saraya Mwarinkir and the *Zumunta Mata* (Christian Women's Fellowship) singing and dancing to music produced by their musical instruments. I sang and danced with them while I recorded the music on audio tape. Unfortunately I did not have a video camera with me at the time. Earlier, on April 9, 1995, I took photographs of Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri in front of and inside Marama church when she was performing music before a large audience during a Christian Women's Fellowship meeting. The leader of the Christian Women's Fellowship announced to them that I was there to take photographs of Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri performing music with them for my field research and they all agreed for me to document the music event photographically. They all sang enthusiastically as I took photographs of their music performance. What I did not do was record that music performance on video because at that time I could not find a video recorder to rent. Eventually, I was able to video tape Saraya Mwarinkir performing with another Christian Women's Fellowship at a wedding occasion in Bindirim on April 10, 1995.

All my informants are now close acquaintances and friends. I enjoyed the laughter and the sharing of ideas with them on music-related issues as well as issues unrelated to music.

Unexpected Experiences

My luggage was taken away and hidden by some customs officials at the Lagos Murtala International Airport when I arrived in Lagos from London aboard British Airways on December 12, 1994. I did not recover my luggage until four days later and was forced to stay in Lagos during that period. The hijacking of my luggage, the days I spent trying to recover the luggage and the resultant delays in starting my field research were some of the unforgettable bad experiences I had when I travelled to Nigeria to do my field research. The problems I had with my brand new tape recorder was another unexpected difficulty. Also, during my field research, traveling by road on the highways was unsafe and risky due to constant attacks and threats by highway armed robbers. My mind was never at rest whenever I was on the road traveling to meet with my informants. The risks of traveling in some ways affected my field research in a negative way because it curtailed my desire to go and meet with my informants as frequently as I wanted.

On the whole, I am pleased with the field research partly because of the cooperation and support I received from my informants and my relations and partly because I was able to collect the data which I needed for my thesis. I am glad that I returned back to Canada safely.

WHAT BURA MUSICIANS HAVE IN COMMON

I am using songs by many Bura musicians for this study, but I focused upon four particular musicians in interviews during my field research in Bura communities in Biu

Emirate Council in Borno State of Nigeria from December 1994 to April 1995. Much of the information I gathered from these musicians confirmed my ideas about Bura folk musicians and their folk music performances.

Before I write the biographies of the four Bura folk musicians I interviewed, I will outline certain characteristics which most Bura musicians share. Although the study is not a comparative study of Bura Folksongs and their makers with African-American songs and their makers, in my readings of North American folk music literature I have noticed parallels between Bura folk music and African-American folk music. I will discuss some of these common traits from time to time, but I have not attempted to trace all the possible examples.

One of the things which these Bura folk musicians have in common is that they often accompany their singing with musical instruments. For instance, Usman Boaja plays *tsindza* (xylophone) as he sings his songs. Anthony Audu also plays xylophone music to accompany his singing. Musa Gwoadzang plays *yakandi* (banjo) music to accompany his singing. Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri's singing is accompanied by playing a variety of musical instruments including *tuhum humbutu* (pot), *mpila* or *kace kace* (beaded gourds), and *tsindza* (xylophone). Although Waziri knows how to play some of the musical instruments such as the pots, she does not play any of the musical instruments herself when she is singing. Rather, it is the other members of her singing group who play the musical instruments. Types of Bura musical instruments and modes of performing Bura folksongs are discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

All of the musicians being considered in this section sing original songs. They are all "songmakers."⁵² Usually, the composition and singing of original songs are accomplished simultaneously. The musicians use oral formulas and contemporary legends to create songs. Sometimes the singers do repeat some phrases and ideas from songs which they have in their repertoires. They also sing phrases from the Bura song tradition at large. It is, therefore, safe for me to refer to these Bura folksong singers as either musicians, songmakers, composers, or singers. Throughout this study, I will be using the terms "musicians," "songmakers," "folk musicians" and "folksingers" interchangeably when referring to these Bura folk musicians. This technique of composing and singing songs spontaneously accompanied with instrumental music is practiced by most Bura folk musicians. Even the drummers such as Bukar Bishi and the late Jirbi Mbilari used their talking drums to communicate ideas. The techniques of composing, singing and performing Bura folksongs will be discussed and examined in detail in Chapter Five.

Another thing which Bura folk musicians have in common is that none of them acquired his or her music skill through formal education. Rather, like African-American blues singers such as Sam Chatmon and Archie Edwards, each one of them said it was a talent.⁵³ The folk musicians use the idea of talent to explain their natural ability to play music.⁵⁴ Beyond talent, each of the four Bura musicians said he or she inherited the skill of singing through a parent or a family member, through practice and by observing and imitating skilled and established Bura musicians when they were performing music at musical events. None of my informants said that he or she feels threatened by the success

and popularity of other Bura musicians. They like the financial and material benefits which they get from performing music, but they perform music partly because of their love of performing and partly because they consider it to be their social role in Bura society. Each of the four singers described to me how he or she acquired his or her musical skill, and this will be discussed in the section on biographies of the four Bura musicians whom I interviewed.

Another characteristic shared by the musicians is that they travel widely both within and outside Bura society, responding to invitations to perform their music on various occasions including weddings, funerals and festivals. These wide travels bring the musicians together with other Bura folk musicians as well as non-Bura musicians in Nigeria such as Kanuri, Hausa, Fulani, Marghi and Kilba musicians. As well, they meet with people of various social status such as kings, military officers, politicians and religious leaders from whom they may learn various ideas. The Bura folk musicians learn new ideas through these contacts and they incorporate the new ideas into their music. Jeff Todd Titon's description of folk musicians' performances is appropriate for describing Bura folk musicians' and their folk music performances.

Folk musicians do not perform naively and unreflectively; most can and do discuss and evaluate aspects of performance and repertoire among themselves, seldom relying on a professional class of music critics or body of written music criticism.⁵⁵

Another thing which these Bura musicians have in common is that performing music is not their only avocation or profession. They are also involved in other means of

livelihood and activities, especially farming. Each of the musicians said he or she prefers performing music to farming. They all combine performing music with farming because they cannot adequately subsist on the money they earn from performing music.

Each of the Bura musicians is bilingual. For instance, Usman Boaja speaks Bura and Hausa as does Musa Gwoadzang. Anthony Audu speaks Bura, Hausa and a little bit of English. Because they are bilingual, they sometimes incorporate some words and phrases from their second language into their folksongs. Sometimes they use non-Bura words and phrases consciously so as to communicate ideas through songs to members of their audience who do not understand the Bura language. The Bura folk musicians I interviewed are articulate, intelligent, educated in Bura tradition, imaginative and artistically creative and innovative. In addition, they are social, charismatic, philosophical, and endowed with a sense of humour. More importantly, the Bura folksingers are observant and sensitive to situations and events around them and are quick to react or respond by composing and singing songs about those situations and events.

In contrast to Ashante musicians, many Bura musicians are neither considered to be closer to the gods nor treated with respect and dignity.⁵⁶ However, like the griot in Wolof society in Senegal, Bura musicians are allowed to behave in ways not permissible for others in the society.⁵⁷ For example, Bura musicians can abuse and ridicule anybody without legal actions taken against them. But their freedom of expression is not without limits. For instance, like Nigerian journalists, Bura Nigerian musicians, including Bura musicians may be arrested and jailed if they criticize government policies.⁵⁸

Bura singers not attached to the royal court do not have much in the way of privileges and respect. But Bura court singers and chroniclers enjoy a considerable amount of privilege and respect. As in Rwanda, the court musicians and their families are not only given some income by the royalty but are exempted from performing communal labour.⁵⁹

Social Role of Musicians in Bura Society

The social role of Bura musicians cannot be over emphasized. As singers, they play specific roles. In addition to providing entertainment and an atmosphere conducive for socializing, Bura musicians serve as the voice of conscience and advocates for the oppressed in the society.

As among the Basongye, the attitude toward musicians in Bura society is ambivalent.⁶⁰ On the one hand, many Bura musicians are considered to be the “butt of jokes” in society; they are considered lazy, heavy drinkers, physical weaklings, adulterers and “poor marriage risks.”⁶¹ On the other hand, without musicians a Bura community is incomplete; people want to sing and dance. They want to pay musicians to sing about their desires and complaints. A number of important community social events cannot be carried out without musicians. Although some of the musicians do not have enviable lifestyles, many of them are men living comfortably and married to women from respectable families. A pattern of ambivalent attitudes toward musicians among the Bura, the Tiv, the Wolof and the Basongye seem to confirm its geographic provenance in Africa.⁶²

Today the urban centres offer Bura musicians greater opportunities for economic independence than the traditional villages do, and the chances of social respectability are

increased because in the cities fewer people know the musicians personally or relate to them outside the arena of performance.⁶³ In the traditional rural setting the characters of the musicians are pre-judged.

The types of songs which Bura folk musicians compose and sing will be outlined and described in Chapter Two. The occasions on which they perform their music will be described and examined in Chapter Three while the themes of their songs will be outlined and analyzed in Chapter Four. The techniques of composing and performing their songs will be described and examined in Chapter Five. The functions of Bura song are discussed in Chapter Six. In the following discussions, I outline the biography of each of the four Bura folk musicians.

BIOGRAPHIES OF FOUR BURA FOLK MUSICIANS

Folklore materials are human products.⁶⁴ Therefore, knowledge of informants is essential. Today more attention is being given to the human sources of folklore. We want to know who they are, what they do, and how and why they become tradition bearers. This section is devoted to a discussion of the biographies of four representative Bura musicians whom I interviewed during my fieldwork in Bura communities from December 1994 to April 1995. The informants were Usman Boaja, Anthony Audu, Musa Gwoadzang and Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri. With the exception of Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri all my informants are Muslims. But this is just a coincidence; it does not mean that three out of every four Bura singers are Muslims. There are many Bura Christians and

other non-Muslims who are recognized as singers. As a matter of fact, the lifestyles of my Muslim informants indicate that they are liberal Muslims. They perform music at Muslim, Christian and secular social events, as long as they are to receive generous rewards from their audiences. Further, many of the topics they sing about are not religious. In the following section, I have quoted excerpts from my informants' remarks in the interviews. Full texts of the interviews are documented in Appendix II.

Usman Boaja

Based on my observations of Bura popular opinion and Usman Boaja's frequent invitations to represent Bura folk musicians at local, state, national and international folk music events, I can assert that he is one of the most popular Bura folk musicians today. He performed Bura folk music in Berlin, Germany in 1987, at an international music festival. His music is broadcast on BBC London Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria. As well, his music is often played on Borno State Radio and Television broadcasting stations. Furthermore, he has responded to invitations to perform his music at wedding ceremonies, funeral ceremonies, and festivals in Bura society for the past forty-two years. He is one of the most well-known and highly patronized contemporary Bura folk musicians. In my interview with him on January 25 1995 at Kidang, he told me that he is fifty-eight years old. He has four wives and twenty-four children. He is a Muslim, and this explains why he has four wives. He lives in his hometown, Gusi, with his large family. However, because his folk music is highly favoured and patronized, he frequently travels to various towns and villages within and outside Bura society, responding to invitations to perform music

on various occasions including weddings, funerals, festivals and at national and international folk music festivals. He told me that he has performed music in Bura communities such as Marama, Kidang and Biu as well as in non-Bura towns such as Maiduguri, Jemeta, Jos, Kano, Kaduna, Ilorin and Lagos.⁶⁵

From what I observed and from what many Bura folksong fans told me, at any occasion to which Boaja is invited to perform music, he will draw a larger audience than any other Bura folk musician. This was especially the case from the late 1960s to the late 1980s when his musical performances were at their best. In the 1990s his musical reputation has been facing challenges from younger, more contemporary Bura folk musicians such as Anthony Audu. Usman Boaja accompanies his singing with the xylophone.

Because he wants xylophone music to remain his family's tradition, he has been encouraging his male children to learn how to play it. He does this by allowing them to practice on his xylophone while they sing. When he is invited to perform music at a social occasion such as a wedding, his male children who are interested in learning how to perform xylophone music go with him and observe how he performs. If he has already accepted an invitation to perform music somewhere else, either at a wedding or a funeral and another invitation comes later, he will send his son Ibrahim or any of his other grown-up sons who can perform music on social occasions to go and perform the music on his behalf. During the time of my interview with him, one of his sons, Musa, was in Lagos in the southern part of Nigeria performing xylophone on behalf of his father because his

father had already accepted many invitations to perform music on wedding occasions in Bura communities.

Before Boaja became a performing musician he worked as a tailor from age 12-14. At the same time, he was involved in weaving traditional clothing materials such as *gabaka* and *bull*. He became a blacksmith when he was thirteen years old.

Usman Boaja revealed to me that he did not undergo formal music training to become a musician. Rather, he inherited the art of performing music from his family.

... I used to be a blacksmith when I was thirteen years old, up to the time when I was fifteen. I used to make tools like hoes, axes and knives. But the other blacksmiths prevented me from continuing with the blacksmithing. They alleged that blacksmithing is not my family tradition. This made me to feel very angry, and I went and told my father about it. My father told me that I should not worry because, after all, blacksmithing is not our traditional family occupation. Our traditional family occupation is performing xylophone music. So I asked my father to buy me a xylophone because I was offended by the other blacksmiths. My father bought the xylophone for me, and I started playing the xylophone music. Immediately my music started to become good even though I did not undergo training. Boys and girls started to dance to my music. From the time I started performing music to public audiences to date is forty-two years.⁶⁶ [Appendix II]

Usman Boaja further said he had never been an apprentice-musician. He said he inherited his music skill from his family.

I neither received training nor became an apprentice of another *tsindza* musician before I started to perform my *tsindza* music. I inherited it from my family. It is our family tradition.⁶⁷ [Appendix II]

(See Appendix III, Figure 1a-f, Usman Boaja).

Musa Gwoadzang

Musa Gwoadzang is one of the fine Bura folk musicians. He lives in his home town, Gwoadzang. He said he is thirty-two years old, but obviously he is older. He is probably about forty years old. However, he did not intentionally lie to me about his age, he simply does not know when he was born. He is not the only Bura folk musician who does not know his age. There are people who do not have their birth records because they were not born in hospitals but in their homes.

Musa Gwoadzang is married. Like most Bura Muslims, he is polygamous. He has three wives and many children. Although he lives in Gwoadzang village with his family, he travels out to other Bura communities in responding to invitations to perform music on occasions like weddings and festivals. Towns and villages where he has performed music include Biu, Mirnga, Lakoja, Kubo, Kwaya Bura and Garkida. He accompanies his singing by playing *yakandi* (banjo) instrument. I asked Musa Gwoadzang how he became a musician.

At that time, we used to go and observe and listen to musicians performing the banjo music. There were times when the musicians would praise the ladies they love or their friends through songs. When the musicians take a break so that they could rest, I will take the musician's banjo and start playing music. In this way, people realized that I could become a musician. So, at music events sometimes when the musicians are on break, members of the audience would ask me to take the musician's banjo and perform music for the audience until the musicians come back from break. In this manner, I performed music for two years. During those two years, some people became interested in my music. So, after those two years, some people started to invite me to their houses to perform music for them. In the third year, I started going outside to perform music publicly to a large audience. The year in which I started my public musical performances, I

performed music at eight different wedding ceremonies. I was invited to perform music on those wedding occasions. From there, my music career continued to progress.⁶⁸ [Appendix II]

How Gwoadzung learned his musical skill is quite similar to that of the American blues singer Clyde Maxwell. Maxwell started learning how to perform music by watching, listening and imitating guitar players until he could play and "sounded pretty good."⁶⁹ (See Appendix III, Figure 2a-b of Musa Gwoadzung.)

Anthony Audu

Anthony Audu is the youngest of the Bura folk musicians I interviewed. He is thirty-five years old. Although he professes to be a Muslim he is married to only one wife. He has six children. He lives in his home town, Labu, with his family, but he frequently travels within and outside Bura land to perform music on occasions like weddings, traditional music festivals, funerals and other social events. He said he has performed music in many towns and villages both within and outside Bura communities including Marama, Whita Mbaya, Kwajaffa, Mubi, Maiduguri, Bauchi, Kano, Zaria and Kaduna.

As is the case with Usman Boaja, Anthony accompanies his singing with the xylophone. His music is in high demand especially among Bura youths. In my interview with him on January 22, 1995, he revealed he wants to be rated the best Bura folk musician by Bura folk music fans. This is an aesthetic and an economic goal as well. He said each time he performs music with another Bura folk musician, he tries to make sure that his music is the best and that his musical performance attracts the largest audience. A

large audience means the musician is more likely to get more monetary and material gifts or rewards during his music performance. In other words, he feels that he is competing with other Bura folk musicians. He considers his music more of a career than a hobby or artistic interest. However, he still respects Usman Boaja and acknowledges the fact that Usman Boaja is his senior in the art of musical performance in Bura society.

From the time Anthony Audu first performed music on a social occasion (a wedding ceremony) up to the time of my interview with him, he had been performing music for twenty years. He dropped out of secondary school at the request of his father so that he could take over the music career of his father. His father wanted to make the xylophone performance a family tradition. Anthony Audu he said he did not acquire formal music training. He learned how to perform *tsindza* music through self determination and practice.

I started to learn how to be a musician when I was still a child. Shortly after my mother weaned me - when I had started to speak. I used to stay at home while my mother went to the farm to work. She will keep food for me. Each time she will keep food and drinking water for me. Throughout the day, until the sun sets, I would be at home playing music while my parents would be in the farm working. If my parents return from the farm and I am not practicing my music, my mother will not be happy with me. She may even beat me. That was how I learned my music.⁷⁰

Anthony also revealed to me that he inherited his art of composing and performing music from his father.

Actually, my father's profession was performing music. He used to perform xylophone music. When I started performing music on social occasions such as at weddings I was at the same time schooling - trying to acquire Western education. But my father told me to stop schooling and take over

his music career, because it is our family tradition.⁷¹

(See Appendix III, Figure 3a-d , Anthony Audu.)

Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri

Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri is one of the prominent Bura female folksingers. She is considered to be the best female Bura folksong performer especially by Bura Christians. She is married and has three children. She does not know her date of birth, but she estimated that she is about fifty years old. She lives in Marama town with her husband. But because her music is in high demand, she frequently travels to towns and villages within and outside Bura communities responding to invitations to perform music on occasions such as weddings, funerals, and Christian activities. Most of the songs she composes and sings are religious songs (Christian songs). She also sings love songs, praise songs, political songs and elegiac songs but she always incorporates Biblical ideas into them. She does not consider her singing to be a profession or an occupation. Rather, she considers it as a gift from God. She considers herself to be a preacher of the Word of God who preaches to her listeners through songs. While the other Bura singers use singing as a means of earning a living, the money which Waziri gets when singing goes into the account of the Christian Women's Fellowship with whom she performs the songs. What she recognizes to be her profession is farming. Any day that she does not travel out to perform songs on an occasion, she goes to work on her farm. She also receives financial and material support from her children, other members of her family, and from her friends. She is loved and respected by most people who know her and by people who have listened

to her singing. (See Appendix III, Figure 4a-d, Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri.)

DEFINITIONS OF FOLKSONGS IN FOLKLORE

General Definitions

Generally speaking, folklorists use the term "folksongs" to denote songs that are traditional. A song becomes traditional when it is transmitted in versions among individuals or groups of people with shared interests. Because the songs are largely orally transmitted, they undergo certain changes either in their form, context or content. Folksongs are realized through performances in specific contexts, with more emphasis on face-to-face communication and social interactions between the performer and the audience.

Folksongs can be found among literate and non-literate groups, and virtually among any cultural or ethnic groups whether in rural or in urban areas. In a largely non-literate society, folksongs are composed and transmitted orally through the use of memorized oral formulas. But in a highly literate society, folksongs may also be composed and transmitted through written notation among people who share sociocultural values, interests and goals. An example would be Christian hymnals. Certain elements of the songs of particular cultural or ethnic groups are often borrowed by other groups as a result of culture contact and acculturation.

However, folklore scholars vary in their definitions of the term "folksongs" or what is referred to in the West as "folk music." In his essay "Ballads and Folksongs," Barre

Toelken provides a contemporary perspective on "folksongs." Toelken debunks the early folksong scholars' notions that folksongs must be "ancient," "rural," "backward," or "quaint" in order to be called folksongs.⁷² He maintains:

A folksong begins its life like any other song: as a musical and poetic expression of some person's feelings or ideas. A song becomes a folksong when it begins to be passed along and rephrased or used by others for whom it also functions as a way of articulating shared attitude or feeling.⁷³

In his essay "Music: Folk and Traditional," Jeff Todd Titon opines that:

The meaning of a folksong arises from its context, from what it communicates ... most folk music is learned in person by imitation and example rather than through formal instruction and written notation. The result of this learning process is that folksong exists in performance ... that is, in several versions and variants rather than in a relatively more fixed written text such as a Beethoven string quartet ... folk music reflects the informally shared experience of a folk group closely linked by occupation, neighbourhood, social class, ethnic heritage, religious affiliation, dialect, race, age, political outlook, sex and so on. Folksongs are shared among folk groups as events in the home or community gathering places in which most people take an active role, interacting as listeners, players, dancers, and singers Like all folk arts, folk music possesses affect; that is, it has the power to reach people's feelings and to move them.⁷⁴

Titon further points out that today many regional and ethnic folksongs are transmitted both orally and by the media resulting in the "cross-fertilization" of folksongs of various regional, ethnic or social groups into what he called "hybrid styles and genres."⁷⁵

In his description of African folk music, James T. Koetting describes the contextual framework of African music:

Much of African music is intimately tied to a specified context, or function ... it does not exist as a pure art form in itself, but must be seen as inextricably related to essentially non-musical activities such as religious rites, rowing, hoeing, funerals, royal occasions and so forth.⁷⁶

Also speaking of the acculturation in African music, Koetting concludes that:

Through the centuries in Africa ... before and after foreign contact ... it can be assumed that African music was changing. When, African peoples met in wars, trading, and migrations they exchanged more than blows, commodities and musical instruments as well. And later when white and black cultures clashed and mingled in Africa and the New World, certain musically mixed forms were created.⁷⁷

As with folk music in other parts of the world, it is unlikely that the folk music of any African ethnic or tribal group today has not been influenced by external ideas and music cultures.

Jan Harold Brunvand also affirms the idea that folksongs are subject to variability when he asserts that:

Only the production of different variants via communal recreation as a song remains for a time in the possession of a definite group can justify the label "folksong."⁷⁸

Brunvand considers oral transmission and variation to be factors in determining folksongs:

Folksongs are unlimited in form and subject matter, ranging from very simple to relatively complex. But their chief distinction remains the manner by which they circulate and the resulting effect on their form: folksongs, unlike any other kind are passed on mostly in oral tradition and they develop traditional variants.⁷⁹

The various scholarly definitions outlined in this section provided ideas and insights which I find relevant for the definition of Bura folksongs. I should therefore point out that my concept of Bura folksongs is partly inspired by many of these scholarly

definitions and partly by my esoteric perspective.

MY CONCEPTUALIZATION OF BURA FOLKSONGS

The question now is, how do I define Bura folksongs? Bura traditional songs, for the purposes of this study, will be considered songs composed and performed by Bura men or women, who have in mind Bura individuals or groups as their primary audience. Bura songs are realized mainly through oral performance in specific contexts. Bura songs can include active audience participation and accompanying music produced by musical instruments. Such folksongs are composed and transmitted orally through the use of internalized oral formulas. Performance practice and repertoire are learned by imitation and example rather than through formal instruction and written notation. Bura songs create affect, that is, they have the power to reach people's feelings and to move them. This is achieved through folksingers' uses of relevant themes and techniques in specific performance contexts. Generally, the themes and functions of Bura folksongs arise from their contexts. The songs reveal and describe the social and cultural values, experiences, sensibilities, beliefs, aspirations and worldviews of the Bura people. Because the songs are transmitted orally, and sometimes through radio, television, video cassettes and tape recordings, they tend to exist in versions with variations. Although Bura folksongs are composed and performed mostly by rural dwellers, the songs are neither "quaint," "backward," "static," nor completely isolated from external pressures and influences. They may show these outside influences in textual themes, performance styles or musical

instruments.

METHODS OF TRANSCRIPTION

One of the first things I did was to decide the level of accuracy at which I would transcribe the tape-recorded interviews and songs.⁸⁰ This decision was largely determined by the purpose the data would serve in my dissertation. In the transcription of the interviews, I stayed away from any representation of dialects. For instance I did not write *na* (mine) when I knew that my informant would probably spell it *arna*. Also I did not transcribe the interviewees' "uhms" :ahs" and their hesitations, false starts and hesitations because I found it practically impossible to transcribe and translate them consistently. Their omission also makes the transcribed data more intelligible. But I included as many as possible of the "ahs," "ayes" and "yas" I heard in the songs because they are compositional elements serving as either vocables or expression of feelings. I noted stage directions by enclosing in brackets [] materials not actually on the tapes. I also used brackets to indicate that either the interviewer or the interviewee had laughed. Where a word or phrase was not clear in the interviews, I left a blank space. Punctuation marks such as a period (.), a comma (,), a question mark (?) or an exclamation mark (!) are conventions of print. Therefore, in making the transcriptions, I adopted them to represent the conventions of spoken language such as the use of pauses, questions and the alterations of pitch and loudness. Ultimately the tune for the songs should be transcribed too, but because I do not have the special skill and training to do that, I did not transcribe

the tunes. Thus, other than the aforementioned omissions, I tried as much as possible to follow the basic rule of transcribing all information on the tapes.⁸¹

I used a transcribing machine, Sony BM-25A at the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive to transcribe the tape-recorded interviews and songs. The transcription exercise was not without some difficulties. Some statements were not audible so I had to listen many times to understand them. Also, I had trouble with determining a pause that indicate a period (.) and one that suggests a comma (,).

TRANSLATION AND DOCUMENTATION

As mentioned earlier, the four Bura musicians do not speak English so our conversations were in the Bura language. As well, the Bura songs I recorded and/or obtained from Bura music fans, individuals, organizations and media houses were sung in Bura. To make data accessible to non-Bura speakers, I translated the transcribed interviews song texts in English. Both the transcribed Bura and English versions of the song texts are documented in Appendix I while the Bura and English versions of the transcribed interviews are documented in Appendix II.

Although I can speak both Bura and English fluently, the translation of Bura to English was not so easy. The problem was compounded, especially when I had to change the sentence structure to make a passage meaningful or clear in the English version.⁸² Among the things I found hard to translate accurately and meaningfully are certain Bura words, phrases, descriptive epithets, oral formulas, and words for objects that are only

known locally. A case in point is the following Bura oral formula used in Bura songs. *Ka giri ndzi akwa hira*. If directly translated in English, it will be “stay tired” or “remain tired.” But in actual sense, a Bura singer uses this formulaic phrase in two ways; first to express gratitude to the audience for rewarding him or her with money while performing; or, second, a singer may use the term in the context of mourning as words of comfort or consolation to the mourners. Another example is the formula *ku ndzi msira aka diffi*. Its direct English translation will be “it is nice to my heart,” but the singer intends to say “I am happy” or “I am rejoicing.” Thus I had to struggle hard to come up with English translations that will make sense to my readers who are non-Bura speakers, and at the same time retain the singers’ intended meaning. Bura oral formulas and descriptive epithets are discussed in Chapter Five.

METHODS OF ANALYSIS

Although I am an insider to the Bura music-culture, my main goal is to analyze Bura folksongs from the perspective of a folklorist. I think any study, especially in folklore, ought to be objective and broad based by building cautiously and empirically from relevant theories and concepts and methods. In this regard, in my analysis of Bura folksongs, not only did I rely on the information which I gathered during my fieldwork but I also framed the study in relation to theoretical frameworks and approaches used in other studies done on both African and non-African music by music scholars.

The subject of my study has been examined by various scholars, using such terms as oral poetry, traditional song and folk music. Like other forms of folk literature or oral literature, the three major areas that have so far governed the study of folksong are interest in culture, in society and in folk literature.⁸³ The serious study of what has come to be known as folk literature began in the nineteenth-century Europe, as part of a general concern which European intellectuals showed in the whole question of human culture. What are its origins and characteristics, and what steps are to be taken to teach the best examples of culture to those who show the least awareness of it? This general study of human culture is known as ethnology.

One group of scholars who concerned themselves with the study of the origins of human culture are the evolutionists. The concept of evolution is rooted in the belief that all biological species have over a long period been undergoing various changes until they have reached the form in which we find them today. The pioneer in this study was Charles Darwin (1809-1882), and in his arguments he had a great influence on students of culture such as his fellow Englishmen Edward Burnet Tylor (1832-1917) and James George Fraser (1854-1941).⁸⁴ Following Darwin, these students of culture believed in certain fundamental principles regarding the development of human culture. In their own works which include studies of African songs and narratives, these scholars tried to provide insight into human nature and the history of human culture.

Another group of scholars interested in the history of culture who had some influence on my study of Bura folksong are the diffusionists. This group was opposed to

the evolutionists in a fundamental way. The evolutionists believe that if two narratives or songs from two societies showed similar elements and a similar pattern, it is because human beings all over the world thought alike and the songs or tales reflect the same stage of cultural development in both societies. The diffusionists, on the other hand, believe that where such similarities occurred it could only be because at some time in the distant past the two societies had some contact with one another which caused the borrowing of certain cultural ideas by one of them from the other. Much of this work of the diffusionists was done under the encouragement of the German brothers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, who themselves collected and published many folktales from Germany.

The shift from a general interest in human culture to a specific interest in society started in the early part of the twentieth century. As more and more scholars visited and lived in various traditional societies throughout the world, they became increasingly aware of the danger in making general statements about human nature and human culture. They felt that these general statements often ignore certain specific details of life which make one society different from another. They therefore preferred to study every society in its own right and to record as much of the various aspect of the people's folklore as possible. Among the founding scholars of this approach were Bronislaw Malinowski, a Polish-Born British anthropologist; A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, also a British anthropologist, and the American Franz Boas. Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown studied communities in the Pacific — in the Trobriand Islands and Andaman Islands, respectively — and wrote extensively about these peoples. Boas studied and wrote on native American

communities, especially the Kwakiutl of the Northwest. Other scholars studied and discussed African societies. For instance E. E. Evans-Pritchard studied the Nuer communities in Sudan and Geoffrey Lienhardt the Dinka communities, also in Sudan. The American William Bascom studied the poetry of divination (*ifa*) among the Yoruba people in Nigeria, S. F. Nadel studied the Nupe of Nigeria, and Marcel Griaule studied the folklore of the Dogon of Burkina Faso. Unlike the evolutionists, these scholars, inspired by Malinowski, were hardly interested in the history of the histories of the societies they studied. They concentrated on the activities, including folklore, which each society did here and now and its usefulness to the society.

The anthropological interest in folklore including folksong, has helped in the emergence of studies that deal with the contents of the folksongs. However, certain features of form and technique have not been fully addressed. Nevertheless, this recognition of the artistic quality of oral texts has led to the use of such terms as “verbal art” and “oral art” in describing the literature.⁸⁵

Another approach that has influenced my work is interest in the context of the folk literature collected. It was Malinowski who first encouraged this approach by urging ethnographers to record everything related to the social context of the folklore texts that they collected during their fieldwork. Such recommendations have proved influential in getting folklore scholars to focus their attention on the practice of folk literature in the societies they study. The call was heeded by quite a few scholars of African folk literature, especially scholars of African folk music, who took it upon themselves to

provide fairly detailed information about the lives and careers of African folk musicians and about situations in which they perform their music. A major advance in the study of African folk music came when native African scholars of folk music began to undertake research into the folk music of their own people. These were scholars who spoke the African languages before they went out to study in foreign languages such as English and French, and who understood well their own culture and what constitutes artistic expressions in their own languages before being exposed to the same sense of aesthetics in other literatures. As Okpewho points out, one of the differences between African scholars and their European counterparts is that, whereas many Europeans (although certainly not all) treated African culture and everything that came from it as “primitive” or inferior to their own, the African scholars approached African culture with feelings of understanding and pride.⁸⁶ Because they understand the languages of the people they studied they tried to present and explain the technical features in the original texts.

Of all the theories, approaches and methods used in these studies, the schools which bring to bear on my work are those that focused on folksong, especially song classification, composition, theme, technique, performance and function. Some of the more recent scholars of folksongs have managed to shun the notion that all folksongs come from the distant past and that the original authors cannot be accounted for. Such scholars felt that if folksongs are to be looked at as works of art and as functional pieces then we must not deliberately conceal the identity of their makers.⁸⁷ As well, we must be prepared to examine the condition under which the song is made.

One of these influential studies was the work done by S. Adebayo Babalola of Nigeria who in his book, The Content and Form of Yoruba Ijala (1966) studied traditional songs of Yoruba hunters, from an insider's perspective. Babalola provides not only the English translations of the songs but also the original texts in the Yoruba Language. His careful stylistic analysis and interpretation of the symbolic meaning and significance of the Yoruba Ijala shows that such a study can best be done by an insider or at least a person who understands the Yoruba language and culture.

Another significant work done on African folk music is Daniel P. Kunene's Heroic Poetry of the Basotho (1971). Inspired by Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord's oral formulaic theory, especially as used by Albert B. Lord in his work, The Singer of Tales (1960), Kunene analyzed the nature of the heroic poetry of the Basotho looking at its techniques and the structure of the Sotho language.

One of the scholars who encouraged the emphasis on the traditional African artist and his or her artistic merits was Ruth Finnegan. In her survey study Oral Literature in Africa (1970), Finnegan considers the artist and the artistic qualities of his or her art. Such a study is useful in giving insight into the life and value that is involved in the production of verbal art, especially songs.⁸⁸

Other scholars whose studies on African music that have been very influential to my work include J.H. Kwabena Nketia (1963), Alan P. Merriam (1964, 1974), Olatunji Olatunde (1973), Tijani El-Miskin (1987), John Blacking (1967) and Isodire Okpewho (1992), Tanure Ojaide (1987), Gabriel G. Darah (1982), Charles Keil (1979), Okot

P'Bitek (1974), James T. Koetting (1984), C. V. Mataka, W. Seidnesticker and R. Vogels (1987/89) and Isa Audu (1990).

Thus, although my primary interest in this study is folkloristic, in order to accurately and adequately determine and analyze the context, content, technique and functions of Bura folksongs, I have also applied historical, sociological and anthropological and literary methods of analysis.

For convenience and easy analysis, I have classified the folksongs into various categories. The classification of the folksongs is determined mainly by the songs' themes, and partly by their contexts and functions. The classification of the Bura folksongs is based partly on Ruth Finnegan's model in *Oral Literature in Africa* (1970).⁸⁹ Finnegan classified African folksongs into the following categories: panegyric, elegiac, religious and work songs. Other classifications are lyrical, topical, and children's songs and rhymes. I also adopted part of Jack Mapanje and Landeg White's classification of African folksongs as documented in their book, *Oral Poetry from Africa* (1983).⁹⁰ Mapanje and White categorized African folksongs as follows: those that concern praise, pleasure, survival, relationships, gods and ancestors, protests, satire and epics. I have also borrowed ideas from John H. Kwabena Nketia's classification of folk music in Ghana. Nketia classified the musical types in three major functional groups: recreational music, occasional music, and incidental music.⁹¹ Charles Keil's ethnographic study of Tiv songs has provided a valuable guideline for this study, especially his focus on the perspectives of Tiv songmakers and classification of Tiv songs.⁹²

In conclusion, although the aforementioned methods and approaches are potentially valuable and relevant, I only adopted the ones which best suited Bura folksongs. I modified and merged some folksong categories. I also explored with my informants their own "emic" or native classifications of Bura folksongs, which may or may not be entirely different from the way songs are classified by scholars of folk music and musicians in other cultures.

So far I have provided a survey and a description of Bura culture in order to establish the background of the study. I have also outlined the objectives, relevance and the scope of this study. In addition, I have described the methods which I used to record, transcribe and document my data. My memorable fieldwork experiences have also been discussed. Furthermore there have been discussions on the varieties of definitions of folksong and biographies of four representative Bura folk musicians. In the chapter that follows, I outline and describe the various types of Bura folksongs.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The thesis is divided into chapters as follows: Chapter One: Introduction. This chapter includes an overview of the ethnography of the Bura ethnic group, discussion of the objective and scope of the study and a review of pertinent literature. The chapter also includes presentation of my methods of fieldwork, data documentation and analysis, and a discussion of the definitions of folksongs and ideas about Bura folksongs. Chapter Two: Types of Bura Folksongs. The various types of Bura folksongs are examined in this

chapter. Chapter Three: Occasions for Performing Bura Folksongs. The occasions and the reasons for performing Bura songs are discussed in this chapter, which seeks to determine when, where, by whom, and to whom Bura folksongs are performed. Chapter Four: Themes of Bura Folksongs. This chapter focuses mainly on the themes of the Bura folksongs under study. Chapter Five: Techniques of Bura Folksongs. This chapter contains an analysis of the form, structure and style of Bura folksong texts, and the singers' modes of performance. Chapter Six: Functions of Bura Folksongs. The sociocultural, educational, religious, aesthetic and economic functions of Bura folksongs are described in this chapter. Chapter Seven: Conclusion. This chapter contains a summary of the study, my concluding observations, and suggestions for further research.

Notes

1. Elaine Mukwunye, Cultural Activities in Nigerian Schools (Ibadan: Ibadan University Press, 1979) 1.
2. J.G. Davies, Biu Book (Zaria: Gaskiya, 1956).
3. J.H. Kwabena Nketia, African Music in Ghana (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1963), 4.
4. B. Rotimi Badejo and Committee on Bura Language Orthography, "Bura Orthography," in Orthographies of Nigerian Languages Manual V, R.N. Agheysi ed. (Lagos: Federal Ministry of Education, 1987), 2.
5. Badejo and Committee on Bura Language Orthography, "Bura Orthography," 2.
6. Davies, Biu Book, 280. Also see a booklet produced by Information Division, Ministry of Information, Home Affairs and Culture Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria titled Biu Emirate: Borno State (Maiduguri: Government Printer, n.d.)8, Balami, "Bura People and Their Language," 1.
7. Davies, Biu Book, 8. Also see Cohen, "The Evolution of Hierarchical Institutions: A Case Study from Biu, Nigeria," 160-161; Mshelia, "Past, Present and Future Development in Bura Language," 1; Paul Newman, "Linguistic Relationship, Language Shifting and Historical Reference, in Africa and Ubersee, 35.3/4 (1969/70), 217-223; Balami, "Bura People and Their Language," 1.
8. Cohen, "The Evolution of Hierarchical Institutions: A Case Study of Biu, Nigeria," 150. Also see Mshelia, 1.
9. Cohen, 165-66. Also see Information Division, Biu Emirate: Borno State, 8-9.
10. Information Division, Biu Emirate: Borno State, 5.
11. Information Division, Biu Emirate: Borno State, 5.
12. Cohen, 157-58.
13. Cohen, 157-60.
14. Information Division, 5 and Vogels, "Music of the Bura People," 2.

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65. Boaja, 25 January 1995.

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66. Usman Boaja, interview with the writer, 25 January 1995.
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CHAPTER TWO

TYPES OF BURA FOLKSONGS

There are various types of songs that are sung by Bura singers. In this chapter I address questions of classification that reflect my experience both as a member of the Bura ethnic group, born and bred in Bura society and as a scholar. I have observed and participated as a member of an audience in various Bura song performances. I know the various types of Bura folksongs which are composed and sung or performed in Bura society by Bura folk musicians. Furthermore, I have conducted field research on Bura folksongs in Bura communities. The field research I carried out on Bura folksongs has widened and deepened my knowledge of Bura folksong tradition, including the types of Bura song that are sung in Bura society.

Before going on to discuss types of Bura songs, some questions need to be asked. First, from whose perspectives or points of view are the songs classified? Second, what are the criteria used to determine types of Bura song? Third, to what extent is Bura typology of songs different from song classifications provided by scholars of African music in general? If I by-pass Bura songmakers' perspectives and use only my own perspective and the perspectives of other scholars to classify Bura folksongs, I will create a bias and an inadequate classification. I wanted to avoid repeating the mistakes made by some folksong scholars, particularly those who failed to let the voices of their informants be heard clearly, even if the informants' views about their music overlap with those of song scholars. Because I wanted the opinions of my informants to be heard, I collected

their perspectives on Bura folksong including their classifications of the types of song which they compose and sing. Their perspectives on the types of song they compose and sing and the criteria on which they base their song classifications are insightful, and were similar to my own perspective both as an insider and as a folksong scholar.

Folksong studies reveal that many scholars have applied their own perspectives in their classifications of folksongs. I consider this approach to be of limited use. A case in point is Ruth Finnegan's classification of African oral poetry in the book Oral Literature in Africa (1970).¹ Finnegan classified African oral poetry into panegyrics; elegiac poems; religious poems; lyric; topical poems; political poems; and children's poems and rhymes (Finnegan, 1970). She did not clearly state whether or not this classification of African oral poems was from her own point of view, from the point of view of the makers of the oral poems or both. Jack Mapanje and Landeg White in the book Oral Poetry from Africa (1983) identified poems of praise; pleasure; survival; relationships; gods and ancestors; protest; satire and epic.² There is no given indication that the perspectives of the African makers of the oral poems were considered in the classification process. John Blacking's study of Venda children's songs involved fieldwork and ethnographic study of Venda songs. But the work is limited to the music of young people in Venda society. Blacking classified music for young people in Venda society into children's songs, play-dances for boys and girls, "amusements" for boys and girls and the Venda national dance (*tshikona*).³ Olatunde Olatunji has categorized West African traditional poetry into praise poetry, incantations (religious poetry), proverbs, riddles and topical occasional songs.⁴ There is no

clear indication that the classification of these West African traditional poems were done jointly by the makers of the poems and the scholar. Tijani El-Miskin, in a paper titled "Generic Classification and Performance Principles in African Oral Literature: The Kanuri Tradition," grouped oral poems of the Kanuri (an ethnic group predominantly found in north-eastern Nigeria) into heroic and anti-heroic poetry, epic (such as the *Kaya war*), lyric, elegiac poetry and Kanuri epithalamia (Kanuri wedding songs).⁵ Again, El-Miskin did not point out whether this generic classification was done single-handedly by himself or by the Kanuri makers of the oral poetry and other Kanuri oral tradition bearers. What I have decided to do differently is to consider Bura songs and document perspectives of Bura musicians related to the types of songs they compose and sing. Further rationale for the typologies which I provide is to explore the possibility of similarities between Bura classification of songs and the typologies provided on earlier works on African traditional songs. Another reason for classifying Bura songs is to avoid the confusion that random analysis can create, and to give a clear picture of the dynamics of Bura categories.

I realize that the emic classification of Bura folksongs is quite different from the way folksongs or oral poetry in Africa have been classified in some of the earlier works on African music.⁶ For instance, while Yoruba religious song are limited to songs about Yoruba gods and goddesses, Bura religious songs include Christian songs and songs that express ideas about Bura indigenous religion.⁷ Also, Bura praise songs are not limited to songs of praise about God and other religious figures but include songs in which individuals are praised for their virtues, achievements and contributions to the

development of their communities. Furthermore, in Bura singing tradition, love songs and wedding songs are considered to be interrelated but they are not the same. Wedding songs are perceived as songs that are sung primarily about and for a newly-wed at their wedding ceremony. On the other hand, love songs can be songs that express either a romantic love admiration for individuals of the opposite sex or for platonic friends and kindreds. But Bura classification of work songs and political songs are quite similar to Finnegan's classification of African work songs.⁸ Therefore, the classification of Bura folksongs which I provide in this study is not based only on one perspective but on an amalgamation of workable perspectives. Firstly, I classified Bura songs from the perspectives of Bura songmakers. Secondly, I incorporated the classification of folksong types provided in previous folksong scholarship.⁹ This is because each of the models proved to be relevant and indispensable.

TYOLOGY OF BURA FOLKSONGS: A BURA PERSPECTIVE

The discussion that follows surveys and describes *jilyer ha* (types of song) agreed upon by Bura *mjir thla ha* (Bura songmakers) and myself as an insider. The idea that there are types of Bura folksongs that are composed and sung is part of the music-culture of the Bura people. For instance, a listener who understands the Bura language and is familiar with Bura music-culture can easily identify the types of Bura folksong which he or she listens to on audio tapes, watches on video recordings, or sees being performed live at social events. The songs cannot be classified into watertight categories as some may fall

under more than one heading. For instance, a *har siyasa* (political song) which focuses mainly on protest can be classified as *har ngurmya* (protest song). A *Har kildzi* (wedding song) which mainly praises the bride and the bridegroom may be identified as *har fuwala* (praise song).

In the vast field of Bura folksongs, my informants and I have identified and classified Bura folksongs into following types:

1. *har ngila* - songs of abuse
2. *har kyertukur* - satirical songs
3. *har ngurmya* - songs of protest
4. *har shimwi* - dirges
5. *har tuwa* - funeral songs
6. *har kildzi* - wedding songs
7. *har fuwala* - praise songs
8. *har hirdzi* - love songs
9. *har kithlir* - work songs
10. *har nua Hyel* - religious songs
11. *har siyasa* - political songs
12. *har gyelir mandankyer* - children's game songs

This classification of Bura folksongs is often used by those who perform and by those who consume or listen to Bura folksongs. It should be noted that the religious songs which I recorded for this study are Bura Christian songs as well as songs about Bura indigenous religion. I did not include Islamic songs. This is because, although there are Bura individuals who are Muslims and they sing Islamic songs at Muslim wedding ceremonies, festivals and Friday public prayer, they usually recite verses in the Qua'aran in Arabic in verbatim. Most of the reciters can not speak Arabic, hence they memorize the verses and recite them without understanding what the verses are about. As a result I do

not consider these Qua'aranic recitations to be Bura folksongs.

The following is a survey of Bura songmakers' glosses on the types of Bura folksongs. When I asked Usman Boaja, one of the most patronized Bura folksong makers and singers, to describe the types of songs which he sings he identified various types:

The types of song which I compose and sing during my musical performances include: praise songs, satirical songs, love songs, wedding songs, songs about politics and funeral songs.¹⁰

Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri, one of the prominent Bura women singers, said that she sings *har mua Hyel* (Christian songs). But she also pointed out that she sings *har hirdzi* (love songs), *har kildzi* (wedding songs) *har fwala* (praise songs), *har siyasa* (political songs) and *har tuwa* (funeral songs) depending on the occasions at which she is performing. With regard to the *hayeri ar mua* (religious songs) which she sings, she explained:

The religious songs I sing are the Word of God. I sing the Word of God. I get my ideas from sermons. Let's say you stand here and start to preach; I will open my ears, raise my hands and listen attentively to what you are saying. Then from this, I will compose songs. Usually the message of the sermon is taken from the Bible so when the preacher reads, (let's say up to three verses in the Bible once, twice, thrice, and appropriately incorporates them in his sermon), I will learn the verses and use them to compose songs.¹¹ [Appendix II]

About the other *jiliyer ha* (types of song) which she sings, Waziri remarked:

If it is on funeral occasions, you see, I sing songs with the aim of comforting or consoling the mourners. This is because during funerals, you will see people grieving. So I try to console them through elegiac songs. But if during the funeral occasions I am touched by the Holy Spirit as a result of the Word of God being preached on the occasions, I also preach

to the people through songs. On wedding occasions, how to start a new married life is one of the topics I sing about. I also praise the bride and the bridegroom through songs. Then I advise them on how to live happily and peacefully in their marriage. I tell the bride and bridegroom to love each other and to be patient with each other.¹² [Appendix II]

Concerning the songs about *siyasa* (politics) which she sings, Waziri said:

During the recent campaigns for political elections in Nigeria [in 1992] by the defunct National Republican Convention and the Social Democratic Party, we did not sing for politicians or any political party. But during the previous [1982] campaigns for political elections in Nigeria by members of the defunct National Party of Nigeria and Great Nigeria People's Party, we composed and sang political songs for some Christian members of Great Nigerian People's Party -- songs that would make their party win in the elections. And I was reported to our pastor (Pastor Wajiri). I was accused of being partisan instead of singing for the glory of God.¹³ [Appendix II]

When I asked Anthony Audu about the types of song which he sings he pointed out that he sings *har siyasa* (political songs), *har kildzi* (wedding songs), *har hirdzi* (love songs) and *har tuwa* (funeral songs).

I sing to them the songs that God gives me. For instance, if I am invited to sing at a wedding ceremony, I will give the bride and the bridegroom advice on how to live as good husband and wife. Since I am enjoying my own marriage, I will sing to them songs about how to live happily in their marriage. I sing praises of the bride and the bridegroom, and I sing to them about love. If it is on a funeral occasion that I am invited to perform my music, I like to go to the funeral occasion and sing elegiac songs so that when the bereaved listen to the ideas expressed in the songs they will be consoled and be comforted. Through the songs I also remind the mourners of the fact that we are all going to die in one way or the other, and at one time or the other.¹⁴ [Appendix II]

Regarding the *har siyasa* (political songs) which he sings, Anthony says:

Oh yes. For instance, I was hired by Chairman Dautiya when he was campaigning to be the Chairman of Hawul Local Government. He invited me -- himself and Abba Madu from Marama. At that time, my horse

recently died, and they gave me eight thousand Naira (N8000.00) [equivalent to one hundred and sixty dollars Canadian(\$160.00)] to enable me to buy another horse. Then I said to myself that the best way to show my appreciation to them for giving me the money was to sing for them about the politics in which they were involved -- the defunct Social Democratic Party. I did not mind if I was killed for composing songs for the Social Democratic Party. Because it was the Social Democratic Party members who gave me the money, I composed a song about members of the National Republican Convention on behalf of members of the Social Democratic Party. In the song, I criticized some members of the National Republican Convention pointing out that they are not good. Anyone who hears the song will vote for the Social Democratic Party instead of the National Republican Convention.¹⁵ [Appendix II]

Musa Gwoadzang also described the types of songs he composes and sings. His song types include *har kildzi* (wedding songs), *har tuwa* (funeral song), *har hirdzi* (love songs), *har siyasa* (political songs), *har kyertakur* (satirical songs) and *har ngila* (songs of abuse). Gwoadzang explained that the *hayeri ar tuwa* (funeral songs) he sings provide comfort to mourners.

If for instance, a person dies and I go to the funeral occasion to perform music, it is necessary for me to sing elegiac songs and songs that will comfort or console the mourners. For instance, I can tell the person whose father died or whose mother died not to mourn too much. There is a limit to every human experience. I will say that bereavement is not only one person's experience -- it can happen to anyone. As it happened to the bereaved today, it will happen to someone else tomorrow. With these thoughts about human experience instilled in the minds of the bereaved they will be consoled or comforted and socialize with the people who have come to the funeral occasion to express their sympathies and condolences to the bereaved.¹⁶ [Appendix II]

Describing his *har kildzi* (wedding songs), Musa Gwoadzang reveals his advisory role.

On wedding occasions I sing songs that relate to the wedding. I point out to the bridegroom and the bride that actually, married people sometimes do have marital problems. There is no marriage without some problems, but if

the married couple exercise patience with each other, the joy of marriage and the enjoyment will eventually come. I also tell the bride through song that a man marries a woman because he loves her, but if problems develop in the marriage, the husband may be abusive to his wife. If the wife does not exercise some patience, they will soon divorce. So I tell the bride how to relate properly with her husband so that they can live happily. As for the bridegroom, I tell him that it is not making the marriage vows but his ability to love his wife, treat his wife well and make the marriage succeed that are most important. So I give the bridegroom and the bride some tips about successful marriage: that they should be patient with each other so that their marriage can be successful as achieved by some other married couples. Whatever they do for each other, if it is not out of love, that thing may not be good. So it is necessary for the husband and his wife to love each other. In this regard, I sing to them about the subject of love. I advise them to love each other very much. Neither of them should abuse the other partner.

If you marry a woman and she abuses your mother [the husband's mother] this is very bad. So I say in my song that if a wife abuses her husband's mother there is no need for the man to keep that woman as his wife. Also, if a husband abuses his mother-in-law, there is no need for the woman to keep that man as her husband. So I point out these issues to them through song.¹⁷ [Appendix II]

About the *har siyasa* (political songs) which he sings, Musa Gwoadzang opined that he composes and sings songs for politicians who are his clients to persuade his listeners to vote for his clients during elections.

With regard to the political songs which I sing, during the time for campaigning for political elections, any politician who comes to me and tells me that he is seeking for election on the platform of a particular political party, I make sure that I compose and sing songs that will persuade the listeners to vote for him or for her. Yes, I have to portray the party to which the person belongs as the best political party.¹⁸ [Appendix II]

When I asked Musa Gwoadzang whether he sings *hayeri ar kyertukur* (satirical songs) and *hayeri ar ngila* (songs of abuse) he remarked that he composes and sings them if the

social context or the reasons for composing and singing the songs can be vindicated.

Yes, except if the themes or the subjects I am asked to sing about do not appeal to my own conscience and my own principles. If someone comes to me and tells me to compose and sing a satirical song or a song of abuse about a person who has done something which she or he does not like or the person's social behaviour is culturally unacceptable, I will first ask about the inappropriate thing which the person did. If I discover that the person's social behaviour is really inappropriate and he or she deserves to be exposed, satirized, criticized or indicted through song, I will then compose a satirical song or a song of abuse about the person's inappropriate social behaviour with the hope that the person will listen to the song and feel ashamed, embarrassed, remorseful, or guilty and stop behaving inappropriately. Also, if I feel the satirical song or the song of abuse I am asked to compose and sing is aimed primarily at reconciling feuding individuals or groups, I will compose and sing the song, with the hope that the man who is the offender will listen to the song and stop his offensive behaviour. Or the lady whose behaviour is bad will hear the song and change for the better. So when I am asked to compose and sing a song of abuse or a satirical song or a song of abuse about these kinds of behaviour, I will do it because we all want peaceful co-existence and good social relationships. But to abuse someone through song just for the sake of money, I tell people who ask me to do it that I do not do that.¹⁹
[Appendix II]

Bura Criteria for Classifying Songs

Among Bura people, especially Bura folk musicians, the general consensus is that, Bura song types are classified on the basis of two main elements. First, songs are classified according to their main themes. For instance, if a song consists mainly of praise or eulogies of God, individuals or groups in Bura society for their achievements or good deeds, that song is classified as praise song. If, a song mainly expresses ideas about love and relationships it is considered a love song. If in his or her song, a singer speaks mainly about God, the Word of God, sin, repentance, salvation, heaven, or hell, the song is

categorized as a religious song. A song that has as its main themes politics, political activities or politicians' political agendas or party manifestos is considered a political song. A song that expresses abuse, criticism or condemnation of an individual's or a group's behaviours or habits that are considered culturally unacceptable is classified as a song of abuse. A song that ridicules some person, concept, or institution is considered to be a satirical song.²⁰ A philosophical song is a song that expresses or explains the worldviews of the society visavis the experiential and existential world of humankind focusing on themes such as the inevitability of death and the transience of life.²¹ These themes will be examined in detail in Chapter Four.

The second determining factor for the classification of Bura folksong types as indicated by Bura folk musicians is the original or primary occasion on which a song was composed and sung. For instance, if a song was composed and sung on a wedding occasion, the song might fall into the category of wedding songs. Often a Bura wedding song composed and sung on a wedding occasion will express ideas related to marriage and love, and give advice to the bride and bridegroom on how the couple can make their marriage happy and successful.

The Bura classify *har kildzi* (wedding songs) as songs that mainly treat the themes of *hirdzi* (love), and *kildzi* (marriage), and are originally composed and performed *akwa viyiyeri ar kildzi* (at wedding occasions). Usman Boaja remarked:

When I am performing music on a wedding occasion, I try to know certain things about the bridegroom and the bride. I will then sing for them a love song. When I look at the newly married couple, I can tell whether or not

their marriage will be a happy one. I will therefore sing for them songs that will tell them how they can make their marriage be peaceful and happy.²² [Appendix II]

If a song was composed and sung *akwa viyir tuwa* (at a funeral occasion), the song becomes *har tuwa* (a funeral or elegiac song). Often, *har tuwa* (funeral songs) treat themes such as *mta* (death), *shimwikur* (bereavement), the separation of the dead from the living, and words of comfort and condolence to the bereaved.

Har tuwa (funeral songs) are primarily composed and performed at funeral occasions. As Waziri stated:

On funeral occasions, I will carefully observe how people come in crying and looking sad. Someone will be in deep thoughts. When I observe the grieving of these people: those buried in deep thoughts and those crying, I will then compose and sing songs that will reflect their feelings, and songs that will give them consolation.²³ [Appendix II]

At nights after supper, children often play games especially in Bura rural communities such as Pakilama, Humsu, Kidang, Gumshum and Dikira. The children perform various types of games including *nduwardzi* (hide-and-seek), *kathladzi* (girls' dance), *ndur suwa* (rope jumping), *gyelir kidlamiladzi* (game of counting out) and *ndikirdzi* (tug of war). Usually, the children's games are played to the accompaniment of songs. These songs which are composed and sung by children to accompany their plays can be described as children's game songs.²⁴

Songs are also sung to accompany work such as blacksmithing, planting crops, weeding, tilling farmland, harvesting crops and road clearing and are classified as work

songs. These songs mostly sung to accompany work, but are sometimes heard in other contexts.²⁵

Furthermore, Bura folk musicians share the view that there are certain Bura song types that are performed on more than one type of occasion. For instance, songs of love and songs of praise are sung on multiple occasions including weddings, funerals, work and during children's games. On wedding occasions the singers often praise the bride and the bridegroom and talk about the newly-weds' love for each other through songs. Waziri's description of the main topics of wedding songs which she performs on wedding occasions seems to vindicate the assertion that certain song types are interrelated:

On wedding occasions, how to start a new married life is one of the topics which I sing about. I praise the bridegroom and the bride through songs. Then I advise them on how to live happily and peacefully. I tell the bridegroom and the bride to love each other.²⁶ [Appendix II]

The above statement reveals that a wedding song may also be classified as a love or praise song.

While *akwa kithlir* (at work), *mjir kithlir* (workers) may sing songs to accompany their work. These songs are identified as *hayeri ar kithlir* (work songs), especially if the songs are mainly about the work they are doing so as to spur them and encourage them to work harder and longer.²⁷ There are certain work songs which treat themes related to love or protest. Also, *akwa viyir tuwa* (at a funeral occasion), *mda na mti ni* (the deceased) and *mjir kyir shimwikurni* (the bereaved family's) achievements and good deeds are often *fwaltidzi* (praised or eulogized) through *hayeri ar fwala* (praise songs or eulogies) and

hayeri ar hirdzi (love songs).

My survey and outline of Bura song types has clearly revealed how song typologies are conceptualized in Bura society. The songs are classified by Bura folk musicians and other Bura traditional bearers mainly on the bases of the songs' *taki* (themes), and the *viyayeri* (occasions) on which *hayeri* (songs) are performed. For instance, a *ha* (song) that is originally composed and performed at *akwa viyir kildzi* (at a wedding occasion) and whose main theme is *kildzi* (marriage) and *fwala sal bilin ka mwala bilin* (praise of the bride and bridegroom) is classified as *har kildzi* (wedding song). Similarly, a song that is composed and sung *akwa viyir tuwa* (at a funeral occasion), and treats themes such as *mta* (death), and eulogies of the deceased and messages of condolence to the bereaved is categorized as *har tuwa* (funeral song). *Har siyasa*, (a political song) is viewed as a song that is composed mainly for political purposes such as for campaigning politicians to educate the electorates about the politicians' political agendas, and party manifestos. These songs are usually sung during political rallies and campaigns, on other social occasions like weddings and festivals, at the installation of Bura traditional rulers, and at the swearing in ceremonies of newly-elected politicians. Songs that are sung by children to accompany their games are classified as children's game songs. The themes, techniques of composing and the performing of Bura songs will be discussed later. Next I will describe and examine the occasions for singing Bura songs.

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10. Boaja, 25 January 1995.
 11. Waziri, 22 January 1995.
 12. Waziri, 22 January 1995.
 13. Waziri, 22 January 1995.
 14. Audu, 22 January 1995.
 15. Audu, 22 January 1995.
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CHAPTER THREE

OCCASIONS FOR PERFORMING BURA FOLKSONGS

To describe the occasions for performing folksongs is to describe the situational, social, and cultural frameworks in which the songs are performed.¹ That is, where and when songs are sung. For this section, I use the term “occasions” rather than the term “contexts” because contexts of folk music encompass both the occasions and the functions or purposes for performing music. Chapter Six is devoted to the analysis of the functions of Bura folksongs. Before discussing the occasions for performing Bura songs, first, let me briefly describe the contexts in which I obtained the data I am using in the study.

Contexts

Whether the role which the folksong collector selects is that of a participant observer or that of a passive observer, his or her main purpose in playing such a role is to observe and report the context in which folk music exists or is performed. Two levels of collecting contexts can be considered: the natural folk music context and the artificial folk music context.² The natural context is the social context in which the folk music actually functions in Bura society. The artificial context is the context in which folk music is performed at the instigation of the collector.³ Such context is usually highly formal in that it is organized and scheduled by the mutual agreement of the collector and his or her informant. I collected my primary data in both natural and artificial contexts.

I quite agree with the idea that of the two contexts, natural and artificial, the ideal one for observing and recording songs is the natural context.⁴ If the collector is able to

observe a natural context, he or she will be able to record what people actually do rather than what they say they do. Also, observing a performance in natural context may reveal data which both the researcher and the informants take so much for granted that they would be unlikely to talk about them in interview sessions. Furthermore, the performance in natural context for the most part has a differing degree of selfconscious. Generally, the awareness of a collector's presence in a folk music context changes the situation to one in which the actions and performances of the participants become self-conscious to some degree. However, as I pointed out in Chapter One in the section in which I discussed my fieldwork method, I feel that although the ideal place for a folklorist to collect research data in its natural context, in a situation where it is not possible to observe and record a performance in its natural context, an artificial context should be used. From my own experience, I realized that if someone is bent on observing and recording songs performed only in natural contexts, either the person will end up with not having enough materials or the person will have to spend much longer time in the field waiting for those events to occur. During my five months of fieldwork in Bura society from December 1994 to April 1995, there was not a single funeral occasion at which I could observe and record Bura funeral songs performed in a natural context. I resorted to collecting Bura funeral songs by creating artificial contexts and by obtaining tape-recordings of funeral songs from individuals who recorded funeral songs sung especially by professional singers during the funeral ceremonies of their loved ones.

In this chapter therefore, I survey, describe and examine the occasions for performing Bura folksongs. The ideas I articulate concerning the occasions for the singing Bura songs are shared by Bura folk musicians and myself as a folksong scholar and as a Bura insider who has observed and participated in Bura folksong performances as an audience member for more than twenty years. Most folksongs that are analyzed in this study are created for and performed on particular occasions. In Bura society, as in other sub-Saharan African societies, songs are composed and sung for specific reasons and at specific occasions. This interrelationship between song types and their sociocultural and situational contexts has been noted by Alan P. Merriam. Merriam wrote that in Africa, a song

... tends to be tied to the socio-cultural events for which it is created, without the event the music is not produced ... songs are not thought of as independent and separable units with distinctive titles but rather as sound entities which are identified as a part of the interrelated set of activities that constitute an occasion. While Westerners tend to stress composer and song title, Africans stress the type of song and the situation of which it is a part.³

Before further discussing occasions, perhaps it is pertinent for me to point out that although Bura folksongs are sung frequently in Bura communities or villages, they are socially controlled. That is, not all occasions on which social or communal activities take place are associated with folksong performances. J.H. Kwabena Nketia makes this clear in his discussion of the context of Ghanaian folk music, and his view can be certainly applied to Bura folksongs:

Not all activities or all occasions on which particular activities take place are associated with music. A beer festival or a procession may, in one and

the same society, be traditionally linked with music, while drinking in the home or walking by individuals may not. A millet beer (*Pitoo*) bar may be a place for making music, while the shrine of ... priest of the land, may not. This is to say a distinction is maintained between musical events and non-musical events.⁶

As Evans observes with regards to African American folk blues performance, the performance contexts of Bura folksongs are varied.⁷ The contexts of Bura song performance refer to the settings, occasions and purposes of composing and singing songs. The social context, by which I mean the reasons for performing Bura songs, is discussed in detail in Chapter Six. Songs are performed in streets, market places, churches, farmlands, and bars for general socializing and for entertainment. Songs are also sung at rites of passage such as naming ceremonies, wedding ceremonies and funeral ceremonies.

Though there are many ways in which occasions for singing Bura songs can be classified for purposes of analysis such as according to the number and gender, social status or age of the participants, a very useful classification system for the song observer involves the degree of formality of any occasion.⁸ This is mainly because it is the level of formality of the occasion more than any other factor which determines the manner and the degree to which the collector is permitted to carry out his or her observations.

For reasons of convenience, the formality of the occasion for singing Bura folksongs may be broadly classified into two types: formal occasions and informal occasions. The formal occasion is one which is organized, solicited for, and sometimes scheduled. Included in this category would be activities performed on special occasions such as births, weddings, deaths, or at specific times of the year, as calendar customs such

as Christmas, Easter, New Year and Nigerian Independence Day celebrations. Informal occasions are those in which songs are sung incidentally or casually, and in which such performance is not required, is unscheduled, and is unexpected. An example is when a musician goes to a beer parlour and sings to entertain people at the bar and get free beer or when a person doing solitary work decides to sing to reduce boredom.

As mentioned earlier, not all occasions, whether formal or informal, have folk music performance. For instance, a child's funeral is complex and well planned but does not involve musical performance. This is because in Bura culture, as in many other cultures of the world, the death of a child is considered "untimely." Hence a child's burial rite and funeral are solemn and mournful occasions. The following section discusses in detail the formal and informal occasions at which Bura songs are sung.

Formal Occasions

There are formal occasions in which the combination of a non-musical event and the performance of Bura folk music are both considered necessary to the tradition of the event. It is the degree of social organization and the number of traditional regulations that determine the "formality" of an occasion. Among the formal occasions at which folk music is performed are *kildzayeri* (weddings), *tuwayeri* (funerals) and festivals. Characteristic of most formal occasions, these events require complex planning and involve musical performances. Such events are considered incomplete without the performance of Bura folk music. Usually, although not always, Bura singers only perform the type of songs traditionally associated with a given formal occasion. For instance, *hayeri ar tuwa* (funeral

songs) are sung mostly at *viyayeri ar tuwa* (funeral events). In the same vein, *hayayeri ar kildzi* (wedding songs) are performed largely at *viyayeri ar kildzi* (wedding ceremonies).

Some formal occasions which give rise to particular musical events may be the result of sociocultural obligations. For instance, spontaneous composition and singing of dirges by bereaved family members, particularly widows, during the burial rites and funerals of their deceased loved ones are inspired by grief. A Bura widow is expected to sing dirges when mourning the death of her husband. A widow who does not sing dirges during the pre-burial rites for her deceased husband will be made a subject of abuse and ridicule in her community. She may be accused of not mourning the death of her husband or of having affairs with other men. In some cases, therefore, rather than singing dirges inspired by feelings of grief caused by the death of their husbands, some widows sing dirges because it is a duty imposed on them by their communities. Song B2¹ below is an example of such dirges composed and sung by a grieving widow named Kayanga Haman during the burial rite of her husband.

Oh my husband,
 Oh my friend.
 Oh my friend,
 You rejected your family and went home?

I did not come with pregnancy my husband,
 I did not come with a child.
 Oh my friend,

¹ The letter 'B' refers to type of the song and the number '2' refers to the sequence in the Appendix of the song in this song type. See the introductory part of Appendix I for more details.

As you can see, our daughter Kulahyer
Has not come.

Oh my friend,
As you can see, your father has not come.
Oh my friend,
You rejected your family and went home.

Similarly, the performances of music on occasions such as weddings, festivals and religious rites are obligatory.⁹ In many formal events, the song performances take a large proportion of the total time allotted for the events. Often a wedding ceremony, an elderly person's burial rite, or a funeral ceremony which can be performed within a few hours is spread or extended over many hours, a day, or even days. Hence singing is often a significant and integral part of sacred and secular ceremonial events in Bura society.

Venues for performing folksongs in Bura society include village squares, streets, thresholds, community leader's front yards, individual's houses, front yards, and beer parlors or bars.

Informal Occasions

Informal occasions for performing Bura folksongs are those in which the combinations of the events or activities and the singing of Bura folksongs are not prescribed but are spontaneous. As in the case of formal occasions, not all informal events in Bura society would include the singing of Bura folksongs. Examples of informal occasions include singing which arises in the course of doing solitary activities such as grinding millet, pounding corn or rice, threshing, weeding, cutting firewood, drawing drinking water from the well, nursing a baby, cloth weaving and certain children's games.

Usually, on such occasions, the individual may sing Bura folksongs to reduce boredom, loneliness, personal tension or to entertain him or herself, or to establish rhythm to facilitate work. The informal occasions are therefore not organized or planned musical events.

Generally speaking, singing at informal occasions is seen as a matter of personal desire and not as a cultural obligation. Often, the songs are song either for self-amusement or to facilitate repetitive or strenuous activities such as *dika pinau* (pounding corn), *hadala mthli* (grinding sorghum) and *kukula faku* (tilling farmland).

The following section is a survey of my four main informants' descriptions of the occasions at which they perform music.

SPECIFIC OCCASIONS FOR PERFORMING BURA FOLKSONGS

While describing their musical careers, Gwoadzang, Waziri, Boaja and Audu described the occasions at which they perform music. They all revealed that they perform music on various occasions starting first with private occasions at the early stages of their music careers and progressing to public performances. They performed in private for their family members or in relatives' households in the role of apprentice or learner. When they became skillful musicians and could create their own "sounds" and repertoires, they started to perform music at public events or social occasions such as *akwa viyayiri ar kildzi* (at wedding ceremonies), *viyayeri ar vi thlim* (naming ceremonies), *akwa viyayeri ar hara sur adini* (religious ceremonies and celebrations) such as *Kirsimisu* (Christmas), *Eastir*

(Easter), Eid-El Kabir and Eid-El Fitir, *Mbal Sadaka* (Thanksgiving) and secular celebrations such as *Miva Bilin* (New Year) and the annual *Bathlir Dlu Kira Tsidi* (Independence Day anniversary: October 1).

Describing his career development and the occasions at which he performs music, Musa Gwoadzang pointed out that he performs music on various occasions including weddings, funerals, religious and secular festivals and other celebrations.

I started performing music bit by bit for two years. After those two years of minor musical performances, people became interested in my music. So, after the two years, some people started to invite me to their houses to perform music for them. In the third year, I started going outside to perform music publicly to a large audience. The year I started public musical performance, I performed at eight different wedding ceremonies ... since then I have performed music not only on wedding occasions but on occasions like funeral ceremonies and Muslim *Sallah* celebrations.¹⁰
[Appendix II]

When I asked Usman Boaja about the occasions on which he performs his music he revealed that he performs on various occasions including weddings, funerals and festivals.

I perform xylophone music on various occasions including weddings, funerals, religious celebrations such as *Sallah* and Christmas, and New Year celebrations.¹¹ [Appendix II]

When I asked Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri to tell me the occasions on which she performs her songs she remarked that she performs music mainly on Christian occasions including Church services, Christian conventions and crusades as well as Christian weddings and funerals.

I compose and sing on various occasions such as wedding ceremonies,

funeral ceremonies and in the church during church services.¹² [Appendix II]

Anthony also told me that he performs at various occasions including wedding ceremonies, funeral ceremonies and festivals.

The interviews reveal that music infuses virtually every activity of Bura life including work, rites of passage, festivals, religious activities and games.

Work

In Bura society, many individuals or groups sing Bura folksongs while *akwa hara kithlir* (working).¹³ I should reiterate that Bura people sing songs in other languages such as in Hausa, Fulani, and English while at work and on other occasions. However, because Bura language is central to this study, I am considering only songs which are sung in Bura language. Songs sung with macaronic usages will also be considered.

As Finnegan observes of African work songs in general, the sorts of work which Bura individuals or groups accompany with Bura folksongs usually consist of "routine tasks such as paddling, threshing or hauling ... which are not in themselves regarded as glorious or romantic."¹⁴ Manual workers, whether solitary or communal, sometimes sing songs to accompany their hard physical labour, as well as routine or monotonous activities.¹⁵ For instance, it is common to hear a Bura woman *ha akwa hara* (singing song) while doing solitary work like *hadla yeri* (grinding millet), *dika shinkafa* (pounding rice), *nthla udzum* (cutting firewood) in the bush, or *ndikira yimi akwa jiba* (drawing drinking water from the well). The themes or subjects of the Bura work songs, as well as the

contents of other types of Bura folksongs, are analyzed in Chapter Four.

In villages like Humsu, Pirkisu, Kidang, Bilatum, Mindi, Kwajaffa and Pela Mbirni, communal farming is a popular occasion for performing work songs. Farming undertaken by one individual is usually slow, wearisome and boring. To alleviate these problems, farmers who live in the same community or village form farming groups so as to make the work they do on their farms faster, less tedious, less wearisome and relatively exciting. Each farming group may contain three, five or even twenty people. However, in most cases, people group together in twos, threes or fours, as *mji pal tsuwha* (they work on each member's farm on a rotational basis). The farming group may also work as *mjir tsuwha gandu* (paid farmers) on the farms of individuals in the community and be paid with money or food.

The formation of farming groups is also done when a Bura married man wants to work on his parents-in-law's farm as *tsiwthur sala mwala* (partial fulfilment of his marital obligations). In many Bura communities, especially before the 1970s, *mjir yer mwala* (parents-in-law) expected their *sal nkwa* (son-in-law), especially new son-in-law, to organize *tsiwthur sal nkwa* (son-in-law's farming) to work on his parents-in-law's farms. Such group farming would not be considered part of the *gina kila* (bride price) but as a sociocultural obligation. Members of this kind of work groups often sing Bura folksongs while they work.

Annually, members of a particular Bura community or village may also organize *mbal tsuwthur kuthli*, an ad hoc community farm group, and work on the farm of their

community leaders such the *kuthli* (king), *lawan* (village head) or *bulama* (ward head) as a mark of their loyalty or support. This kind of farming group is no longer as popular as it used to be about 30 years ago. Usually, *stuwhur kuthli* (king's farming) event is accompanied with Bura folk music including *tsa ganga* (drumming); the playing of other Bura musical instruments such as *tsindza* (xylophone); *timbil thla* (cow horn); *shola* (flute); *hara ha* (singing); *bathla* (dancing); *mbu tsi* (clapping); *hara yarali* (ululating) as well as the main activity of the day, which may be either a *kukula* (tilling the ground in preparation for planting), *tsuwhumta kusar* (weeding) or *nthli mthi* (harvesting). Types of Bura musical instruments and types of Bura dance are discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Usually men do the working and singing while women play supportive roles like lining up behind the men and spurring them to work by *bu tsi* (clapping), *hara yerali* (ululating) at intervals, *hara ha* (singing) the choruses and *bathla* (dancing) to the rhythm of the music with staccato effects. In some cases, especially today, it is no longer considered inappropriate or "not lady-like" for Bura women to participate actively in men's communal work such as tilling, planting, weeding, harvesting or threshing on a community leader's farm. Perhaps this is an indication of the changing social roles of women in Bura society: women are increasingly being recognized as important and equal members of the society as their male counterparts.

The themes of Bura work songs as well as the themes of the other types of Bura folksongs will be discussed in Chapter Four. Also, the functions of Bura work songs will be discussed in Chapter Six.

Burial Rites and Funeral Ceremonies

Bura burial rituals and funeral ceremonies often involve song performances. This particularly applies to the burial rituals and funeral ceremonies of adult *mjir adua* (Christians), and *mjir nua habtu* (followers of indigenous Bura religion). During burial and funeral occasions, some of the bereaved individuals spontaneously compose and sing or chant dirges as they mourn for the deaths of their relatives.¹⁶ This is especially true of Bura women who are bereaved. Culturally, bereaved Bura women like Akan women in Ghana, are expected to show some competence in spontaneous composition and singing of dirges while they mourn for the deaths of their deceased parents, husbands and other relatives.¹⁷ Occasionally gossip and complaints are heard in Bura communities about certain bereaved women who could not compose and sing *har tuwayeri na msira* ("good" or "sweet" dirges) for their deceased husbands or parents. Culturally, bereaved Bura men are not expected to compose and sing dirges when they are mourning for the deaths of their wives or parents. Bura men are expected to suppress or control their emotions as an expression of their strength and masculinity. Only women should cry. Men should not cry even in times of bereavement. However, there are some Bura men who do not conform to these social and cultural expectations of the male gender in Bura society. They cry, weep, and spontaneously compose and sing dirges when they mourn for the deaths of their close relatives or loved ones.

I discovered that in most cases, the bereaved whose spontaneous composition and singing of dirges are inspired by the death situations find it difficult to reproduce their

dirges apart from the actual burial and funeral occasions. Some explained that they can not remember the words and phrases they uttered while they were crying and singing. Others said that they cannot perform the dirges without shedding tears. In this case I am speaking about my personal experiences in encountering dirges that were spontaneously composed and sung by bereaved Bura individuals during the burials of their relatives. Finnegan also experienced these kinds of difficulties in collecting dirges in Akan society in Ghana.¹⁸ I did not formally collect dirges from bereaved individuals because it would have suggested that I did not empathize with their state of bereavement. It would have been culturally and morally inappropriate for me to go about recording dirges from grieving individuals. Furthermore, unless the deceased died at an old age, singing the dirges outside the particular death situation is considered inappropriate. For the purpose of this study, I collected some dirges from listeners who had learned and memorized dirges when they were sung by others who were bereaved.

Well-known skilled Bura folk singers are also invited to adult burial and funeral occasions to perform funeral songs. Often, singers who are invited to perform funeral songs can still remember and reproduce the songs. They commit to memory the song which they originally composed and performed on particular funeral occasions and they sing the funeral songs at burial and funeral occasions of other deceased individuals with some variations to suit the changes in the occasion.

Bura funeral songs are rarely performed outside burial and funeral occasions. This suggests that death, burial rites and funeral ceremonies are culturally the appropriate and

obvious occasions for performing Bura funeral songs. The dirges are usually sung by female mourners as the deceased lies in state and when the corpse, dressed in *bullu*, is carried on *algau* (a stretcher) by four men in a procession to the graveyard for burial. During each of the two post burial funeral ceremonies, one which takes place two days after burial and the other twenty-one days after the burial, professional singers are invited to sing eulogies about the deceased and songs that would console the bereaved family. The singers may not necessary be professional mourners but they are known and recognized in Bura communities as musicians who can compose and sing songs for entertainment as well as eulogies. For example, Musa Gwoazdang described funerals as the only occasion at which he performs funeral songs.

If for instance, a person dies and I am invited to the funeral occasion to perform music, it is necessary for me to sing eulogies and songs that will console the mourners.¹⁹

Usman Boaja also said that he performs music at funeral occasions:

When I am going to perform xylophone music on funeral occasion, I try to know certain things about the deceased person and the bereaved family. I will then compose songs about the deceased, and songs that will help to console the bereaved.²⁰

Weddings

The wedding ceremony is another occasion for performing songs in Bura society. Usually, Bura folk musicians are invited to a wedding ceremony to perform various types of songs for the bride and the bridegroom, their families, friends, and invited guests. In Bura society, a wedding without musical performance is like "tea without sugar." That is,

it is incomplete and distasteful. Music is performed at almost every phase of the wedding ritual. The engagement ceremony which is the first major step to a wedding is marked with feasting and singing accompanied by instrumental music and dance. A wedding engagement usually takes place in the house of the bride's parents. The second phase of the wedding which may be described as the bachelor's eve is marked with music and dance. A case in point is a Bura Christian wedding. Female relations and friends of the groom's family assemble in the groom's parents' house to prepare meals which would be served on the wedding day. Members of the Christian Women's Fellowship assemble in the parents of the groom's house and entertain with music and dance while the women prepare the meals assisted by the family of the groom and the wedding guests who arrived before the wedding day. On the wedding day, shortly before the bride and the groom march into the church for the solemnization of the wedding, music is performed inside the church by members of the Christian Women's Fellowship who entertain the congregation seated inside the church with music. And as the groom and his three or four friends each marche into the church, the church choir ushers each of them in with music. The choir also sings when the bride and the bridesmaid each marche into the church. During the wedding solemnization conducted by the officiating pastor, the choir would sing shortly after the bride and the groom have made their wedding vows, after the new couple have exchanged wedding rings and after they have signed the church marriage register. The wedding reception which may be conducted either in front of the groom's parents' house or in a college assembly hall is a major music event. In most Bura wedding ceremonies, guests

are served meals as soon as they arrive for the wedding and go into the groom's parents' house to greet and commend them for their son's wedding. This means that by the time the wedding reception starts, most of the wedding guests might have already eaten rice and beef stew and drunk porridge (made with white rice, peanut butter milk, tamarin fruit and sugar) in the groom's parents' house. What is usually served at wedding receptions are non alcoholic drinks such as Fanta, Coke, Sprite, Pepsi, Maltex, and snacks such as biscuits, candies, chin-chin, and kola nuts. Thus, although the wedding reception includes eating, drinking, cutting of the wedding cake by the newly-weds, and the telling of marriage-related jokes and stories, the wedding reception is devoted mainly to musical performance. Members of the Christian Women's Fellowship entertain, educate and praise the new couple through songs accompanied with instrumental music and dance. Usually, the new couple, their friends and the wedding guests (which may include many community members who are just acquaintances) actively participate in the performance either by taking part in the dancing, singing or giving money to the couple as wedding gifts when the newlyweds are dancing in the midst of the guests. After the wedding reception there would be another musical performance involving drumming and the playing of the xylophone by professional musicians who are hired to perform at the wedding ceremony. The music performed at this point is non-religious even if the performers are either devout Muslims or Christians. The music is mainly meant to entertain the new couple, their friends and relatives, and the wedding guests. In most cases, the musicians who are invited to perform at the last phase of the wedding ceremony

are men who are known and acknowledged in Bura society as professional musicians. Among Bura musicians who are frequently invited to perform at the last stage of wedding ceremonies are Bukar Bishi, Avi Pwasi and three of my four informants, Usman Boaja, Anthony Audu and Musa Gwoadzang. My four informants' description of their performances at wedding ceremonies are discussed in the following section.

Gwoadzang clearly stated that wedding ceremonies are among the social events in which he performs music.²¹ Gwoadzang even mentioned some of the towns where he was invited to perform at wedding ceremonies such as Biu, Miringa, Lakoja, Kubo, Kawayaya Bura and Garkida.²²

Although he is a Muslim, Gwoadzang revealed he performs music at both Christian weddings and Muslim weddings.

You know, Christian weddings are usually accompanied with musical performances. In some Muslim weddings, musical performances are not allowed, but there are some Muslims whose weddings include musical performances. So, on these wedding occasions I do perform music, if I am invited.²³ [Appendix II]

Boaja explained how he performs music at wedding ceremonies.

When I am performing music on a wedding occasion I try to know certain things about the bridegroom and the bride. I will then sing for them a love song. When I look at the newly married couple, I can tell whether or not their marriage will be a happy one. I will therefore sing for them a song that will tell them ways in which they can make their marriage to be a peaceful or a happy marriage.²⁴ [Appendix II]

Festivals

Songs are also performed at festivals including Christmas and Easter. On

Christmas day, religious songs are performed by the choir and the Christian Women's Fellowship sing during the Christmas morning Church service. In the evening, Bura traditional music is performed in the front yard of the community leader as part of the activities marking the Christmas celebration. Like the traditional music performed in the last phase of a Bura wedding ceremony the evening music event marking the Christmas celebration is usually secular, and it is performed by Bura male professional musicians mainly for the purposes of entertainment and socialization.

During indigenous Bura traditional festivals like *Mbal Angira Mta* (The Reunion of Bura Living and Their Ancestors), *Mbal tsuwaha Laku* (Road Clearing Festival), *Mbal Sadaka* and *Janguli Sadaka* (Almsgiving and Thanksgiving Festivals) music is performed either by professional or semi-professional Bura folk musicians who are invited to perform during the festivals. Most Bura traditional festivals are considered to be partly secular and partly religious. Thus, aside from singing songs, there would also be prayers, and sacrifices of grains such as corn and the blood of animals such as a goat, to the spirits of Bura ancestors. The ritual sacrifices are performed in the morning of the day of the festival either in the community graveyard or sacred grove, by the community traditional priests in the company of Bura community elders. They accompany the ritual performance with religious songs. In the evening of the day of the traditional festivals, secular Bura traditional music is performed accompanied by Bura traditional dance. The performance takes place in the front yard of the community leader, and is open to every member of the community including women, children, Christians and Muslims. It should be noted that the

music performed during festival celebrations in the front yards of Bura community leaders, such as the emir of Biu, by Bura musicians who are not regularly employed to perform music for the emir is not considered to be court music by the Bura people. Rather, the musicians regard the front yard of the emir's place as a public venue suitable for public gatherings and celebrations. Unlike the musicians who are employed to praise the emir on a regular basis, the musicians who perform traditional music in front of the emir's palace during festival celebrations may neither pay homage to the emir nor praise him through songs during their performances. Usually, their main goal is to make money from the performances and to entertain their audiences with songs, instrumental music and dance.

Gwoadzang described festivals as being one of the social occasions at which he performs music:

For instance, during the Muslim *Sallah* festivals particularly the *Eid-El-Kabir*, Village Heads are invited to participate in the *Sallah* celebrations at Biu. Each of the Village Heads will tell the musicians in his area of jurisdiction to accompany him to Biu and perform at the *Sallah* occasion. On the first night of our arrival at Biu, we will perform music where our Village Head is staying. But in the following night, all the musicians will perform music in the front yard of the emir's palace.²⁵ [Appendix II]

Political Campaigns and Government Programs

During political campaigns, campaigning politicians often hire talented Bura singers to compose and sing songs that will help to spread their political agenda and party manifestos, and help the politicians to win the party elections. Gwoadzang told me that he composes and sings songs for any politician who asks him, irrespective of the political party to which the politician belongs:

With regard to the political songs, I compose and sing during the time for campaigning for political elections. Any politician who comes to me and tells me that he is campaigning for election on the platform of a particular political party I will make sure that I compose and sing songs that will persuade the listeners to vote for him or her. I have to portray the party to which the person belongs as the best party. This is because you know, if the person is not elected I will be held responsible. In politics I know that if another politician also comes to me and asks me to compose and sing a song that will ensure his victory in the elections, I will not refuse his request. Rather, as I did for the other politician, I will compose and sing a song that will persuade the listeners to vote for him or her. Because if I do not do the same thing for him or her, people will say that I am supporting one of the two political parties and rejecting the other party. So I try to support the two politicians. Let's say that there are two or three political parties, I will not choose one of the parties and say that I am supporting it. Even if my client is the leader of his or her party I will not support that party. I have to show that I am on the fence or neutral. If this party wins is good for me, if that party wins, is good for me as well.²⁶ [Appendix II]

When I asked Audu if he had been hired by politicians to compose and perform songs that will enhance their chances for victory during party elections he confirmed that he had composed and sang political songs for his clients.

Oh yes! For instance, I was hired by Chairman Dawutiya when he was campaigning to be the chairman of Hawul local government. ... I did not mind if I am killed for composing song for the Social Democratic Party because it was SDP members who gave me money. So I composed a song about members of the National Republican Convention on behalf of members of the Social Democratic Party. In the song I criticized some members of NRC pointing out that NRC members are not good In the song I said that NRC members have their heads downwards like bats. I used this proverb. Any one who listens to this song will hear what I said and will vote for SDP instead of NRC.²⁷ [Appendix II]

Usman Boaja performs political campaign songs as well, particularly at political conventions.

I also sing songs about politics. For instance during the time of the defunct

National Party of Nigeria and Great Nigeria People's Party, and during the time of the defunct Social Democratic Party and National Republican Convention, I composed and sang songs about the political parties and about politicians. During the time when Bura people were demanding their autonomy from the Biu authority, I sang a song in which I advocated for Bura people's autonomy from the Biu authority.²⁸ [Appendix II]

Often, songs composed for campaigning politicians are sung by the composers, the campaigning politicians, members of their campaign teams as well as by their party supporters during their political campaigns and rallies. In addition, singers compose and sing songs for politicians during wedding ceremonies, festivals and during installations of traditional rulers. Often the singers are rewarded generously with money or given material gifts by the politicians or their party supporters who listen to the songs.

Furthermore, when Borno State Government or the Federal Government of Nigeria introduces a new social program or policy in an effort to inform and educate the populace on new governmental policies and programs government officials sometimes hire or encourage folk musicians to disseminate new governmental policies and programs through songs. Governmental policies and programs which government officials encourage musicians to sing about include *bilata nggakur* (primary health Care), *mpa ar kanta kula hankalkur* (war against indiscipline), *thlipa illimi* (mass literacy campaign), and *nca nfwā* (tree planting campaign).

Also, during *sakar barkira mda wala* (traditional installation of a new traditional ruler) such as a new emir and a new village head, there will be musical performances where songs about the new ruler and his lineage will be composed and sung by the singers

invited to perform on the occasion.

Belonging to the category of court music is the music performed by musicians who are employed to perform music to the emir of Biu. The Emir has a music band comprised of drummers and bards who are employed to entertain the emir with music and to shower praises on the traditional ruler through songs. Almost on a daily basis, these court musicians equipped with their musical instruments including *gangayeri* (drums), and *algetayeri* (flutes) stand in the front yard of the Emir's palace and sing praises of the Emir and recount the Emir's family lineage or genealogy as they beat their drums and blow their flutes. Some of the bards or court musicians, especially *mjir tsa ganga aka kuthli* (the king's court musicians) follow the king everywhere he goes. For instance, when the king attends public functions like religious festivals or Nigeria's Independence Day celebration, the court praise singers will accompany him, chanting his praises as they walk behind him as he takes his seat among the special guests of honour. The most spectacular public occasion for singing songs for Bura traditional rulers is the type which could be compared with singing for rulers in Northern Liberia, Northern Nigeria and in Sierra Leone described by Ruth Finnegan:

Sometimes this takes a very simple form -- as on the bush paths ... when a petty chief ... is accompanied by praises as he enters villages and the local dwellers are thus instructed or reminded of his chiefly dignity. Or it may be a huge public occasion as in the Muslim Chiefdoms in Nigeria -- Hausa, Nupe, Yoruba -- when at the "Sallah" rituals (the Muslim festivals of Eid-El-Fitir and Eid-El-Kabir) the subordinate officials attend the king on horseback accompanied by their praise singers.²⁹

It is obvious then, that in Bura society, politics and song go together. Alan

Merriam observed similar tendencies in other African societies.

Music often plays a strong part of politics, both as the citizens sing of political events and as the ruling hierarchies employ musicians for their own purposes, at court, in legal disputes, to sing praise, and on many other occasions.³⁰

Children's Games

When Bura children and teenagers are playing games, they often accompany the games with singing songs or chanting rhymes. Like Acoli children from Uganda, Bura children often play games accompanied with songs during the day time when the adults have gone to work on their farm fields, and at nights under the moonlight.³¹ Children's game songs and rhymes will be described and examined in detail in Chapters four and five.

The foregoing survey and descriptions have revealed that there are various occasions on which Bura folksongs are sung or performed. The occasions include social events and activities such as work, funeral ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, political campaigns, installations of Bura traditional rulers, festivals, and during children's games. Some of the occasions are formal in the sense that the combinations of the social events or the activities and the performances of Bura folksongs are considered necessary to the successful completion of the events. Events such as weddings, festivals, funerals of deceased Christian adults, and deceased elderly Bura traditionalists are considered incomplete without the performances of Bura folksongs. Songs are also sung on informal occasions. Informal occasions for performing Bura folksongs are those on which the combinations of the events or activities and the performances of Bura folksongs are not

considered as necessary but are spontaneous. Examples would include singing, which arises in the course of doing solitary work such as grinding millet, pounding corn or rice, washing pots and dishes, planting seeds, weeding, harvesting, threshing, cutting firewood, drawing drinking water from the well, weaving cloth, nursing a baby, as well as certain children's games. The informal occasions are therefore not organized or planned musical events. In the chapter that follows, the themes of Bura folksongs are outlined and analyzed.

Notes

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1. Alan Dundes, "Texture, Text, and Context," Southern Folklore Quarterly, 28 (1964): 255-256.
 2. Goldstein, A Guide for Field Workers in Folklore, 80.
 3. Goldstein, 82.
 4. Goldstein, 82.
 5. Alan P. Merriam, African Music in Perspective (New York & London: Garland, 1982), 140.
 6. Nketia, African Music in Ghana (Illinois: Northwestern University, 1963), 4-5.
 7. David Evans, Big Road Blues: Tradition and Creativity in the Folk Blues (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982), 40.
 8. Goldstein, A Guide for Field Workers in Folklore, 81.
 9. Nketia, African Music in Ghana, 8.
 10. Gwoadzang, 31 December 1994.
 11. Boaja, 25 January 1995.
 12. Waziri, 22 January 1995.
 13. Mapanje and White, Oral Poetry from Africa, 53.
 14. Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa, 230-231.
 15. Nketia, Drumming in Akan Communities of Ghana, 114-115.
 16. P' Bitek, Horn of My Love, 21-24; Nketia, Funeral Dirges of the Akan People, 10-15.
 17. Finnegan, Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Context, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 197.
 18. Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa, 197-198.

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19. Gwoadzung, 31 December 1994.
 20. Boaja, 25 January 1995.
 21. Gwoadzung, 31 December 1994.
 22. Gwoadzung, 31 December 1994.
 23. Gwoadzung, 31 December 1994.
 24. Boaja, 25 January 1995.
 25. Gwoadzung, 31 December 1994.
 26. Gwoadzung, 31 December 1994.
 27. Audu, 22 January 1995.
 28. Boaja, 25 January 1995.
 29. Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa, 120.
 30. Merriam, African Music in Perspective, 141.
 31. Okot P' Bitek, Horn of My Love (London: Heinemann, 1974), 1-4.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEMES OF BURA FOLKSONGS

One of the important reasons for studying folk literature, particularly folksong, is to discover the messages, ideas or themes expressed in it.¹ My main goal in this chapter is to outline and analyze the themes of Bura folksongs with a view to exploring Bura ways of life, beliefs and experiences which are expressed through songs.

The Bura people, like most other ethnic groups in Africa, have distinctive oral traditions which are connected to, and express Bura social and cultural values, attitudes, beliefs, worldviews, philosophies, experiences and aspirations.² These social and cultural elements form the thematic framework for Bura folklore, particularly folksongs. As among the Akan, the Acholi and the Ewe people of Ghana; the Yoruba of Nigeria; and the Sotho of South Africa many Bura songs deal with themes which are universal such as human nature and human relationships.³ These include relationships in marriage, in kinship, between the genders, and between individuals of differing social and economic status. There are also songs in which the issues expressed are not necessarily peculiar to Bura society but perhaps receive more attention from Bura singers. A case in point is the idea of making moral commentaries on social issues and problems such as child abuse, domestic violence, forced marriage, incest, theft, pride, greed, selfishness, laziness and political dictatorship. I noted that some songs focus on validating, reifying, upholding, commending and encouraging patterns of social behaviours and attitudes which are culturally acceptable in Bura society such as hard work, honesty, generosity, hospitality,

humility, kindness, love and marital fidelity. Others are used for showing contempt and resistance to oppression and abuse of power by government officials. Furthermore, some of the songs deal with experiences including tragic experiences like sickness, death and accidents.⁴

For organization and clarity, I analyzed the songs following the categories outlined in Chapter Two namely songs of abuse, satirical songs, protest songs, lamentations, love songs, dirges, religious songs, political songs, work songs, and children's rhymes and game songs. All song texts analyzed in this chapter are documented in Appendix I.

I analyzed songs which I recorded from singers when they were singing songs in "natural" contexts. In addition, I examined songs which I recorded from Bura musicians which they sang outside the "natural" contexts for the purpose of this study. Also considered are songs which I obtained from Bura individuals who were not the original composers and singers. For each song, I indicated whether or not I collected it from the maker or from someone else. I also indicated the kinds of occasion at which the songs were sung and whether the songs were recorded by me when they were performed in "natural" performance contexts or whether I recorded the songs outside the natural performance contexts. In the following section, I describe and examine the thematic concerns of Bura folksongs.

ABUSE, SATIRE, AND PROTEST

There are Bura songs which the makers compose and sing mainly for the purpose of abusing or criticizing individuals or groups for saying or doing things which are socially and culturally unacceptable in Bura society. Individuals may use protest songs and songs of abuse to resist violations of their rights. Like malevolent jokes, songs of abuse are sung to heard by the "culprits" or "social deviants" so as to make them feel hurt and ashamed of what they have done or said.⁵ Songs of abuse are also sung to communicate sentiment, anger or prejudice towards individuals or folk groups. The subjects of abuse may be the singers' "enemies," rivals or opponents. In some cases, a Bura folksong singer is hired to compose and sing songs of abuse by individuals or groups who have been offended by other individuals or groups. Musa Gwoadzang explained to me that he had been requested on several musical occasions by some of his clients to compose and sing songs of abuse about those who offended them such as individuals who have either had romantic love affairs with their wives or husbands, had stolen their property or had gossiped about them.⁶ Sometimes when a Bura musician sees or hears of disturbing social misconduct in the community and knows who the culprit is, he or she will compose and sing a song of abuse about the perpetrator. In the song, the singer will describe and condemn what the individual or group had done. Usually, members of the society will endorse the folksinger's song of abuse because people often consider a folksinger to be a sensitive, observant, conscientious and courageous individual who can effectively act as the mouthpiece and the

advocate or the attorney for members of his or her society.

A satirical song is a song through which individuals or a group of people are satirized or ridiculed.⁷ A protest song describes mainly complaints or protests against unwanted behaviours and attitudes.⁸ These three types of Bura songs, namely songs of abuse, satirical songs and protest songs, tend to be interrelated. For instance many Bura songs of abuse contain not only abuses but also protests and elements of satire such as ridicule, jest and humour. And although the protest songs deal mainly with complaints, many of them contain abuse, ridicule and humour.

Some Bura satirical songs not only contain humour and ridicule but are malevolent as well. Similarly, some protest songs express statements of protest, resistance and complaints, and also abuse, ridicule and humour. It is because of the interrelations and symbiotic nature of these three types of songs that, in the following pages, I outline and analyze the themes of selection of Bura songs of abuse, satirical songs and protest songs.

Usually it is the behaviours and attitudes which are socially and culturally unacceptable in Bura society that are condemned, criticized, ridiculed or protested through the media of songs of abuse, satirical songs and protest songs. These socially and culturally abhorrent behaviours and attitudes are many and of various natures. They include forced marriage, child abuse, domestic violence, incest and bestial behaviours such as having sex with animals. Others are theft, greed, stinginess, laziness, pride, arrogance, jealousy, oppression and exploitation.

During my oral interview with Musa Gwoadzang, I asked him if he abuses or satirizes individuals or groups through songs. He replied:

Yes. If someone comes to me when I am performing my music at a social occasion, and the person requests me to compose a song of abuse, a satirical song or a protest song about an individual or group of people who have done to him or to her things that are not appropriate I will do it. Usually I ask the complainant to describe to me the inappropriate thing which the other individual did or said, and if I am convinced that the person's behaviour was socially or culturally unacceptable, I will then compose a song of abuse or any song that can appropriately describe and condemn the person's bad behaviour. Basically, I am interested with reconciling people, and with enforcing patterns of behaviours and attitudes that are socially and culturally acceptable in our society. So, I do compose and perform songs of abuse, satirical songs or protest songs with the hope that the person who is abused, ridiculed or condemned will hear the song and feel guilty or ashamed and stop behaving inappropriately. I do this because I am interested in encouraging peaceful co-existence or cordial relationships among people in our community. But if someone asks me to compose a song of abuse, satirical song or protest song about someone without giving me justifiable reasons, I will not do it even if the person will reward me with a lot of money.⁹ [Appendix II]

In Song A24 below composed and sung by Musa Gwoadzang at a *hiridi* in Kidang village in 1977, he ridicules his rival suitor. According to Gwoadzang, the protagonist in the song (Umuoru) was his rival suitor. He decided to insult and to disgrace Umuoru at a public musical event through a song.¹⁰ He had hoped that the lady would hear the song of abuse about Umuoru and as a result reject Umuoru's marriage proposal.

Umuoru does not like to handle a hoe.
Does it cause stomach pain, my friend?
Umuoru does not like to handle a hoe.
Does it cause stomach pain, my friend?

You better farm groundnuts and marry a woman.
Foolish man, you should not be jealous over a woman

who is not married.
 You better farm groundnuts and marry a woman.
 Foolish man, do not be jealous over a woman
 Who is not married.

Umuoru, with your big mouth.
 Umuoru, you should not be jealous over a woman
 Who is not married.

You better farm groundnuts and marry a woman.
 Foolish man, do not be jealous over a woman
 Who is not married.

Umuoru is portrayed and described as a jealous and a lazy man. Whether this is true of his character or not, these are two of the behaviours and attitudes which Gwoadzang describes so as to tarnish his rival suitor's image and reputation in the mind of the young woman who they are both interested in. First, Umuoru is described as a man who does not like to farm. Bura young women, especially those living in peasant farming communities tend to refuse marrying men who do not like farming. Any Bura man who owns large farms and harvests large quantities of crops such as corn, groundnuts (peanuts), beans, millet, rice, cotton and pepper at the end of the farming season is respected or loved by other members of his community, especially by women who are still single. Many women who are still single think that men with large farms are hard working and responsible enough to feed their families and clothe their families from the money they get from selling their cash crops. The protagonist in this song is portrayed as a young man who does not have any farm; hence he is considered to be lazy and irresponsible. Laziness is a pattern of behaviour which is socially and culturally unacceptable in Bura society.

Hence the person abused in the song stands a chance of not finding a woman who will marry him. Also, the contrast between an unmarried woman and a married woman is reflected in this song, and in particular, the idea that a woman who is not married can be approached by any suitor. The singer combines his ridicule with a piece of advice to the lazy and excessively jealous man. He advises him to start to farm at least groundnuts so that he can gain some admiration especially among women so that he can find a woman to marry.

Another behaviour for which Umuoru is ridiculed in the song is jealousy. In this case, he shows jealousy over a lady whom he has a "crush" on, but the lady is neither married to him nor has the lady publicly declared that she is in love with him. In Bura culture it is recognized that jealousy is a part of human nature, but it is socially unacceptable for an individual to act out his or her excessive jealousy by saying things that will hurt other's feelings or by doing things that are inappropriate. The lady in the middle of the rivalry eventually married a man other than the singer and his rival suitor. But it was widely believed in the lady's community that she refused to marry Umuoru as a result of the satirical song which Gwoadzang composed about Umuoru and sang at a *hirdi*.

Similarly, Usman Boaja said that he composes and sings songs of abuse, satirical songs and protest songs if the crimes committed are of a serious nature or pose a threat to the integrity and unity of the society. Because Usman Boaja rarely composes and sings these types of song. I was not fortunate enough to record any for the purpose of this study. But I have been privileged to hear him sing satirical songs and protest songs during

Bura folk music performances in the 1970s and in the 1980s. During my oral interview with him I dug into his folksong repertoire and I brought out a particular satirical song, Song A2, and asked him for his oral literary criticism of the song in question. He still remembered the song and its social context. I will discuss the social context of the particular satirical song, and then I will document the text of the song and analyze it. With regard to the social context of the satirical song, Usman Boaja said he composed and sang the song when he was informed that a man named Haruna Bila committed bestiality. He was told that Bila had sex with an animal (a donkey). Having sex with an animal is a taboo in Bura society. Any individual or group of people who break this taboo are usually abused, criticized and ridiculed through songs. When Usman Boaja investigated the allegation and confirmed its authenticity, he composed and sang this song. In addition, Boaja wanted Bila to feel ashamed of his bestial act and discontinue such practices. Also, Usman Boaja intended to inform and warn his audience and the general public of Haruna's social and cultural misconduct. Last but not the least, Usman Boaja performed the song to entertain his audience with the malevolent joke about Haruna Bila's unusual sexual involvement with a donkey. Due to popular demand by his audiences, Usman Boaja has sung the satirical song about Haruna Bila at many different social occasions. He has sung it at various wedding ceremonies, and at Bura folk music events performed to mark Christmas, *Sallah* and New Year celebrations in the 1970s and in the 1980s.

The first time I heard Usman Boaja sing the song was at a wedding in Kidang in the 1970s, when he was invited to perform his folk music. As characteristic of people of

my age group at that time, when I heard the song I learned it and memorized it. The song is also available on audio tapes as recorded by some of his music fans. One of my uncles, Mr. Salihu Mwada Bdlyia, has a collection of audio tapes of Usman Boaja's folk music. The second time I heard Usman Boaja sing the song about Haruna Bila was in Marama town at night on Christmas Day in the 1970s. He was invited to perform folk music as part of the social events organized to mark the Christmas celebration. I was at the folk music event as an audience member. My uncle (Mr. Salihu Mwada) gave me an audio tape that contains Usman Boaja's song about Haruna Bila when I was collecting Bura folksongs for the purpose of this study in January 1995. The following is the text of the song composed and sung about Haruna Bila by Usman Boaja:

Haruna, donkey's boyfriend!
 Haruna, the boy from Bila.
 When you want to buy a female donkey,
 Beware of Haruna Bila because
 He sleeps with donkey.

Does a female donkey put on eye pencil,
 Haruna, the boy from Bila?
 Does a female donkey eat Kola nut,
 Haruna, the boy from Bila?

When you want to buy a female donkey
 You should beware of Haruna Bila
 Because he sleeps with donkey.

In this satirical song, the protagonist, Haruna Bila is indicted and ridiculed for having sex with a donkey. As part of the ridicule of Haruna's behaviour, the singer asks Haruna some rhetorical questions as to what made him sexually attracted to a female

donkey. Being an animal, it can not possibly do things to sexually attract a man, such as putting on facial make-up like eye pencil, mascara and powder. Also, the singer wonders why Haruna is sexually attracted to a female donkey because as an animal the donkey cannot possibly fall in love with Haruna and accept Kola nuts from Haruna as a symbol of the donkey's love for Bila. In Bura culture a lady may receive or give Kola nuts to a man as a love token or as a symbol of love.

Through the song, the singer warns his listeners who intend to buy female donkeys to keep their donkeys away from Bila because he will have sex with them. Behind this criticism and ridicule of Bila, the singer wants to achieve or accomplish at least five things. First, being a songmaker and singer who is often considered and treated in Bura society as the "voice of conscience," he wants to express public opinions about the breaking of Bura taboo. Second, he wants to inform people who are not yet aware, of the fact that Haruna broke a taboo by sleeping with a donkey. Third, he wants to warn prospective buyers of female donkeys to keep the donkeys away from Haruna because he will sleep with them. Fourth, behind this criticism and ridicule of Haruna Bila for his social and cultural misconduct, the singer wants to publicly reveal a case of either lack of sexual control or lack of a woman that led Haruna Bila to make love to an animal. Fifth, the song contains humour so that the listeners are not only informed and warned of Bila's social and cultural misconducts but they are also entertained by the humour.

For the satirical song which he composed and sang, Usman Boaja did not receive negative reaction from Bila or members of his family. If anything, there has never been

further reports that Bila slept with another animal since the song was composed and sung. Also, there has not been any indication that Bila was ostracized by his community or taken to court by the owner of the donkey. The possible reason I can advance for Bila not being ostracized or jailed either by the owner of the donkey or by his community is the strong sense of commonality or kinship that exist among the people in his community.

Stealing

Theft, although it occurs sporadically, is abhorred in Bura society. Individuals who are caught stealing or are suspected of stealing are abused through songs. Song A11 is an example of a song of abuse composed and sung by a Bura woman named Yankirda Zoaka. She discovered that her husband was a thief so she decided to indict and denounce her husband's stealing through song. She sang the song at the funeral ceremony of a deceased old man named Satama Bdlyia in the 1960s. In Bura society, the funeral ceremony of a deceased old person is considered and treated as a festive occasion at which music is performed and songs including funeral songs, love songs, protest songs, songs of abuse and satirical songs can be sung. I collected this song in December 1988 from Zainabu Kubili Lawan who is one of the active bearers of Bura folksongs. Here is the song:

Oh, my husband, let us get divorced
 Because you are hopeless.
 Oh, my husband, let us get divorced
 Because I am not enjoying living with you.

I know that what is happening to me now
 Has happened to a fellow woman
 And she sought for divorce.

Come my children, and let us all
 Move to my parents' house
 Because I cannot continue to live
 With an armed robber.
 (Yankirda Zoaka)

The speaker in this song is a wife who feels very uncomfortable and unhappy living with her stealing husband. She, like most members of Bura society, does not like the idea of people stealing other people's property. Also, like many other Bura people, she does not like to associate or live with a thief so she requests a divorce from her husband. She compares her plight to that of another woman who earlier sought a divorce from her husband because the husband was a thief.

She calls on her children to join her so that all of them will go away and leave the man whom she calls *dikal* (armed robber). The fact that a woman would be willing to abandon or divorce her husband because he is a thief sends a strong message. It indicates that stealing is an unacceptable social behaviour in Bura society. This also suggests that although most Bura women prefer to marry and stay with men who are rich, they would not want to marry or associate with men whose wealth or riches are acquired by stealing other people's property.

In Bura society, a thief stands the risk of being socially alienated. For a Bura female in particular, stealing can become a social stigma. When a Bura young woman is caught stealing, she is made a subject of verbal and emotional abuse. Furthermore, most men would not want to marry her, even if she stole only once. Her suitors who may not be aware that she once stole someone else's property will be told, and they will keep away

from her. An example is Song A13, inspired by a local legend about a young woman who stole a live chicken. The song was composed and sung during a folk music performance at a wedding ceremony in Huma in the 1970s so as to denounce and ridicule the young woman for stealing. The following is a version of the song recited by Hanatu Gwangndi:

People have neglected the girl
 Because she has a bad habit.
 She is a thief!
 Men have neglected the girl
 Because she has a bad habit.
 She steals chickens!

Was it cooked girl?
 No, not cooked
 She ate it raw like a dog!

In the second stanza of the song, the young woman is sarcastically asked whether the chicken which she stole was cooked or raw: "Was it cooked girl?" Then someone else replies on her behalf by alleging that the chicken which the girl stole was raw, and she ate it raw like a dog, "No not cooked/She ate it raw like a dog!" Eating raw meat is symbolic of animal behaviour.¹¹ It is a taboo practice in Bura society. Anyone who is caught eating raw meat is considered to be a witch and is criticized through song.

The young woman's ridicule is most prudent as she is compared to a dog, an animal which in Bura society is known for stealing foods and for eating raw meat. The worst implication of her stealing is that men in her community refused to marry her as a result of the warning they received from the singer. Fortunately, because the lady's name was not mentioned in the song, some people outside her community who had listened to

the song did not know who the protagonist was. As a result, she eventually got married to a man outside her community.

Forced Marriage

There are instances of forced marriage in Bura society which have been criticized and condemned through songs. Individuals who are about to become victims of forced marriage have protested against it through songs. In Song A19 below, a teenage girl who was about to be married out to an old man by her father protested against the forced marriage and expressed her refusal of the marriage. The song was composed and sung by a Bura girl named Awa Hudu. She sang the song at *hirdi* in the 1970s in front of the house of the *Lawan* (village head) of Kidang village. Below is the song:

I do not want him.
 I do not want to marry an old man.
 If I marry an old man,
 When he comes to my bedroom
 He will only pass farts b-o-o-m!

Instead of marrying an old man,
 I will prefer to marry a young man.
 If I marry a young teacher
 When he comes to my bedroom
 He will at least say to me "good morning."

The speaker in the song expresses her refusal to marry an old man imposed on her by her parents. At the same time she criticizes men who wish to marry girls of their daughters' or granddaughters' ages. Such old and usually rich men give monetary and material gifts to the girl's parents so as to lure the parents to force their young daughters to marry them against the girls' wishes. The girl in this particular song is about to be made

a victim of forced marriage and child abuse so she speaks out against it.

Certain social realities have been pointed out by the girl in the song. For instance, she remarks that an old man is not socially, mentally and emotionally compatible with a teenage girl in a marriage relationship. The girl prefers to marry a young man such as a young teacher not only because the teacher is literate but also because he is young, her contemporary and may have common interests and goals. An old man may not have the courtesy to say "good morning" to the girl whenever he comes to the girl's bedroom. Instead, he would release farts "b-o-o-m." The old man's frequent release of bad air is perceived by the girl as involuntary, and a sign of aging and loss of control. Furthermore, the young man will be kind to her and consider it important to greet her each time he comes to see her in her room. In other words, the girl seems to point out that she should be allowed to choose the man she wishes to marry. Although she speaks for herself against forced marriage and child abuse, she acts as a representative advocate for all Bura girls who are potential victims of forced marriage. The singer saved herself from the potential forced marriage and got married to a young man who she was mutually in love with.

Generally, forced marriage is not acceptable in Bura society. In the past, there used to be pre-arranged marriages between a girl and a boy, arranged by either their parents or other relatives. But in practice, pre-arranged marriage was not successful. There were reported cases of young lovers who had eloped, leaving behind the partners whom their parents chose for them as potential marriage partners. This song also reveals that there are some individuals in Bura society who practice either pre-arranged marriage or forced

marriage for their daughters. Most parents who do either pre-arranged marriage or forced marriage for their children usually do so for material, financial, religious, or social reasons.

Poverty and Laziness

Some individuals in Bura society are poor as a result of either sickness or disaster. Others are poor because they are not hardworking. Bura people abhor poverty and laziness and attach importance to wealth and hard work. As a result, most people tend to dislike people who are poor, especially if their poverty is caused by laziness. Bura girls in particular do not like to marry men who are poor as a result of their laziness, even if the men are handsome and gentle. Song A8 below is a song of abuse in which the singer addresses some of these points. The song was originally composed and sung by Awa Audu in the 1970s at a youths' moonlight folk dance in Kidang village. Since then the song has been performed many times at many youths' social events by Awa Audu. It is a good example of a Bura songs that has become part of the stream of Bura folksong tradition. It is often sung by young women in the composer's community and other Bura communities.

Oh you this boy leave me alone
 I do not want to marry a poor man.
 If you marry me
 Will I be tying your mother's wrapper?
 I do not see anything in your house.

If you marry me
 Will I be wearing your sister's clothes?
 I do not see anything in your house.

If you marry me
 Will I be tying your half sister's wrapper?

I do not see anything in your house.

In this song a suitor who is poor is not only insulted and ridiculed but also rejected by the girl he wants to marry. The girl's basic reason for refusing to marry him is his poverty. She fears that if she marries him, she may have to beg for clothes or borrow clothes from the young man's mother and sisters. The song also portrays the hopelessness of life and the deprivation one suffers when one becomes incapacitated by poverty. Apparently, the poverty of the man in this song is caused by his laziness, not by misfortune. As a result, his plight may evoke little or no sympathy in the minds of the listeners of this song.

The implication that many people feel uncomfortable or are ashamed to associate with the poor is further expressed in Song A16 below. The song was originally composed and sung by Bata Lokoja. Bata Lokoja sang it during a folk music performance session at the funeral ceremony of a deceased old man. This song text is a version of the original text, which was sung to me by Zainabu Kubili Lawan in 1988 when I was collecting Bata Lokoja's songs for my Master's research project. Zainabu Kubili Lawan told me she was in the audience when Bata Lokoja sang the song at the funeral ceremony.

Salki you better farm
 Because when I see my friend Dika begging
 I feel very ashamed.
 This world is full of wonders
 If not, how can a horse owner
 Like myself be a beggar's friend.

This world is full of wonders
 If not, how can a horse owner

like myself be a beggar's friend.

This world is full of wonders.
If not, how can a rich person
Like myself be a beggar's friend.

This world is full of wonders
If not, how can a person of my calibre - Bata
Be a friend to a lazy man and a beggar.

In this song, Bata Lokoja describes his unusual friendship with a man named Dika. Dika is portrayed as a lazy and a poor man who begs for money and food stuffs to subsist. The singer says that each time he sees his friend Dika begging, he feels ashamed. He even regards it surprising and ridiculous that a rich man and a horse owner like himself can be a poor man's friend. In Bura society, horse ownership is a symbol of wealth, prestige and honour. This song further reveals some of the Bura people's social and cultural values and attitudes especially with regard to love of money, and the respect and acceptance which wealthy individuals get. People who are poor are marginalized, especially those whose poverty is a result of their laziness.

Food Taboos

In Bura society, soup is served with almost every meal, especially meals served for lunch and supper. However, there are certain animals, birds, seeds, fruits and plants which are not supposed to be used as soup ingredients. Individuals who use the non-edible items as soup ingredients are criticized and ridiculed through songs. Often the entire community or village of the social "deviants" will be made the subject of abuse and ridicule. A case in point is Song A22 below, a satirical song composed by a Bura folk musician named Avi

Pwasi. The song is based on a rumour about some individuals in Bibalkwi village who allegedly violated Bura traditional foodways by eating animals, birds and plants which are not considered edible in Bura society. In reaction to the alleged social misconduct of those individuals in Bibalkwi, Avi Pwasi composed and sang this satirical song. I have listened to him sing the song at Bura folk music performances on many social occasions in the 1980s including *hirdi* at Kidang, Christmas celebration at Marama and New year celebration at Biu. In February 1995, I obtained a version of the song recorded on video in 1987 by the Nigerian Television Authority Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria.¹² The following is the song's text:

The only people who eat delicious foods
 In *Pabir* land in Biu area
 Are the people from Bibalkwi.

They cook mice with *tabwa*
 And add *dana* fruits
 And then add shea-butter.

What kind of delicious soup did you cook like this?
Sigwi and *dlalang*
 With baboon's intestines, ground okra
 Monkey's palate and *baka* fish.

The singer is being sarcastic when he describes the Bibalkwi people's foods as the most delicious foods in Bura land. In reality, he is criticizing and ridiculing them for preparing soup with things that are considered to be inedible by most of the Bura people. Thus he implies that Bibalkwi residents are unclean because they eat what most Bura people would consider to be garbage. The non-edible food ingredients which Bibalkwi

residents were alleged to have used as soup ingredients include monkey, mouse and baboon meat. The singer sings the song for the purpose of informing other members of the Bura society that Bibalkwi people are violating Bura traditional food habits. The singer seem to project a form of identity assertion achieved by "othering" Bibalkwi residents. In this case, as a non-Bibalkwi resident, the singer portrays what he is by showing what Bibalkwi residents are not, through his satire of their foodways. He intends to make them feel embarrassed and possibly desist from using the repulsive items as soup ingredients. So far, there has not been any report that residents of Bibalkwi have confronted or taken Avi Pwasi to court for the damaging song he composed about them. On the contrary, many of the residents of Bibalkwi who have heard Avi Pwasi sing the song consider it to be a product of either a comic joke or a suspect legend, meant to entertain listeners rather than a social criticism of their foodways.

Death and Philosophy of Life

As among the Acoli ethnic group in Uganda, funeral songs form an important part of the conventionalised and dramatized outburst of grief, with which the Bura people face the supreme crisis of life — death.¹³ When a person is critically ill his or her elder family members are called to the deathbed to hear the dying person's last wishes. Soon after death has occurred the bereaved women begin wailing mingled with singing of dirges. The male relatives of the deceased begin to dig the grave while some of them, in tears, blow horns to announce the death to neighbours. Messages are sent out to other relatives, and soon a crowd is assembled at the homestead where death has occurred. The general

atmosphere during the funeral is determined by the age of the dead person. It is restrained and sad if it is the funeral of a person below the age of sixty. You may hear occasional wailing of the women mourners mingling with the singing of dirges. The closest relatives sing and dance with tears on their cheeks. It may be said that the dirges and the formal funeral songs have their fullest meaning and significance when they are sung for a Bura person who died at this prime age. But at the funeral of an elderly Bura person the situation is different. Before the death of such a person, the scenario is much the same with what happens to an Acoli elderly man or woman whose end is near:

... women in the homestead joke with him or her, and ask, 'Granny, when will you die so that we may enjoy a dance?' and some of them even make preparations publicly for the occasion. Small children play with him or her like a doll. They give him earth instead of bread and laugh as the old one puts the earthen lump in his toothless mouth.¹⁴

During the burial rites and the funeral ceremony of such a person women pretend to weep, but complain that it is hard to shed tears. So that although funeral songs are sung at the funeral dance of elderly Bura individuals, the songs do not seem to carry the same significance and meaning with the ones performed when a young adult dies.

During my one-on-one interviews with Bura folk musicians, each told me that the funeral ceremony is one of the occasions at which he or she performs songs. All of them indicated to me that the main recurrent theme of the songs which they sing at funeral occasions is the theme of death. Death is alluded to in various ways in Bura songs. This includes descriptions of the dead and beliefs about death and the transience of life or human mortality. Other death-related themes which the singers sing about are the

relationship between the living and the dead, the continuity of life after death either in heaven (for good people), in hell (for sinners), or, for those who believe in ancestor worship, in the world of the ancestors. Most Bura funeral songs express condolences to the bereaved, and allude to the sense of separation, abandonment, loss, loneliness and deprivation felt by individuals who are bereaved. Being a Christian singer, Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri said the songs which she sings at funeral occasions are mostly songs about death and death-related topics to ease the pain of those bereaving.

At funeral occasions I sing songs for the purpose of consoling the mourners. At funerals, when I see people grieving, I try to comfort them through elegiac songs. I will admonish the mourners to rejoice rather than grieve because the deceased has gone to live in a better place where he is free from all the suffering in the world. I will also tell them not to mourn excessively or for too long because some day they will reunite with the deceased at the feet of God in heaven. If I am touched by the Holy Spirit as a result of the Word of God which is preached during the funeral service, I will preach to the mourners through song. I will preach to them about the inevitability of death and the need for them to be prepared so that when they die they will go to heaven and not to hell.¹⁵ [Appendix II]

Musa Gwoadzang, a Muslim singer, also told me that he sings about death and death related subjects when he is invited to perform music at a funeral occasion in conformity to the collective support given to the bereaved in Bura society.

If a person dies and I am invited to the deceased person's funeral ceremony to perform music, it is necessary for me to sing songs that will console the bereaved and eulogize the deceased. For instance, through my songs I will tell the person whose father died or whose mother died not to mourn too much, but to be patient. I will say that bereavement is not only one person's experience, it can happen to anyone of us. Today it has happened to the bereaved, tomorrow it will happen to someone else.¹⁶ [Appendix II]

Like Waziri and Gwoadzang, Anthony Audu, a professed Muslim, told me that whenever

he is invited to funeral ceremonies to perform music, the songs which he sings mainly describe death-related themes such as human mortality and the transience of life. Also, his funeral songs contain condolence messages to the bereaved family and friends.

If it is at a funeral occasion that I am invited to perform my xylophone music, I like to go to the funeral occasion and sing elegiac songs so that when the bereaved listen to the ideas I express in the songs they will be consoled and be comforted. Through the songs I will remind the mourners that everyone of us is going to die in one way or the other and at one time or the other.¹⁷ [Appendix II]

Similarly, Usman Boaja, a Muslim, sings songs that eulogize the deceased and console the bereaved.

Whenever I am invited to perform music at a funeral occasion, I try to know something about the deceased person's lifestyle, character and the bereaved family. I will then compose and sing songs about the deceased person and about the bereaved family. I will eulogize or praise the bereaved: his achievements, his personality and social status. I will also sing songs that will describe and eulogize the bereaved family. Also, I will sing songs that will console the bereaved family and the other mourners at the funeral occasion. I do not accept invitation fees whenever I am invited to perform music at a funeral occasion because it is mainly an occasion for mourning. My intention is to sing songs that will console the bereaved.¹⁸ [Appendix II]

I have listened to Waziri sing funeral songs at Christian funeral ceremonies in the 1970s, 1980s, and in the early 1990s. But during my field research from December 1994 to April 1995, there was no funeral occasion at which Waziri could performed her music in natural context for me to observe and record. As a substitute, on January 22, 1995, she assembled members of the Kidang Christian Women's Fellowship and they created an artificial context. At the occasion Saraya sang to me a selection of the funeral songs in her

repertoire, and I recorded the songs on audio tape. The singing took place at Kidang, my home town.

Earlier she had pointed out to me that the situational and social contexts in which she composes and sings funeral songs are death, burial rites and funeral ceremonies. When she composes a new funeral song at a particular funeral occasion, she commits the song to memory and sings it again at other deceased Bura Christians' burial rites and funeral ceremonies, but with some variations to suit the social identity and status of the current deceased individual and the current bereaved family. For instance the names mentioned in the previous version of the song will be replaced with the names of the current deceased individual and the current bereaved individuals.

In the pages that follow I will document and analyze the texts of two of the funeral songs which were composed and sung by Waziri. The first funeral song is Song B14 below:

Be comforted,
 His time was up,
 He is now free from all the sufferings in this world.
 Be comforted,
 His time was up
 He is now free from all the sufferings in this world.

Even if we cry and cry
 Until the sun goes down
 Our cry cannot bring him back.
 Even if we think and think,
 Until day break
 Our sleepless nights of thinking
 cannot help us to understand why.

Even if we cry and cry
 Until the sun goes down,
 Our cry cannot bring him back.
 Be comforted
 His time was up
 He is now free from all the sufferings in this world.
 Even if we cry and cry
 Until the sun goes down
 Our cry cannot bring him back.
 Even if we think and think
 Until day break
 Our sleepless nights of thinking
 Cannot bring him back.

In this funeral song, Waziri expresses the Bura worldview and attitude towards life and towards death. A case in point is the Bura people's resignation and acceptance of death as an inevitable phase in the life cycle of every individual. The singer points out the fact that the deceased person died because "*sakar ni ani hara*" (his time was up). A person's life span is not totally in the person's control. Everybody has an appointed time to die and when that time comes, nobody can prevent it.

One idea highlighted in the song is the natural tendency for someone to grieve for the death of a loved one. Another idea in Bura philosophy which has been poignantly expressed in this funeral song is the fact that when a person dies, no amount of crying or mourning can bring the person back to his or her normal life. Also implied in the song is the Bura belief that death can bring freedom for the deceased from the sufferings of this world. That is why Waziri consoles the mourners by asking them not to grieve over the death of their loved one. Instead they should be glad that the deceased is "now free from all the sufferings in this world." Commenting on the funeral songs which she composes

and sings at funerals, Waziri said that when she attends funerals and sees the mourners grieving, she composes and sings songs which will console the mourners, and cause them to stop grieving excessively.

At funeral occasions I sing songs for the purpose of consoling the mourners. During funerals when I see people grieving, I try to console them through elegiac songs ... I will preach to them about the inevitability of death¹⁹ [Appendix II]

This is what Waziri tries to accomplish through this song: to console the mourners and encourage them to accept the fact that death is an inevitable experience for every human being, and that instead of grieving the mourners should be happy for the deceased because he is now living in a place where there is neither sorrow nor suffering.

The following Song B15 is another one of Waziri's songs which focuses on death-related themes. Also in the song, references made to Bura religious belief system, particularly the idea of the Bura supreme deity, *Hyel Mthlaku* (God Almighty), is the ultimate comforter of people who are bereaved.

All of us living in this world
 We are only passing time
 Brethren let us think about it.
 All of us living in this world
 We are as shoppers shopping in the market
 Brethren let us think about this.

Thank you God, our Father.
 We do not have the power
 But You can comfort them.
 Thank you God, our Father.
 We do not have the power
 But You can comfort them.

All of us living in this world
 We are as shoppers shopping in the market
 Brethren let us be aware of this.
 All of us living in this world
 We are as shoppers shopping in the market
 Brethren let us think about it.

Thank you God, our Father.
 We do not have the power
 But You can comfort them.
 Thank you God, our Father.
 We do not have the power
 But You can comfort them.

In this funeral song, Waziri once again describes the Bura worldview regarding the transience of human life. No matter how successful or how enjoyable a person's life is in this world, the person will inevitably leave this world through death. The idea that life in this world is temporary, and death is an unavoidable phase in the human life cycle is metaphorically described in the song. Using the image of shopping in the market, the singer points out that just as shoppers go home after they have finished shopping, our stay in this world is not permanent but temporary. Even though Waziri is a Christian, singing songs about a Christian God and Christian beliefs, her Christian songs are listened to by many Bura Muslims and other non-Christians, especially when she sings at Christian funerals and Christian weddings attended by both Christian and non-Christians. The ideas she expresses seem to be acceptable and sufficiently syncretic beliefs for non-Christians to hear.

In the song, Waziri also expresses the belief that God is the ultimate source of comfort and consolation for a bereaved person. Other people can ease the grief or sorrow

of a bereaved person through their sympathies and condolence messages, but it is God who can provide ultimate consolation for the bereaved.

Sometimes resignation and acceptance of the inevitability of death are expressed in Bura funeral songs as a way to console the mourners. Some examples can be found in the Song B7 below, sung by Waziri:

Let us all stop crying,
My brethren, his time was up
So he went home.
It is better for us to stop crying
My people, let us just ask God
To open the way for him.

Even if we cry and cry
Our cries will not bring him back
And if we brood we will feel worse.
Do not weep as you come in,
Just sit down
And give praise to God.

In this song, Waziri expresses the Bura philosophy of life -- the idea that there is no need for the mourners to grieve or cry for too long over the death of the deceased because "his time was up therefore he went home." The "home" in this song means the world where the Bura people believe people go to when they die. Bura traditionalists believe that a deceased person goes to live in the world of the dead or the ancestors. Bura Christians and Bura Muslims believe that when a Christian or a Muslim dies, he or she goes to live in heaven. This reflects the influence of Christian and Muslim religious beliefs and worldviews on Bura people who have become Christians or Muslims. They tend to adopt and personalize these non-indigenous religious beliefs and worldviews. The song

further expresses the notion that human beings are not totally in control of their life span. Everybody has an appointed time of dying and when that time comes, nobody can prevent it. Also, no amount of crying or mourning can bring the deceased back to this life.

In Bura society, it is culturally and socially acceptable for a bereaved person to grieve but it is considered inappropriate if the grieving is carried out excessively and indefinitely. As implied in the song, grieving excessively and indefinitely may prevent the deceased person's soul resting in perfect peace and from being incorporated into the "Otherworld."²⁰ Also, the bereaved who is mourning excessively and indefinitely may not overcome his or her sorrow and move on with his or her life. It is against this background that Waziri in this song advises and admonishes the mourners to stop crying and instead, ask God to accept the soul of the deceased and grant the deceased's soul eternal rest. This again validates the Bura people's belief that there is another life to be experienced after death in heaven, in hell or in the world of the ancestors. As well, God has the ultimate control and the final say over a person's life and destiny both in this life and in the life after.

Bura people's belief in the relationship between the living and the dead is reflected and expressed in Bura folksongs, especially in funeral songs. Generally, Bura people, including those who have been converted to Christianity and Islam all share the belief that they will some day reunite with their deceased loved ones. This basic Bura folk belief is expressed by Waziri in Song B9 below:

Your time is up in this world,

So you are now going home, our brother?
 Your time is up in this world,
 You are going home may God take you home safely.

Your time is up in this world,
 You are going home, may God lead you.
 His time is up in this world,
 So he is going home, may God take him home safely.

Another time God will reunite us,
 So we should not worry
 May God take him home safely.

God will comfort his mother,
 So let us not worry
 May God lead him home safely.
 God will comfort his father,
 So let us not worry,
 May God take him home safely.

In this funeral song Waziri describes Christian ideas which are similar to Bura folk beliefs and perceptions, one of which is the possible future reunion of the living with their deceased loved ones in the world beyond. Another notion reiterated in the song is the continuity of life after death.

In trying to comfort the mourners, the singer says, "some day God will reunite us, so let us not worry." This expression reflects the Bura people's belief in the continuity of life after death, and in the link between the living and the dead. As is the case among the Asaba Ibo of south-eastern Nigeria, sacrifices of food and drink may be periodically offered for the ancestors to enjoy.²¹ Those who are alive now will someday reunite with those who are dead either when those living die or when the world comes to an end. The latter belief is shared by Christians and Muslims as well. This suggests that the Bura

people tend to combine their indigenous traditional religious beliefs and world views with imported foreign beliefs and world views such as Christianity and Islam. Based on the belief that the living will some day re-unite with the dead, the singer consoles the mourners by urging them not to worry over the deceased's death because "God will reunite" them.

Furthermore, Waziri expresses the view that although people can comfort others in times of bereavement, God is the ultimate comforter. Also, the singer reflects the fact that bereavement is a temporary state because people who are bereaved always get over their bereaved state. Sometimes the death of a relative or loved one may even spur one to greater heights or allow one to cope better with other painful experiences and situations.

In 1989, one of the active bearers of Bura folksongs by the name of Zainabu Kubili Lawan sang two funeral songs for me which she learned at the funeral ceremony of my late paternal grandfather, Bilama Yankurama Bilami, in the 1960s. The two funeral songs were composed and sung at the funeral occasion by a well known Bura folksong maker named Bata Lokoja. I knew Bata Lokoja as a folksong maker and as my father's friend. However, he died before I started recording Bura songs from Bura songmakers and the active bearers of Bura folksongs for the purpose of this study. But I was told by Zainabu Kubili Lawan, a daughter in-law of my late grandfather, that Bata Lokoja was a good friend of my grandfather. Therefore, when he attended my grandfather's funeral ceremony he composed and sang the two funeral songs to console my bereaved family.²² Bata Lokoja used the songs as a medium to eulogize my late grandfather for his hard work, his

achievements, and the good leadership qualities which he demonstrated when he was still alive. Until the time of his death, my paternal grandfather was the *bilama* (chief) of Kidang and its surrounding villages. Like the funeral songs which were composed by other Bura folksong makers, the two funeral songs which Bata Lokoja composed and sang at my grandfather's funeral ceremony also deal with the themes of death, especially the fact that death is part of human life cycle and the fact that life is transient, not permanent. Below is a version of one of the funeral songs, Song B4, which Bata Lokoja composed and sang at my grandfather's funeral ceremony, as sung for me by Zainabu Kubili Lawan.

Do not worry, Lawan Haruna,
Such is life.
May God take you home safely
My father Bilami.
May you reach your world beyond safely.

Your father was wise Lawan Haruna.
He made you his successor
Before he went home.
May God take him home safely.
My father Bilami,
May you live well in your world beyond.

In this particular dirge, Bata Lokoja expresses Bura notions about death and Bura attitude towards death by saying that death is part of life. Like Waziri, Bata Lokoja also describes the notions of human mortality and the transience of life in his efforts to console and comfort Lawan Haruna, the eldest son of the deceased. The singer enjoins Lawan Haruna, the eldest son of Bulama Bilami (the deceased) not to mourn uncontrollably for the death of his father because death is a part of life and is a universal experience.

The singer makes reference to traditional African belief regarding the dying and the dead, including the continuity of life after death, and the link between the living and the dead.²³ For instance, Bata Lokoja describes the deceased as having travelled or set out on a journey to the world of the dead where he will continue with his life. Thus, Bata Lokoja bids the deceased farewell when he says "may God take you home safely my father Bilami." In this context Bata Lokoja, like Waziri, reinforces the Bura people's belief that even though death physically separates the dead from the living, death is a transition from this world to another. When a person dies, it is not the end of his or her life; he or she continues to live in the world of the ancestors or in heaven. A deceased Bura adult is addressed by the living as *yana* (my father) because the deceased has assumed a supernatural status as an ancestor, and the guiding spirit and divine provider for the needs of the living.

The second funeral song which Bata Lokoja composed and sang at Bulama Yankurama Bilami's funeral ceremony is Song B8:

Do not worry over Bulama's death
 His death is like that of a king.
 Aiya-ah!
 Oh, let us not worry over Bulama's death
 He was like a king.
 Aiya-ah!

The lion is dead
 But the tiger is still alive
 He will look after us.
 Aiya-ah!
 The lion has left us
 But the tiger is still alive

He will look after us.
Aiya-ah!

This funeral song is more of a eulogy sung in honour and praise of the deceased and the bereaved family. In the song, Bata Lokoja consoles and admonishes members of the deceased family by reminding them that the deceased died with honour and dignity because up to the time of his death his subjects still considered and treated him as a protective and powerful "Bulama" (Traditional community leader). The deceased is likened to a powerful king. Also his death was not a "bad" death because he died in his old age. Furthermore he had achieved many things in life: he died leaving behind five wives, many children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. These are possessions which in Bura culture are considered a person's valuable assets or wealth and achievements.

Still in the song, Bata Lokoja describes the fact that Bulama Yankurama Bilami's death attracted a large crowd of mourners and sympathizers comparable to the crowd that attends the funeral of a mighty king. In Bura society, when a funeral does not attract a large crowd of mourners and sympathizers, people will interpret the poor attendance as the result of the deceased and the bereaved family's bad attitude towards other members of their community.

In this song the deceased is also eulogized by being directly described as a "lion." In Bura culture, a lion is a symbol of authority, courage, power and honour. Bura folk narratives often depict the lion as king of all the animals in the forest or the jungle. Bata Lokoja uses this image of the "lion king" to portray and eulogize the strong personality

and the good leadership of Bulama Bilami when he was still alive. Thus, the deceased's qualities, personality and his achievements are described and praised in the song.

In Bura society, traditional leadership is in most cases hereditary. This is reflected and described in this dirge when Bata Lokoja in his comforting statements to the mourners reminds them that although the "lion is dead," the mourners should not worry because the deceased appointed his son, Lawan Haruna, to succeed him on the throne. In the song Bata Lokoja describes the successor to the throne as a "tiger." This shows that the heir to the throne is honourable, powerful, courageous, and capable of protecting his subjects.

In time of bereavement in Bura society, the bereaved women are inspired by their grief to compose and sing dirges. When they suspend singing, they would weep melodically, uttering vocables such as "ra, ra, ra, " "yamana, yamana" "aiyee, aiyee" and "aiya, aiya." It is very rare to hear bereaved Bura men either weeping or singing dirges at burial and funeral occasions, but it is very common to hear bereaved Bura women weeping and accompanying their grieving with spontaneous composition and singing of dirges. In most cases, the composers of the dirges cannot recollect and sing the dirges outside the context of bereavement. Often, other women who attend burial and funeral occasions as sympathizers try to listen to the dirges which are composed and sung by the bereaved, and they will learn the dirges and commit them to memory. It is socially and culturally acceptable for the women who learn the dirges from the composers to sing the dirges outside the contexts of burials and funerals. They can sing the songs in their homes, to other women for them to hear and to assess whether or not the bereaved was a good

mourner. A bereaved Bura woman who fails to compose and sing a good dirge will be made a subject of gossip, abuse and ridicule among the women in her community.

I have listened to grieving women sing dirges on many burial and funeral occasions. I did not record dirges directly from bereaved individuals who composed and sang the dirges during their moments of grieving for three main reasons. First, it would mean that I did not care about the bereaved's state of bereavement. Second, as Ruth Finnegan was told by Akan women in Ghana, I noted that Bura women find it difficult to compose dirges when they are not grieving.²⁴ Third, even if they can still remember versions of the dirges, asking them to repeat the dirges for me to record would be like opening a healed wound. My action may evoke in this kind of informants sad memories of their deceased loved ones. However, I recorded versions of this type of dirge from individuals who attended burial and funeral occasions and learned the dirges when they were sung by bereaved individuals at the burials or funerals of their deceased relatives or loved one.

I collected a version of a dirge which was composed and sung by a bereaved Bura woman at a funeral occasion. It is Song B3. The composer of this dirge has become anonymous, and the dirge has entered into Bura folksong tradition. I have heard versions of it performed by Bura girls during folk music and folk dance sessions at funeral ceremonies of deceased Bura individuals and during teenage girls' moonlight games in Bura rural communities. Girls sing this dirge to accompany their rhythmic dances. The dirge is as follows:

I am without a mother.
 Oh!
 I am without a mother, without a brother.
 Oh! Oh!
 What did you leave behind for me?
 Oh!
 What did you leave behind for me
 When you were dying?
 Oh! Oh!
 What did you leave behind for me?
 Oh!
 What did you leave behind for me.
 When you were going?
 Oh! Oh !) (Awa Audu)

In this elegiac song, the singer grieves over the death of her mother. The dirge expresses in heart-breaking terms the mourner's sense of loss and abandonment. For instance, she expresses that as a result of her mother's death, she is now motherless. She also states how death has separated her from her mother and as a result, has caused her suffering, loneliness and deprivation, especially deprivation from protection and material things which her mother used to provide for her. In lamenting over the death of her mother, the mourner recalls and mentions the death of her brother which also caused her certain deprivations. The social implication of death as revealed in this song is that, the bereaved feels abandoned, lonely and deprived of the deceased's physical presence, companionship and material providence. The feeling of loneliness and deprivation caused by the death of a mother is also expressed in the following Acoli song:

I am squatting on a tree.
 I am squatting on a tree
 Like a bird;
 I am like a monkey

Squatting on a tree.
 Oh, mother
 Fate has knelt on me;
 What can I say?
 Ee, fate has crushed me completely;
 Suffering has sunk deeply in my flesh,
 Ee!²⁵

The grieving of bereaved Bura women with a high degree of agitation — weeping and wailing -- to express their sense of loss is also done by grieving Akan women of Ghana as depicted in the following dirge by a woman from the Akan of Ghana:

Mother! Mother!
 Aba Yaa!
 You know our plight!

Mother! You know our plight.
 You know that no one has your wisdom.
 Mother, you have been away too long.
 What of the little ones left behind?

Alas!
 Who would come and restore our breath,
 Unless my father Adom himself comes?
 Alas! Alas! Alas!

Quite often it is a struggle for us!
 It is a long time since our people left.
 Amba, the descendent of the parrot that eats palm nuts,
 Hails from the Ancestral Chamber.

I cannot find refuge anywhere.
 I, Amba Adoma,
 It was my grandfather weighed gold
 Under the scale broke under his weight.

I am a member of grandsire Kese's household:
 We are at a loss where we go:
 Let our people come, for we are in deep distress.

When someone is coming let them send us something.
Yes, I am the grandchild of the parrot that eats palm nuts.²⁶

This dirge tells us about the Akan concept of death which is also found in many societies in Africa.

During my interview with Usman Boaja, he told me that funeral songs are included among the songs which he composes and sings. As a professional Bura folk musician he is often invited to funeral occasions to perform music, especially at the funerals of deceased old Bura individuals so as to console the bereaved through songs, to eulogize the deceased and the bereaved family, and to entertain the mourners and their sympathizers with his *tsindza* music and song performances. He performs music at funerals not as a mourner but as an artist who sympathizes, consoles and entertains his audiences at the funeral occasions through *tsindza* music and songs. Boaja said that sometimes he memorizes his funeral songs and later performs them in versions at other funeral occasions.²⁷

With regard to the themes of the funeral songs which he composes and sings at funeral occasions, Usman Boaja said he sings about death, especially death as a necessary stage in the human life cycle. Also he describes in his funeral songs the sad feelings of the mourners, particularly their feelings of abandonment, rejection and loneliness. He also praises or eulogizes through songs the virtues and the achievements of the deceased and of the bereaved family. Song B12 is a funeral song which Boaja composed and sang at the funeral of his mother in the 1970s. He committed the song to memory and he has been singing it at music occasions other than his mother's funeral in memory of his deceased

mother. He sings the song when he is performing music at social occasions like wedding ceremonies, New Year celebrations, and at the funeral ceremonies of other deceased elderly Bura individuals. Here is a version of the song:

My mother died this year.
 Dawi Safiyo also died this year.
 They have jailed me for ten years.
 Dawi and his master have died.

Mr. Musa Dika
 Oh, oh *guga* is really great,
 One should look for *kura*.

Mr. Musa Dika
 Oh, *guga* is really great.
 Oh *guga*.
 Can *guga* that has fallen inside a well come out?
 Unless one finds *kura*.
Guga does not fall inside a well and come out,
 Unless one finds *kura*.

Guga, aiya, aiya-a.
 Oh, *kuga*.
Guga ya, aiya, aiya-a.
 One should try to find *kura*

Oh my mother, aiya, aiya-a,
 My mother has gone to her home.
 Dawi Safiya, oh my Dawi.
 Dawi Safiya, oh my Dawi.

In this funeral song, Usman Boaja mourns the death of his mother. The mourner seems to be in distress, and points to a deep feeling of helplessness and loss. One particularly striking element in this song is what it tells us about the Bura concept of death in the last stanza, "My mother has gone to her home." This notion about the dead may be

found in several communities across Africa.²⁸ When a person dies, he or she is assumed to have departed physically from this world but have joined the company of the ancestors who have gone before. But in the course of lamenting over the death of his mother in the song, he incorporates his mourning over the death of his friend and great music fan Dawi Safiyo. From the song, Usman Boaja reveals that his mother and his friend, Dawi Safiyo died the same year. The two deaths were not the only bad things which happened to Usman Boaja that year. In the song, he also reveals that he was jailed that same year. "My mother died this year," "Dawi Safiyo also died this year," "They have jailed me for ten years," "Dawi and his master have died." It was a very bad year for him. All these sad events took place in the 1970s. He told me that he was jailed because he composed and sang a song in which he advocated Bura people's independence from the Biu Local Authority.

It is not uncommon to hear a Bura singer combining two or more themes or subjects in his or her own songs. This is what Usman Boaja has done in this song. He mourns over the death of his mother and his friend and great fan, and at the same time laments and complains about his serving term in prison.

Love Relationships

Love songs are Bura folksongs which have as their main themes love relationships and other ideas that are related to love.²⁹ The theme of love finds manifold expressions in Bura folksongs. The theme of love includes a wide range of feelings of love and love relationships such as kinship, friendship, courtship and marriage. When I asked Waziri

about the contexts and the themes of her songs she said to me that most of the songs which she composes and sings, especially at wedding ceremonies, are songs about love especially the love between the bride and bridegroom. She said that in her wedding songs she gives advice to the bride and the bridegroom: she admonishes them to love each other unconditionally and to honour their vows so that they can have a happy and a successful marriage.³⁰ The love songs she sings also contain praises of the bride and the bridegroom for getting married, an act which is considered a very important rite of passage in the life cycle of every Bura person. In addition, Waziri praises the bride and the bridegroom's physical appearance, the wedding costumes as well as their social and economic status such as their avocations and educational qualifications. The parents and friends of the newlyweds are also praised in the songs.

Wedding Songs in Social Context

In the following section I will analyze and examine a selection of songs which Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri composed and sang at Christian wedding ceremonies in Bura communities. One of the wedding ceremonies was performed on April 12, 1995, at Bindirm Village in Hawul Local Government, Borno State, Nigeria. I was there to record Saraya Waziri's music performance for the purposes of this study. Before analyzing the Bura wedding songs which Waziri performed, I will describe the social context and the chronology of the time and space of the performance. The time and space of the music performance reflected the various stages and events that take place at a Christian wedding ceremony which I described in Chapter 3. As in all her performances, Waziri did not sing

alone. She was accompanied by members of the Christian Women's Fellowship who supported her by singing the choruses and by playing the accompanying instrumental music.

Waziri first performed on the night before the day of the wedding ceremony as part of the social activities marking the bachelors' eve. The music was performed in front of the bridegroom's parents' house, the main venue for the wedding ceremony. The songs which Waziri sang on the eve of the wedding day were Christian wedding songs which focused mainly on themes related to Christian marriage. The second performance by Waziri was between 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. on the day of the wedding ceremony. The music was performed in front of the bridegroom's parents' house to entertain the wedding guests and relations of the bride and the bridegroom who had arrived to witness the ceremony. The third session of Waziri's performance took place during ritual solemnization of the marriage between the bride and the bridegroom inside Bindirim Protestant Church from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. The music was performed to accompany and reinforce the church wedding conducted by the officiating church minister. The fourth and last phase of her music performance at the wedding ceremony took place during the wedding reception, from about 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

During each of the phases of her music performance, Waziri alternated Bura wedding songs and Hausa wedding songs which she had learned. My focus in this study is to analyze songs which were composed and sung mainly in Bura. As a result, I will be discussing the Bura wedding songs by topics rather than in the chronological order in

which they appeared during the wedding ceremony at Bindirim.

Praise of the Bride and the Bridegroom

In many of the wedding songs, Waziri commends the bride and the bridegroom for formally and publicly declaring their love and commitment to each other symbolized by their marriage. A case in point is the Song D12 below:

Modern wedding,
Brethren, we are rejoicing.
Modern wedding,
Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Mr. Malgwi.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.
He is happy.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.
They are happy.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Wedding of educated people.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.
Wedding of people who are in love.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.

They are engaged.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.
We are grateful.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.
We are thankful.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Modern Wedding.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.
We are thankful.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.
Mr. Inusa.
Brethren, we are rejoicing.
She is now Mrs. Inusa.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Malgwi's wedding.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Malgwi's engagement.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

This is *mallama's* wedding.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

The very neat Malgwi.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

We have performed their engagement.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

We have performed their engagement.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Wedding of educated people.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Wedding of educated people.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Modern wedding.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Mallama Dika.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

We have performed their engagement.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Wedding of people of the Malgwui clan.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

In this song, the singer praises the newlyweds for their beautiful wedding. Waziri describes the wedding as being *kildzir mjir ilimi* (a wedding of people who have acquired Western education). She also describes it as being *kildzir na bilin* (a new version of Bura wedding influenced by Christian and Western wedding customs), and *kildzir mjir hirdzi* (a wedding of people who are in love). Saraya also praises the physical appearance of the bride and the bridegroom, especially their beautiful wedding costumes, make-up and their neatness.

She describes the newlyweds as being nice people (*da ku ndzi msira*). As well, the parents of the new couple and the Malgwi clan to which the bridegroom belongs are included in the eulogy. They are commended for making it possible for their son's wedding to take place.

The Joy of Marriage and Advice on a Successful Marriage

In one of her songs, Song D13, Waziri reiterates the fact that Inusa, the bridegroom, must be very happy because his bride has been brought to him. In like manner, the bride is happy because she has married the man she loves. The following is the full text of the song :

Mr. Inusa you must be very happy,
 They have brought you a wife.
 When we finish performing the wedding,
 You will be happy, you will live with your wife.
 When we finish performing the engagement,
 You will be happy, you will live with your husband.

You have promised to love each other,
 Therefore salute each other and laugh
 So that we can see you.
 You have promised to love each other,
 Therefore touch each other and laugh
 So that we can see you.

If he provokes your anger you should tell him,
 "*Zanawa* I have forgiven you."
 If she provokes your anger you should tell her,
 "*Mallama* I have forgiven you."
 Oh brethren we are happy,
 Our son is getting married.
 Malgwi *ntilang ntilang*, we are happy,
 Our son is getting married.
 Oh Mr. Bata you are happy,

Your son is getting married.

There is a reason why the singer starts this song saying "Mr. Inusa you must be very happy." In Bura marriage custom, parents do not easily release their daughter to marry a young man until he has successfully passed some tests and fulfilled some obligations. With regards to the testing, if the man is not already known to the parents of the young woman, the young woman's parents may request some individuals to investigate the boy's family background and the boy's life style. If the young man or his family has a history of violence, stealing, laziness, chronic disease, or witchcraft, the parents of the girl will not allow the boy to marry their daughter. But if the boy or his family has no such deficiencies the boy will be allowed to marry the girl if he is able to provide the material things that will be demanded from him by the family of the girl.

One of the necessary things which the boy is expected to do is to pay the bride price or dowry. If he does not pay the bride price he will not be allowed to marry the girl. The boy will also be required to buy certain prescribed items, *kari kila mwala* (material aspects of the bride price), such as bags of *goro* (*kola* nuts), bags of salt, potash, candies, clothes, shoes and cosmetics. In some families, the *kwaba kila mwala* (bride price or dowry) goes to the *tiddar mwala* (father of the bride) but in other families, the bride price is given to the senior brother or uncle of the bride who is appointed to serve as the *tiddar mwala* (father of the bride) during the wedding. The cosmetics, the shoes and some of the clothes will be given to the bride. She may give some to her sisters and her friends. The salt, potash and candies will be distributed as gifts to the girl's relatives, friends and

acquaintances and to people who are acquaintances of her parents both within and outside their community. The distribution of the *kola* nuts is an effective Bura traditional method of broadcasting to people that a particular girl is going to get married. When the boy and his family have passed the tests and have met all the other requirements, the wedding date is set and the girl is brought to the boy's place and is married to him and then lives with him in his place. The moment of the wedding is therefore a very happy moment for a bridegroom in Bura society because of what he has accomplished to get his bride.

The singer also mentions the fact that once the wedding ceremony is over the bride and the bridegroom will be happy because they will start to live together as husband and wife. Before the wedding they cannot live together as a couple because the society considers it as socially and culturally unacceptable.

The wedding ceremony is a rite of passage which not only marks the bride and the bridegroom's change of social status from being single individuals to a married couple, but also an occasion in which they pledge before their God and before the public their love and commitment to each other. The singer asks the newly married couple that their wedding guests would like to see them laugh and touch each other as a couple that is truly in love. Furthermore, the singer tries to play the role of adviser and marriage counselor. She advises and encourages the newly married couple to forgive each other when one person is "provoked to anger" by the other person.

On a wedding day, it is not only the bride and the bridegroom who rejoice but their friends and relatives as well. In fact, the entire communities of the bride and the

bridegroom rejoice and display their collective support and solidarity during the wedding.

Communal rejoicing is described in the following excerpt.

Oh brethren we are happy
Our son is getting married.

Malgwi *ntilang ntilang* we are happy
Our son is getting married.
Oh Mr. Bata you are happy
Your son is getting married.

Mr. Bata, who is mentioned in the song is the proud and happy father of the bridegroom.

Malgwi is the name of the clan to which the bridegroom belongs. Many members of the Malgwi clan were at the wedding. I saw them singing and dancing and rejoicing because as the singer points out, a member of their clan or one of their sons was the one getting married. Many of them travelled hundreds of kilometres not just to witness the wedding of one of their "sons" but to participate in the planning and the execution of the wedding, and to participate in the musical performances at the wedding as audience members. In addition, they give donations to the bride and the bridegroom and to their parents in the forms of money, foodstuff, and dishes. Images of the commonality and solidarity among members of the Malgwi clan are portrayed in the song.

On November 8, 1991, Waziri was invited to perform music at a wedding in Yola town in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The first phase of Waziri's music performance was in the morning in the bride's parents' house before the church wedding. The second session of the performance took place inside Yola Protestant Church during the ritual solemnization of the wedding by the officiating Church Minister, from around 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. While

the bridegroom is Yoruba, he speaks Hausa, but not Bura. As a Bura young woman, the bride speaks both Bura and Hausa. In order to make her songs understood by both her Bura and non-Bura audiences, some of Waziri's wedding songs were in Bura and the others in Hausa. As with the discussions of the songs which Waziri sang during the wedding at Bindirim, the Bura songs she sang at the wedding in Yola will not be discussed chronologically but on the basis of their topics.

Love and Christian Marriage

Some of the songs which Waziri performed at the wedding focus mainly on the subject of Christian love and marriage. In particular, the singer outlines the things which the bride and the bridegroom need to do in order to make their commitment and love for each other grow stronger so that they can have a happy and successful married life.

In one of the songs about marriage, which Waziri sang at Alfred and Kuceli's wedding, she wishes the bride and bridegroom God's guidance and a successful married life. The song is Song D15 below:

You are going to enter your matrimonial home today Mrs.
 May God help you.
 You are going to enter your matrimonial home today Mr.
 May God help you.

We bear your witness
 Even if hardship comes you should endure.
 We bear you witness
 Even if hardship comes you should endure.

Your home belongs to Christ.
 You should know that it is not a worldly home.
 We bear you witness,

Even if hardship comes you should endure.

You are going to enter your matrimonial home today Mr.

May God help you.

You are going to enter your matrimonial home today Mrs.

May God help you.

We bear you witness

Even if hardship comes you should endure.

We bear you witness

Even if hardship comes you should endure.

You are going to enter your matrimonial home today Mr.

May God help you.

You are going to enter your matrimonial home today Mrs.

May God help you.

Your home belongs to Christ.

You should know that it is not a worldly home.

Your home belongs to Christ

You should know that it is not a worldly home.

We bear you witness

Even if hardship comes you should endure.

We bear you witness,

Even if hardship comes you should endure.

You are going to enter your matrimonial home today Mr.

May God help you.

You are going to enter your matrimonial home today Mrs.

May God help you.

We bear you witness,

Even if hardship comes you should endure.

Your home belongs to Christ

You should know that it is not a worldly home.

You are going to enter your matrimonial home today Mr.

May God help you.

You are going to enter

Your matrimonial home today Mrs.

May God help you.

On behalf of the guests at the wedding, the singer advises the bride and the bridegroom to try to endure hardship when they are faced with it in their marriage: "Even if hardship comes you should endure." No matter the type of songs she composes and sings, Waziri often inculcates Christian religious beliefs and values. The songs which she sings at wedding occasions are not exceptions. In this particular song, Waziri preaches to the bride and the bridegroom about godly love. In particular she reminds them of the love that is expected to exist between a Christian married couple as advocated in the Bible by Paul, particularly in Ephesians 5:22-33 where Paul enjoins Christian men to love their wives just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself as a sacrifice for the church. Even her advice to the bride and the bridegroom that they should endure hardship "for better or for worse" relates to the formulaic phrase "for better for worse" which is often included in marriage vows for the bride and bridegroom during the solemnization of a Christian wedding.

Like the church minister who officiates the wedding, the singer preaches to the bride and bridegroom through song about the rules for Christian marriage. She advises and admonishes the newly married couple to make Christ the head of their home and the cornerstone of their marriage because she believes that if the married couple follow these rules, their marriage will be happy and successful.

Another song which Waziri sang at Alfred and Kuceli's wedding treats the subject of Christian marriage is Song D16 below:

Ephesians says one should have patience.

Pastor, read it to my hearing.
 Ephesians says one should have patience
 Pastor, read it to my hearing.

Brethren we are happy
 Because this is a wedding based on the Bible.
 Brethren we are happy
 Because this is a wedding based on the Bible.
 The bride and the bridegroom are happy
 Because this is a wedding based on the Bible.

Pastor will preach the Word for them to hear
 And make use of it, so that their marriage can last.

Pastor will preach the Word for them to hear
 And make use of it, so that their marriage can last.

Pastor will preach the Word of God
 And we too can hear it
 And make use of it,
 Even though we are here as wedding guests.

I admire you sitting in the bridal chair
 I wish I can sit in it.
 I admire you sitting on your chair
 I wish I can sit inside it.

Ephesians says one should have patience
 Pastor, read it to my hearing.
 Ephesians says one should have patience
 Pastor, read it to my hearing.

All of us Christians we are happy,
 Let us pray that God should help them.

Pastor will preach the Word of God for them to hear
 And make use of it
 So that their marriage can last.
 Pastor will preach the Word for them to hear
 And make use of it
 So that their marriage can last.

Pastor will preach the Word of God
 And we too can hear it
 And make use of it
 Even though we are not newlyweds.

I admire you sitting in the chair
 I wish I can sit in it.
 I admire you sitting in the chair
 I wish I can sit in it.

All of us Church members are happy.
 Let us pray that God should help them.
 All of us members we are happy
 Let us pray that God should help them.

In the song, the singer admonishes the newly married couple to love each other unconditionally and to be patient with each other as stated in the Bible. The singer calls on the pastor who is officiating the wedding to read the passage in the Bible that talks about the principles of Christian marriage for the bride and the bridegroom to hear and apply those principles in their marriage. Bura pastors like Waziri because her music draws both Christians and non-Christians to Christian events such as Christian weddings, funerals and crusades. She compliments the pastors by winning new converts to the church through her music.

She admonishes not only the newlyweds but also the guests at the wedding to listen to the officiating pastor's sermon about Christian marriage and apply the message to their own marriages so that their marriages can last.

Pastor will preach the Word for them
 To hear and make use of it
 So that their marriage can last.

Pastor will preach the Word and we too
 Can make use of it even though
 We are here as guests.

Usually during wedding sermons the officiating pastor addresses his message not only to the bride and the bridegroom but to the wedding guests as well. He hopes that all the members of his audience will hear the message and apply it to their own marriage including those who will marry in the future. Thus the singer plays the role of a preacher and a marriage counselor to the bride and the bridegroom as well as to the guests at the wedding as they listen to the song. The singer says she admires the bride as she sits in her chair because the bride looks very beautiful and she is the subject of attention at the wedding ceremony.

Waziri also sang Song D17 at Alfred and Kuceli's wedding. In the song she treats the theme of love and Christian marriage, in particular, the love Alfred and Kuceli have for each other that is symbolized by their marriage. The following is the text of the song:

This is your wedding Mrs.
 You should be smiling to the young man.

Pastor has said it to your hearing,
 In your home there should be no selfishness.
 Even if you have only one *kobo*
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.
 Even if you have only one *kobo*
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.
 Even if you have only one measure of grain
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.

See the girl has become clean,
 She has become light in complexion,
 Her smile has attracted the young man.
 The girl has become clean,
 She has become light in complexion.
 Her smile has attracted the young man.
 Kuceli has become clean,
 She has become soft and beautiful.
 Her smile has attracted the young man.

You have now got your own home Mr.
 Rejoice and live together with your wife.
 You have now got your own home Mrs.
 Rejoice and live together with your husband.

Pastor has said it to your hearing,
 In your home there should be no selfishness.
 Even if you have only one *kobo*
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.
 Even if you have only one measure of grain
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.

The girl has become clean,
 She has become light in complexion.
 Her smile has attracted the young man.
 The boy has become clean
 He has become light in complexion.
 His smile has attracted the girl.

As characteristic of Waziri, in the above song, she gives the bride and the bridegroom some tips on how to make their love for each other grow stronger. She advises the bride to smile at her husband and not to give him angry looks. "This is your wedding Mrs.,/You should be smiling to the young man."

The singer also reminds the bride and the bridegroom to apply what the officiating

pastor preaches to them about Christian marriage. First, they should not be selfish to each other even if they have only one *kobo* (*kobo* is the lowest denomination in Nigerian currency, just like one cent is the lowest denomination in Canadian currency). Even if they have *auna duku* (one measure of grain such as corn, millet and rich) they should share it. In essence the singer advises the new married couple not to be selfish.

The singer also advises the new couple to keep their marriage vows. "The vows you made to each other my brethren,/we ask that you keep them." If the bride and the bridegroom had not paid attention to the pastor's sermon on the rules for creating a successful Christian marriage, certainly Waziri's reiteration of the pastor's message through the song will be understood by the bride and the bridegroom.

When a Bura young woman is about to get married, she would use body care products which would make her skin relatively light in complexion. This is because some people consider a bride who is light in complexion to be more beautiful than a bride who is not. This idea of beauty is implied in the song.

I have attended several Christian weddings in Bura society over the years as a guest, as a participant, and as a field researcher. And I have observed that on each of the wedding occasions, the bride and the bridegroom, their friends and their guests at the wedding tend to pay more attention to the songs that are sung at the wedding than to the sermon preached by the officiating pastor. To me this indicates that in Bura society, songs seem to be a more powerful and more effective medium of communicating social, cultural and religious values to the audience than sermons. Waziri knows that people listen more

attentively to her singing than to the preacher's sermons not only at weddings but at funerals and church services. So, when others doze off or allow their minds to be preoccupied with other thoughts during the preacher's sermon, Waziri listens attentively to the preacher's sermon and memorizes the most important messages and some of the verses which the preacher reads in the Bible during the course of giving his sermon. And when she is asked to sing, she will get up and go in front of the audience or congregation and she will spontaneously compose and sing songs incorporating themes of the preacher's sermon.

In another song, Song D18 below, Waziri describes what the guests at the wedding should do for the bride and the bridegroom. The guests should teach the newlyweds how to properly live their lives together as husband and wife.

We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will teach them how to live married life.
 We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will teach them how to live married life.

They have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will laugh for them *gwa! gwa!*
 We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will teach them how to live married life.

Nothing is nicer than a wedding occasion,
 God is with us brethren.
 Nothing is nicer than a wedding occasion,
 God will be with us brethren.

We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will teach them how to live married life.
 We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will teach them how to live married life.

We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will laugh for them *gwa! gwa!*
 We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will laugh for them *gwa! gwa!*

There is nothing nicer for a person than the person's wedding day. In the song, the singer asks the wedding guests to rejoice with the newlyweds in celebration of their wedding and also advise the new couple on how to live a happy marriage. She provides in the song vivid images of a wedding occasion such as the crowd, the music, the laughing, ululating, singing, dancing, feasting, preaching and other social activities that take place at Bura Christian wedding ceremony.

Advantages of and Keys to a Successful Marriage

To find the right person to marry can be a long and a hard process. As a result, when a person finds the right life partner and they eventually get married, the person is considered to be fortunate. Waziri iterates this perception in Song D19 which she sang at Alfred Kuceli's wedding ceremony.

Ms. Kuceli you are fortunate
 Do not worry any longer, you now have a husband.
 Mr. Tunde you are fortunate
 Do not worry any longer, you now have a wife.

Ms. Kuceli you are fortunate,
 Do not worry any longer, you now have a husband.
 Mr. Tunde you are fortunate,
 Do not worry any longer, you now have your own home.

The promises you made to each other
 Our brethren, we ask you to fulfil them.

Mr. Tunde you are fortunate

Do not worry any longer, you now have your own home.
 Ms. Kuceli you are fortunate
 Do not worry any longer, you now have your own home.
 No matter what happens between you, do not quarrel,
 Try to be patient and live together in your home.

The promises you made to each other
 You should remember them, we enjoy you.
 The promises you made to each other
 You have fulfilled them, we love you.

The singer tells the bride and the bridegroom that they are fortunate because they have become married. As newlyweds, they are free from worrying, especially as to whether or not they will each find the right life partner.

Ms. Kuceli you are fortunate.
 Do not worry any longer, you now have a husband.
 Mr. Tinde you are fortunate
 Do not worry any longer, you now have a wife.

Marriage is considered a big achievement for a man. Hence the singer commends the newlyweds for their getting married. A person who fails to establish his or her own family is often considered to be irresponsible and a failure. For the protagonists, the pressure is off because they have been incorporated into the group of married people. In particular, the bridegroom is free from the ordeal of searching for the right woman to marry because he has already found and married Kuceli. He is also free from feeling lonely and helpless because he now has a life partner and a help mate.

In Bura society, the pressure to establish one's own family is strong because until a person gets married, the person is considered and treated like someone without a home. An unmarried person is not independent from his or her parents, even if the person is

living on his or her own. Establishing one's own home by virtue of marriage gives a person a sense of place to belong.³¹ In Bura society, as in some Newfoundland communities, bachelors and spinsters are given low status, and treated as suspects by individuals who are not secure in their relationships.³² All these views about life before marriage and after marriage are depicted and expressed by the singer in the song.

The singer asks the bride and the bridegroom to fulfil the marriage vows or the promises which they pledged to each other such as the promise to love, cherish and to honour each other. "The promises you made to each other/Our brethren we ask you to fulfil them." Being a Christian, the singer refers to the bride and the bridegroom as "brethren" because the new couple are also Christians. The new couple are advised to be patient with each other so that they can live happily as a couple. Couples who lack patience and tolerance tend to quarrel. Persistent quarreling is considered to be a canker that can destroy a marriage. The singer is aware of this problem hence she advises the newlyweds to avoid quarreling and to be patient with each other in spite of their differences.

Wedding Songs in Other Contexts

On January 22, 1995 after I had interviewed Waziri about her songs, she sang a selection of the songs in her song repertoires which she had composed and sang at various social occasions and committed to memory. She was joined in the singing of the songs by members of the Christian Women's Fellowship in Kidang. The group's participation involved playing the musical instruments and singing the choruses. Among the songs

which Saraya sang for me to record are weddings songs which describe themes of love relationships such as friendship, courtship and marriage.

One of the wedding songs contains praises of the bride and the bridegroom for taking the bold step to get married in spite of the prevailing social and economic problems which discourage many single Bura young men and young women from developing healthy love relationships up to the marriage level. This particular song is Song D14:

In this generation for you to pledge your
 Love and commitment to each other
 You must be blessed with patience.
 In this generation for you to pledge your
 Love and commitment to each other
 You must be blessed with patience.

Mrs. are you about to enter your
 Matrimonial home?
 Mrs. is about to enter her
 Matrimonial home.
 Mr. you are about to enter your
 Matrimonial home.
 Mrs. is about to begin her
 Matrimonial home.
 Mr. you are about to enter your
 Matrimonial home.
 Mrs. is about to enter her married life.
 Mr. you are about to enter your
 Matrimonial home.
 Mr is about to enter his
 Matrimonial home.

In this generation for you to pledge your
 Love and commitment to each other,
 You must be blessed with patience.
 In this generation for you to pledge your
 Love and commitment for each other,
 You must be blessed with patience.

Mr. you are about to enter your
matrimonial home.

Mrs. is about to enter her
Matrimonial home.

Lady are you about to enter your
Matrimonial home?

The woman like a tomato is about to
Enter her matrimonial home.

Lady are you about to enter your
Matrimonial home?

The woman like a tomato is about to
Enter her matrimonial home.

In this generation for you to pledge your
Love and commitment to each other,
You must be rich.

In this generation for you to pledge your
Love and commitment to each other,
You must be rich.

Mr. you about to enter your
Matrimonial home.

Mr. has entered his matrimonial home.

Mr. you are about to enter your
Matrimonial home.

Mr. has entered his matrimonial home.

Mr. you are about to enter your
Matrimonial home.

The lady is about to enter her
Matrimonial home.

Mr. you are about to enter your
Matrimonial home.

Mr. Ayuba is about to enter his
Matrimonial home.

Mr. you are about to enter your
Matrimonial home.

And this lady is about to enter her
Matrimonial home.

Mr. you are about to enter your
Matrimonial home.

The daughter of Zoaka clan is about to

Enter her matrimonial home.
 Mr. you are about to enter your
 Matrimonial home.
 Mrs. is about to enter her
 Matrimonial home.

In this generation for you to pledge your
 love and commitment to each other,
 You must be blessed with patience.
 In this generation for you to pledge your
 Love and commitment to each other
 You must be blessed with patience.
 Mr. you are about to enter your
 Matrimonial home.
 Zoaka Kamada is about to enter her
 Matrimonial home.
 Mr. you are about to enter your
 Matrimonial home.
 Zoaka Kamada is about to enter her
 Matrimonial home.
 Mr. you are about to enter your
 Matrimonial home.
 Gwangdi Kujara is about to enter her
 Matrimonial home.
 Mr. you are about to enter your
 Matrimonial home.
 Someone said Miss is about to enter her
 Matrimonial home.
 Lady are you about to enter your
 Matrimonial home?
 The lady like tomato is about to enter
 Her matrimonial home.
 Lady are you about to enter your
 Matrimonial home?
 The lady like tomato is about to enter
 Her matrimonial home.

In the song, as is often done by Bura adults, the singer commends the bride and the bridegroom for having the patience to remain committed to each other in their love

relationship and for having the courage to get married. Some people who are in romantic relationships either break up without getting married or have babies before they get married. These behaviours and attitudes are socially and culturally unacceptable in Bura society. This idea is depicted, especially in the opening lines of the song.

In this generation for you to pledge your love and
commitment to each other
You must be blessed with patience.

The singer reminds the bride and the bridegroom that they are no longer single individuals but are married, and they will soon begin living together as a married couple saddled with all the responsibilities and expectations of Bura married life.

Other Bura Love Songs

The more common type of love expressed in Bura folksong is the love between a man and a woman. Quite often this comes in the form of an intense admiration of the physical beauty of the woman by the man, or vice versa, in such a way as to indicate a feeling of a sexual desire.³³

Avi Pwasi is a respected Bura folk musician. Unlike Usman Boaja and Anthony Audu who play *tsindza* (xylophone) music, Avi Pwasi plays *gulum* (a three stringed long-necked lute) music. Avi Pwasi accompanies his *gulum* music with singing of various types of songs which he composes himself. The songs range from love songs and funeral songs to satirical songs. Regarding Avi Pwasi's songs about love, he is particularly well known for a classic love song, Song D11, which he composed about his love relationship with a Bura woman known as Jija Kwandza.

Pwasi told Raymond Vogels the personal experience narrative about the love relationship between him and Jija Kwandza which inspired him to compose and sing this beautiful love song.

I returned from a journey and was on my way home. She was sitting in the shade with other girls. She was very young. I joined them and asked for drinking water because I was very thirsty. But none of the girls wanted to fetch water for me. Jija said, our compound is far, over there by the trees. "If you want to wait, I'll fetch some water for you." I agreed and she ran off. But when she came back the container with water was almost empty because she had ran so fast. I took the water and drank. "Shall I bring you more?" She asked. The water was enough for me and we sat down and talked. From that day onwards I have praised Jija. When she was of marriageable age she told her father that she wanted to marry Avi Pwasi. I could not agree because I was an old man already and she was a very young woman. But she wanted me. So I was invited to her father's house. We met with my Uncle and her father. We asked, "You invited us here what can we do for you?" Her father replied, "It was not I who invited you but Jija." Then Jija said, "Father, you want me to get married but I have found a husband already: he is Avi Pwasi. If Avi Pwasi doesn't want to marry me he shall say so; but if he wants to marry me he shall say so now." To this her father said, "Jija, it is up to the two of you to decide. What has Avi to say?" I replied, "No, my child, it is good already, I am grateful to you, I cannot marry you. If you find somebody who wants you, marry him. But if your future husband does not allow me to praise you, don't marry him, because I shall not stop praising you even when I stop playing the *gulum*. I shall praise you until my death." On the day of her wedding I bought a wrapper and gave it to her brother so that he could give it to her. However, I asked him to only present it to her when everybody was around, and then he was to say: "This is from your husband." Since then she has been using the wrapper to cover herself during the night.³⁴
[Appendix II]

A version of Avi Pwasi's love song about Jija Kwandza was recorded on video in the 1980s by reporters from Nigerian Television Authority Maiduguri. The television reporters specialize in field recordings of traditional music from Borno for broadcast on

the Nigerian Television Authority, Maiduguri. I copied the video recording of Avi Pwasi's love song about Jija Kwandza from the Nigerian Television Authority Maiduguri and I transcribed the song for the purpose of this study.

Speak Avi Pwasi.
 Speak the Governor,
 They want to hear the praise of Jija Madlau.
 You will be taken to the television.
 You will be taken to the television.
 You should announce to every town
 So that the entire region can hear about
 The name of Jija Madlau
 The daughter of Badawi.
 What did the Emir of Biu say about my beloved?
 All the Kings who go to Kaduna for meetings
 What do they say about my beloved
 The daughter of Madlau?
 The Governor told soldiers to guard Jija
 Because in the past they were in our community.
 If I should speak, what do I say to my beloved?
 Oh, my Jija.
 They try to convince you to reject me
 Because I am poor.
 Oh my Jija.
 They try to convince you to reject me
 But you refuse to listen to them.
 Oh my Jija.
 The entire community tries to convince you
 To reject me but you refuse to listen.
 Oh my Jija.
 Someone said you should reject me
 And look for a young man of your age.
 Someone said, "This is an old man with
 Grey hair who is marrying you Jija,
 Can't you refuse?"
 Listen to what she said to them,
 "He is a young man who grew old.
 I will marry him, I will not reject him.
 I know that it is the young Okra that

Grows to produce seeds.
 Is this not a young man who grew old?
 Mother should I reject him just
 Because of his old age?
 I will marry him and we will try
 And live together.
 Mother if it does not work out we will then separate."
 "What has happened to you Jija?
 What has happened to you my daughter?
 Did Avi cut for you a piece of human flesh
 Daughter of Dikwa clan?"
 "Oh mother, it is a promise made between
 My beloved and I.
 I will marry him, I will not reject him.
 Keeping promise surpasses everything.
 A promise is a load."
 God has not created us that way
 Or else I would have swallowed her.
 She will live peacefully in my stomach.
 God has not created us that way
 Or else I would have swallowed you
 So that you can live peacefully in my stomach.
 The entire region is trying to convince you to reject me
 But you do not listen to them.
 Oh my Jija.
 On Thursday I went to Madlau,
 I saw my beloved going to her husband's house.
 Very beautiful was Jija as she walked.
 Very beautiful was Jija as she walked.
 Very charming was the girl as she walked.
 Very elegant was Jija.
 Beautiful like a plane flying.
 Are you actually going to
 Your husband's house my Jija?
 But we did not plan it this way,
 Daughter of Dikwa clan.
 Daughter of Lemba clan.
 Where is the road to Mirnga Madlau?
 I will follow the footprints of my beloved
 To her husband's house.
 Even the dust from the footprints of my beloved

I will put some in my mouth to make me feel happy.
 Anyone who goes to my house
 Will see that my bedroom door is facing Madlau.
 Anyone who goes inside and looks at my bed
 Will see that I put my head in the direction of Madlau.
 If I trip I will fall on Madlau road,
 In the direction of Kwandza.
 I will elope with her and I will take her
 To my mother and my father in heaven for them to see her.
 "This is the girl I used to tell you about
 Mother and father.
 I married her after you died.
 I bring her to you in heaven so that you can see her.
 Spirits of my mother and my father,
 It is now that I truly feel I am married.
 It is now that I am happy.
 Since they have seen her, I am very happy.
 Please let me elope with you and build for you
 A house in the sky/space
 For you to live inside, Jija Kwandza.
 The door to your room Jija
 I will put for you the moon.
 For the window of your room I will put a star
 Because this is God's will for you.
 For the road that leads to your house lady,
 God will spread the rainbow.
 Oh my heart, Oh I wish my beloved is given to me.
 Oh Jija Madlau, oh my beloved.
 If I elope with you I will build for you
 A house in the sky/space
 For you to live inside, Jija Madlau.
 For your door Jija, I will put the moon.
 For your window I will put a star
 Because it is God's will for you.

The Emir of Biu town,
 Alhaji Mustapha the Emir of Biu,
 What do you say about my beloved?
 You usually go inside a room and discuss issues.
 What have you been saying about my beloved?
 The Governor told soldiers to come and guard Jija

Because in the past he had lived in our community.

Avi Pwasi begins the song by describing with a sense of pride that he is singing his love song about Jija Kwandza because the television reporters have asked him to sing it for them to record it and broadcast it on television for the Governor and the entire people of Borno State to hear.

Speak Avi Pwasi
 Speak, they want to hear the praise about Jija Madlau.
 You will be taken to the television.
 You will be taken to the television.
 You should broadcast the event
 So that every region will hear about
 The name of Jija Madlau.
 The daughter of Badawi.

He feels very proud and at the same time honoured that the television reporters are interested in recording his song about Jija Kwandza so that they can play it on television. He is also happy about it because he will be shown on TV. As well, the name of Jija Kwandza will be known to television viewers throughout Borno State including people who are not Bura. In the song, Avi Pwasi calls Jija with various surnames and praise names. He calls her Jija Badawi and Jija Kwandza. He also calls her Madlau. Madlau is the name of Jija's village. In Bura society, a person's village and clan can be used instead of his or her surname. Avi also calls Jija with her paternal and maternal clan names Dikwa and Kwandza. Calling a person by his or her clan name often implies praise of the person.

As the German music scholar, Raymond Vogels, points out about Avi's praise of Jija Kwandza, it

... exceeds by far the ordinary praise of positive characteristics. With this "love song" he binds his affection to a religious-philosophical outlook that appoints this woman to the centre of his cosmos.³⁵

Obviously in this love song Avi elevates Jija Kwandza to a very high pedestal physically, morally and spiritually. The picture of Jija Kwandza painted in the song is that of a goddess, a heroine, and the people's princess. She is the subject of admiration and conversation of people including the rich and famous such as Kings, Emirs and Governors.

Pwasi claims that because Jija Kwandza is so beautiful the Governor appointed some soldiers to be Jija Kwandza's bodyguards to protect her from being kidnapped by men who are crazy about her and from being killed by people who are jealous of her beauty and fame: "The Governor told soldiers to guard Jija/Because in the past they were in our community."

Pwasi paints the picture of himself in relation to Jija as someone who is not only too old for Jija to marry but very poor. Evidently the social and economic disparity between Pwasi and Jija Madlau is what makes Pwasi wonder why Jija should be in love with him and insist on marrying him. Coupled with these differences is the fact that Kwandza's parents and her entire community have tried to convince her to marry a man of her own age and economic status.

Pwasi creates an image of Jija having conversations or arguments with the people who have been persuading her to forget about Avi Pwasi and marry a man who is "worthy" of her. Each time someone tells Jija not to marry Avi Pwasi because he is an "old man with grey hair," Jija will reply to her detractors, including her mother, by telling them

that Avi is an old man who was once a young man. She uses a proverb to explain the fact that like everyone else's life cycle, Avi's was once young but has now matured to adulthood. An adult who is capable of procreating, "... it is the young okra that grows to produce seeds." In Jija's reply to her mother's discouraging pleas, she says that she will not reject Avi Pwasi even though he is too old for her. She is in love with him so she will marry him and they will live together as a married couple. If the marriage does not work out they will separate.

In Bura society, it is often believed that when a girl is crazy about marrying a man who does not deserve to be her husband, then that man must have used some charms or supernatural means to make the girl love him. Jija's mother thinks that Avi must have bewitched Jija, giving her something dangerous or supernatural such as human flesh as a love potion. She wants to know from her daughter if Avi gave her human flesh. To her, there is no other possible explanation as to why her daughter Jija would want to marry an old and poor man like Avi Pwasi.

What has happened to you Jija?
 What has happened to you my daughter?
 Did Avi cut for you a piece of human flesh?
 Daughter of Dikwa clan?

Jija's reply to her mother's question shows she has not been bespelled by Pwasi. Rather, her unconditional love for Avi is natural. Jija also reveals to her mother that the love between her and Pwasi is mutual. They promised to get married she says. She argues that she will not break the promise because it is very important to keep one's promise.

Sometimes a promise can be a burden or like carrying a load, but it is good to keep one's promise. Therefore she would not jilt Avi Pwasi; she will marry him.

Oh mother, it is a promise made between my beloved and I.
 I will marry him, I will not reject him.
 Keeping promises surpasses everything.
 A promise is a load.

Through the song, Avi is able to tell Jija Kwandza and his other listeners how much he too loves Jija Kwandza. Because he is overwhelmed by shyness and low self esteem due to his old age and poverty, he has not been able to openly and publicly reveal his strong feelings of love for Jija Kwandza. It is through this love song that he has been able to do so. Avi is aware of the fact that the young Jija will not continue to resist the pressure put on her to reject Avi and marry a man who is young and rich. Because he knows he will soon lose the battle to his opponents, in the song Avi laments and philosophizes that if it were possible, he would take away Jija Kwandza and swallow her and she would live peacefully in his stomach. She would be free from those opposing her desire to marry Avi and from her other suitors. But God has not created human beings with the ability to swallow other human beings alive and keep them in their stomachs. It is a wishful thought.

Pwasi describes how his earlier fears of losing Jija Kwandza to someone else became justified. Jija Kwandza could not resist the pressure on her to reject Avi and marry a man of her age. One fateful Thursday, when Avi was on his way to Madlau to visit Jija, he saw Jija walking to her bridegroom's house to get married. She was forced by her

parents and others to marry somebody else. Avi was heartbroken when he saw his beloved walking away to be married to another man. Although Avi was disappointed and devastated that Jija married someone else, his love and admiration for Jija remains solid. He describes the way he saw her walking away to her bridegroom's village as being beautiful, elegant and graceful.

On Thursday I went to Madlau,
 I saw my beloved going to her husband's house.
 Very beautiful was Jija as she walked.
 Very beautiful was Jija as she walked.
 Very charming was the girl as she walked.
 Very elegant was Jija,
 Beautiful like a plane flying.

Pwasi is still in love with Jija and wants to marry her even though she is married to someone else. In the song he says he will follow the road which Jija followed when she was going to her husband's house to go and meet her. He will follow her footprints and hopes that he will see her. If he does not see her, he will carry the dust in her footprints on the road and put the dust in his mouth at least to make him feel happy.

Where is the road to Mirnga Madlau?
 I will follow the footprints of my beloved
 To her husband's house.
 Even the dust from the footprints of my beloved
 I will put some in my mouth to make me feel happy.

Avi reveals what he does in private in his house to signify his love for Jija. He portrays her as his goddess or object of worship. He says the door to his bedroom faces the direction of Madlau village where Jija Madlau lives. When he goes to sleep on his bed at night he puts his head towards the direction of Madlau. When he trips and is about to

fall, he always wishes that a certain force will transport him to the road that leads to Madlau so that he will fall on Madlau road towards the direction of Jija Kwandza.

Anyone who goes to my house
 Will see that my bedroom door is facing Madlau.
 Anyone who goes inside and looks at my bed
 Will see that I put my head in the direction of Madlau.
 If I trip I will rather fall on Madlau road,
 In the direction of Kwandza.

Avi, later in the song, puts himself and Jija in a fantasy world. He fantasizes about eloping with Jija and taking her to his deceased parents in heaven so that they can see her. He will tell his parents that he married Jija after they died. He will tell his parents that he has never felt like he has been married, and he has never felt really happy until he married Jija and introduced her to his parents in heaven. Continuing his fantasizing, Avi says he will elope with Jija and he will build a house in the sky for her so that she can live away from this troubling world. The house which he will build for Jija will be extraordinarily beautiful and unusual. The door to her room will be made of the moon. Her windows will be made of stars. The road that will lead to her house will be made of a rainbow. Avi indicates that it is not only humans like himself who exonerate Jija Kwandza; God also considers Jija Kwandza a special person.

Avi's secret love and admiration for Jija starting from the day she gave him water to drink can no longer be suppressed. He tries to suppress his love for Jija because he fears that he is too old and too poor for her. When Jija breaks the norm by introducing Avi as the man she wants to marry, Avi does not accept Jija's marriage proposal. This is not

because he does not wish to marry her (as a matter of fact he is madly in love with her), but because he feels that he is too old and too poor to be her husband. He fears he will not adequately satisfy her emotionally and materially. The best way he thinks he can speak out and let people know what is going on in his mind and the way he feels about Jija Kwandza, his beloved, is to compose this love song which he can then sing for Jija and his other listeners to hear. To some extent, he has succeeded because today, Avi Pwasi's song about Jija Kwandza has been listened to by most Bura speakers, including those who currently live outside Bura land. Even people who are not Bura have heard the song because it has been played many times on Borno Radio and Television and on Nigerian Television Authority, Maiduguri. Also, people who sell tape-recorded Bura traditional music sell Avi Pwasi's recorded songs, including this song, in market places and on streets in various cities and towns in Borno State, especially in Biu town where Bura people are predominant.

In contrast to the classic love song which Avi Pwasi composed about Jija Kwandza, there is a love song, Song D8, composed with a different performative intent by Musa Gwoadzang, about a girl named Yarami Audu. Musa was in love with Yarami and in order to win her love, he expressed his love and admiration to her through this song. During my interview with Musa on December 31, 1994 at his house in Gwoadzang, he told me he had hoped that Yarami would marry him. Unfortunately, she married somebody else. He said that whereas he succeeded in winning the love of his current wives through songs, he was unable to win Yarami's love through the song which he composed

about her. Unlike Avi Pwasi who continued to sing his song about Jija even after Jija became married to someone else, as soon as Yarami got married to another man, Gwoadzang stopped praising her through songs. Yarami's name was replaced by other women who are now currently Gwoadzang's wives.

The following is the full text of the love song which Gwoadzang composed about Yarami:

Yarami the girl from Kidang,
Suzuki woman.
Yarami the girl from Kidang,
Suzuki woman.
Ding-ding-ki-di-ding.

Her teeth are like millet flour.
Her neck is like a cornstalk.
Yarami my friend.
I am afraid Yarami has not come
to the musical occasion.
Ki-ding, kiri-di-ding.
Love, love.
This is the modern way of calling it.
Ostrich, prime woman.
Yarami, thank you.
Are your face marks made with a straight razor?
No my friend, with a razor blade.

How much does a pair of Bally cost
So that I can buy a pair for my beloved?
How much does a silk cloth cost
So that I can buy some for my beloved?

Mwada the girl from Bilatum,
when she is among educated ladies
one cannot differentiate her.
Princess Pindar, she is light in complexion.
She has become light-skinned like a European lady.

In the song which Musa composed about Yarami he eulogizes Yarami's physical beauty. The singer uses both foreign and local images to describe Yarami's beauty. He directly compares Yarami's physical beauty to Suzuki the Japanese-made motorcycle: "Yarami, from Kidang, Suzuki woman." Avi Pwasi employed the image of an airplane in his love song about Jija Kwandza, demonstrating the use of modern technology as images and metaphors by Bura folksingers. Musa also uses materials in Bura natural and home environments as images for his description of Yarami's beauty. For instance, he says Yarami's teeth are white and beautiful like millet flour. Her neck is slender, long, smooth, and beautiful like a corn stalk. He also refers to her as *mwala apa zhimnaku* (a woman like an ostrich) and as *mbikilir mwala* (a woman in her prime). In Bura culture, elegance, long neck and millet-white teeth constitute a woman's physical beauty and attractiveness.

Bura musical occasions are ideal places for socialization. These are situations where lovers meet to converse, to dance and to laugh. Hence when Musa did not see Yarami in the crowd he felt worried and disappointed. The singer is worried perhaps that Yarami is more interested in someone else.

Musa admires Yarami's beautiful tribal face marks. Like two lovers having a conversation, he asks a rhetorical question as to whether Yarami's face marks were designed with a shaving knife. Then he replies by pointing out that Yarami's face marks are not made with a shaving knife but with a razor blade: "Are your face marks made with a straight razor?/No my friend, with a razor blade." Similar Admiration of a lady's physical beauty by her lover is expressed in Acoli song, especially in the following excerpts:

When I see the beauty on my beloved's face
 When I see the beauty on my beloved's face,
 I throw away the food in my hand;....

Her neck is long, when I see it
 I cannot sleep one wink;...
 Her neck is like the shaft of a spear.
 When I touch the tatoos on her back,
 I die;...

When I see the gap in my beloved's teeth,
 Her teeth are white like dry season simsim.³⁶

The singer reveals his intention to buy shoes and clothes for Yarami as a mark of his love for her.

How much does a pair of bally shoes cost
 So that I can buy a pair for my beloved?
 How much does silk cloth cost
 So that I can buy some for my beloved?

The content of the song shows that Yarami was not the only lady eulogized by Musa in the song. Other local famous beauties have featured in the song as "figurative" allusions. One of those village "belles" is Mwada from Bilatum village. Musa remarks that Mwada, who has not acquired any level of Western education, looks and behaves like a Bura educated lady. This notion stereotypes people who have acquired western education; those who have acquired secondary and university education are considered more "civilized," smarter, neater, more fashionable and more attractive than non-literate villagers and other people who have not acquired any level or form of western education. In the song, the singer points out that although Mwada is uneducated and lives in a village, whenever she is among educated girls at social occasions such as musical events,

weddings, and at market places, it is hard for a stranger to identify her as an uneducated lady. This is because she looks and behaves like an educated lady: "When Mwada Bilatum is among educated ladies/One cannot differentiate her."

The singer also has some words of praise and admiration for a beautiful lady named Pindar. She is metaphorically described as a "princess." This implies that she is respected, honourable and beautiful. The singer also admires Pindar's beautiful skin which he describes as light in complexion. Although Pindar's light skin is just natural, the singer attributes it to the fact that she likes bathing. Using hyperbole and simile, the singer compares Pindar's light skin to the skin of a white woman. In Bura society, many people prefer a light skin complexion to dark skin complexion. Making value judgments on the basis of appearance, a light-skinned Bura lady is often considered to be neater, more beautiful and more attractive than a Bura woman who is dark skinned.

There are other Bura songs about relationships which I recorded from Bura individuals who are not the original composers and singers of the songs, but are active bearers and good conduits of Bura folksongs. Some of the songs which I collected from these sources are about love relationships. A case in point is Song D6 sung by a woman named Shetu Musamndiya. The following is a version of the song, recited by Zainabu Kubili Lawan in December 1988:

My husband's voice is not sweet to me.
 Only my lover's voice is sweet to me.
 Musamndia's voice is not sweet to me.
 Only my lover's voice is sweet to me.

I wish my husband is taken and dumped inside a bush.
 And my lover is brought to me so that we can go away.
 I wish Musamdia is taken and dumped inside a bush
 And Markusu is brought to me so that we can run away.
 I wish Musamdia with his big mouth is taken away
 And Markusu who is handsome is brought to me
 So that we can go away.

Is the lorry travelling to Herwa town still here?
 They shook hands with Useni; what did they discuss?
 I wish my husband is taken and dumped inside a bush
 And my lover is brought to me so that we can run away.

According to my informant, the song was originally composed and performed by a Bura woman named Shetu Musamdia during a Bura folk music performance at the funeral ceremony of a deceased old Bura person at Pakilama Village. The speaker in the song reveals to the audience that she is in love with a man other than her husband. She made a public declaration of her love for the other man through the song. In contrast, she denounces her husband by alleging that her husband's voice is not "sweet" to her; only her lover's voice is "sweet" to her. This is an indirect way of saying that her husband is not the man she truly loves. Later, in the song, she lets the "cat out of the bag" and shows how much she loves the other man and how much she hates her husband.

I wish Musamdia with his big mouth is taken away
 And dumped inside a bush
 And Markusu who is handsome is brought to me
 So that we can go away.

She was bold enough to reveal to her audience the name of her lover and what she wants to happen to her and her lover.

In the past, Bura girls were often married away by their parents when they were still in their early teens. Often, the girls were too young to understand what romantic love or marriage was. Later in the marriage, some of the women would realize that the men they are in love with are men other than their husbands. Most women try to suppress their feelings of love for men other than their husbands and remain faithful to their husbands. There are a few women who, like this singer, are daring enough to publicly proclaim and reveal that they are in love with other men. During the musical performance, the audience may admire her courage for these public declarations and also be entertained by the humour in the song. But after the performance, when the poetic license and freedom of expression and the reversal of social order are no longer permitted, such a woman is openly or secretly abused or accused of infidelity by her husband, her in-laws, and by other people in her community. The woman who composed this song that reveals her infidelity was not divorced by her husband. Instead, her husband treated her well so as not to lose her to the lover.

There is another song about a love relationship sung by a young woman named Mwajim Musa. It is Song D10 below:

Oh, my handsome boy.
 If I do not marry you
 I will die and my body will swell up.
 Oh, my handsome boy.
 If I do not marry you
 I will die and my body will swell up.

People in this village are treacherous.
 They gossip here and gossip there.

Now they have deprived me of my beloved.
 People in this village are wicked.
 They gossip here and gossip there.
 See they have deprived me of my beloved.

In the song, the young woman expresses her love for her boyfriend whom she is about to lose because people have gossiped about her to the boy and discouraged him from proposing marriage to her. With deep emotions, the speaker in the song says that if she does not marry the boy, she will die. And when she dies, her corpse will swell up. According to Bura folk belief, when a person dies and the deceased person's corpse swells up, either the person was a witch or was greatly offended while still alive. In the case of the speaker in this song, it will mean that she was greatly wronged.

Through the song, the girl also reveals her feelings of anger and despair caused by people's gossip about her which led to her boyfriend's refusal to propose marriage. There are some people who interfere in other people's love relationships and either destroy the relationships or destabilize them. They do it either out of jealousy, sentiment or wickedness.

The foregoing analysis of Bura love songs shows how Bura individuals of both genders express their feelings and ideas about love through songs.

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

As discussed in Chapter One, there are three religions observed by the Bura. Some Bura Christians and the others are either Muslims or followers of indigenous Bura

traditional religion. However, despite the differences in their religious identities, Bura Christians and non-Christians have almost the same mental picture of *Hyel Mthlaku* (Supreme God) and the same philosophy of life. Thus, it is not unusual to find many Bura individuals who have ambivalent attitudes toward the three religions. For instance, there are some Bura Muslims who keep in their bedrooms traditional religious folk objects as protective charms. Similarly, there are some Bura Christians who consult Bura traditional spiritualists for physical and spiritual healing.

Songs are composed to communicate religious and philosophical messages. Bura religious songs treat subjects that range from *Hyel Mthlaku* (God Almighty) to concerns about life after death. Many of the religious songs also contain praises, supplications and appeals to *Hyel Mthlaku* (God Almighty), to Bura traditional deities such as Bura ancestors or to some religious individuals. The songs also describe the attributes, characteristics and roles of the religious figures. Furthermore, some of the religious songs describe Bura people's views about the relationship between human beings and God, the deities and the ancestors. Other religious themes treated are resurrection, judgement, heaven and hell.

Finally, there are religious songs which deal with issues related to the philosophy of life and human nature such as good and evil, crime and punishment, sickness, suffering and death. As I explained earlier, the songs analyzed in the study are limited to Bura Christian folksongs and songs about Bura traditional deities and ancestors.

Christian Beliefs and Values

The largest number of Bura religious songs collected for the purpose of this study are Bura Christian folksongs. They were composed and sung by Waziri at various religious and social occasions including church services, weddings of Bura Christian couples and funerals of deceased Bura Christians.

From the 1970s up to the early 1990s, I attended many church services, Christian conferences and seminars, Christian weddings and funerals in Bura communities and I observed and listened to Waziri singing religious songs on many of those religious and social occasions. I participated many times in the dancing and the singing of the choruses for the songs which Waziri performed, and like many in her Bura audiences, I learned and memorized many of Waziri's religious songs. However, I did not think of conducting a scholarly study of the religious songs until I started to study folklore. At that point I realized and felt that Waziri's Christian songs deserve to be collected and documented in a scholarly fashion.³⁷

Some of the wedding and funeral songs in Waziri's repertoire express religious and philosophical ideas. For example, the songs which I recorded at the wedding ceremony at Bindirim on April 11, 1995 contain not only praises for the bride and the bridegroom and their parents, but also religious themes such as expressions of praise, thanksgiving and worship to God and to Jesus Christ. Furthermore, as Waziri said to me during my oral interview with her on January 22, 1995, most of the songs which she sang at the wedding at Bindirim contain ideas and values adapted from the Bible such as keys to a happy and

successful marriage, rules for a Christian wife and husband and a Christian home or family. Saraya said her main objective for singing religious songs at every wedding at which she is invited to sing is to teach and to advise the newly married Christian couple to live their married life based on Biblical principles and doctrines.

One of Waziri's wedding songs which has already been analyzed under the theme of love and relationships contains religious lessons and advice for the bride and bridegroom. The Christian marriage principles and values which she incorporates into the song include the need for the Christian married couple to be tolerant and patient with each other. The singer also makes reference to biblical principles such as the idea that wives should be submissive to their husbands because husbands are the heads of their families, as Christ is the head of the church.

Waziri also admonishes her audience, especially the guests at the wedding, to uphold the newlyweds in their prayers and ask God to bless the new couple's marriage and to grant them a happy and successful marriage, "All of us Christians we are very happy. Let us pray for God to help them." In addition, the singer advises the newlyweds as well as the guests who are already married to apply in their marriages the doctrines and rules of Christian marriage which the officiating pastor preached to them at the wedding.

The singer also praises and commends the wedding, describing it as a clean or a holy wedding by virtue of its being Christian. She also eulogizes the newlyweds by describing them as being clean in their deeds and in their physical appearance. These may not be real attributes of all Christian weddings and Christian couples. Rather, they are the

ideal images, assumptions or expectations of Christian weddings and Christian couples. Waziri said that sometimes she repeats songs which she originally sang during Sunday church services and at other Christian events such as during fellowships, retreats, seminars and conferences. The following Song F5 was originally sung by Waziri at a Christian conference but she has repeated it at church services, fellowships and retreats.

Let us not be afraid,
 Let us preach the Word in the Bible
 Without ceasing.

I wish I am like a bird
 So that I can fly around the world
 And preach about Jesus.
 If I were a fog I will cover the whole world
 So that they can hear about Jesus.

When I become baptized I will go around the world
 And preach about Jesus.
 I wish I am like a bird
 So that I can fly around the world
 And preach about Jesus.
 If I were a fog I will cover the whole world
 So that they can hear about Jesus.

The main theme of this song is Christian evangelism. The singer admonishes her Christian listeners to go out and preach the gospel about Jesus Christ to people as they have been enjoined by Christ in Acts 1:8.30.

Using images taken from the natural environment, the singer expresses her desire to travel around the world and preach the gospel so that the whole world can hear about the saving grace of Jesus Christ. For instance, she said she wishes that she could fly like a bird so that she could fly around the whole world free of charge and preach about Jesus.

She also wishes that she was a fog so that she can cover the whole world and make people all over the world hear about Jesus Christ.

Waziri said that during Sunday church services, she is often invited by the person conducting the service to minister the Word of God to the congregation through songs. Usually she is invited to sing one or two songs, as special numbers before and after the preacher delivers his sermon. The following, Song F1, can serve as an example:

They said Father that there is someone greater than you,
 There is no one greater than you.
 They said Jesus that there is someone greater than you,
 There is no one greater than you.

Some prophets died, and decayed in their graves
 But the Son of God arose from the grave.
 Give your heart to Jesus the Son of God.
 And he will save you from your sins.

This song was performed by Waziri during a service in Marama church in 1989. Versions of this song are often performed in Bura local churches during Christian festivals like Christmas and Easter. In this song, the singer expresses praise and supplication to God. God is described as "Father." The Christian beliefs in the supremacy of God and in death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are also expressed in this song. Because Jesus is considered the Son of God and Saviour by Christians, the singer advises her listeners to believe in Christ. He will save them from their sins. This depicts the Christian notion of the relationship between God and human beings -- that anyone who believes in God and repents of his or her sins to God will be forgiven and saved from eternal condemnation. The song therefore touches on topics of God; the death and resurrection of Christ; sin;

repentance; and God's salvation of those who believe in Him.

Another Bura Christian song composed by Waziri is Song F2 below:

Lord Almighty, as we come into your presence
 Please be in our midst, and have mercy on us.
 Lord Almighty, please accept our prayers,
 Satan has set a trap for us.

Even if someone slaps me
 I ask you Jesus to give me patience.
 Even if someone abuses me
 I ask you Jesus to give me patience.
 Oh, it is hard for me to be patient.
 I ask you Jesus to give me patience.

This song reveals the kinds of supplications and requests which Bura Christians make to God. The singer requests God to be in the midst of the worshippers during the worship service. Thus, the singer, like other Christians, expresses the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent nature of God. The singer also asks God to have mercy on the members of the congregation, and to save them from their sins. Furthermore, she asks God to give her patience so that even if someone abuses her she will not retaliate.

Like preachers' sermons at the Sunday church services, Saraya's songs minister to the hearts and the souls of her listeners. During Sunday church services, Waziri often leads the Christian Women's Fellowship. The group sings songs as special numbers to accompany the collection of offerings, to invite preachers to the pulpit to preach, and to conclude Sunday church services. Sometimes, immediately after a preacher finishes his sermon, Waziri and her singing group emphasize or validate what the preacher preached about. The Song F6 below is a good example:

When the Word of God dwells in my heart,
 I do not fear anything in this world.
 When the Word of God dwells in my heart,
 I do not fear anything in this world.

The Word of God is not enough for me,
 I want to be given more.
 The Word of God is not enough for me,
 I want to be given more.

The Word of God dwells in my heart,
 I do not fear even the suffering in this world.
 The World of God dwells in my heart
 I do not fear even the suffering in this world.

In the song, the singer depicts the power and impact of the Word of God on the minds and lives of members of the audience. Using herself as an example, she says it helps her to overcome her fears. It also reinforces her faith in God. Certain aspects of human nature such as human sufferings, fears and needs have been highlighted in the song. Also implied is the Christian belief that even in the midst of fears and sufferings, God gives those who believe in Him the grace and power to overcome their fears and trials, and to experience the peace of God which passes all human understanding. There is another one of Waziri's songs in which she admonishes members of her audience to accept Christ as their saviour and be saved. It is Song F7 below:

Come all Christians and let us believe in the Son of God
 Because the world is turning.
 Come all Christians and let us believe in the Son of God
 Because the world is shaking.
 Come all Christians and let us believe in the Son of God
 Because the world is turning.

If we believe there will be no judgement against us,

We will go home and be with the Son of God.
 If we believe there will be no judgement against us,
 We will go home and be with the Son of God.
 Even if you are poor you will still die.
 Why don't you repent so that you can go and meet Jesus?
 Even if you are wealthy you will still die.
 Why don't you repent so that you can go and meet Jesus?

Come Christians and let us believe in the Son of God
 Because the world is shaking.
 Come Christians and let us believe in the Son of God
 Because the world is turning.
 If we believe there will be no judgement against us,
 We will go home and be with the Son of God.
 If we believe there will be no judgement against us,
 We will go home and be with the Son of God.

The singer warns members of her audience to accept Christ as their saviour because the world is now "shaking" or coming to an end. She exhorts them by telling them that if they have faith in Christ, on judgement day they will not be condemned but will enter into the "Kingdom of God."

Philosophical views about human life and human nature are also described in the song. An example is human mortality. Another reality of life mentioned in the song is the fact that death is not a respecter of people. Whether a person is rich or poor the person can still die. These views about human life tend to be comforting and therapeutic especially for the poor or the masses. They feel that when it comes to dying, even the wealthy cannot escape it. She also makes reference to the idea that heaven and hell can be places for both the rich and the poor. Human mortality, punishment for evil, reward for good, heaven and hell are not views that are peculiar to Christianity. These are views

shared by Bura Christians and non-Christians.

There is another song in which Waziri challenges Christian women, especially women who are in the Christian Women's Fellowship, to use the talents which God has given to them to do the work of God. Her message is well conveyed in the following Song F8:

Christian women we all have talents,
 Let us do the work of the Son of God.
 Christian women we all have talents,
 Let us do the work of the Son of God.
 All of us members have talents,
 Let us do the work of the Son of God.

Jesus took a talent and gave it to you
 If you do not work with it,
 How do expect to get a reward?
 Someone who works with her talent
 Will get a reward from the Son of God.
 Someone who work with his talent
 Will get some reward from the Son of God.

Christian women we all have talents,
 Let us do the work of the Son of God.
 Christian men you all have talents,
 You should do the work of the Son of God.

Jesus took a talent and gave it to you
 If you do not work with it,
 How do expect to get some reward?
 Jesus took a talent and gave it to you
 If you do not work with it,
 How do you expect to get some reward?
 Someone who works with her talent
 Will get a reward from the Son of God.

In the song, Waziri points out to her women listeners that, like their male counterparts, they have been endowed with various talents by God to do the work of evangelism. The singer's main talent is to preach the Word of God through songs. Waziri calls on the men

in the church who have talents but have not been using their talents to serve God, to become active in doing so. The singer points out that Christians who do not make use of their talents but "bury" them will not receive any further reward from God.

In Bura society, the traditional expectation of women is to support men, even though women are capable of performing male or masculine roles. Waziri's encouragement and motivations for Bura Christian women to be actively involved in Christian activities and other things that matter in Bura society have revolutionized the way Bura women think and behave, and the way that Bura women are treated by their male counterparts. At first, some men viewed Saraya as a threat to their authority in the church and other social activities. But this version of the Western feminist movement continued to grow and to gain popularity among Bura Christian women and even Bura non-Christian women. Today, these motivations and encouragements which Saraya gave to Bura Christian women have paid off. When I was doing field research from December 1994 to April 1995, I observed that members of the Bura Christian Women's Fellowship are now actively involved in charity work and in church activities. In the area of charity work, they attend funerals and console the bereaved through songs. They also prepare meals and take them to bereaved families. They visit the sick people who are lying in hospitals or in their homes, and give the patients gifts of money or food. When there is a wedding ceremony they attend it and make the wedding occasion joyful and successful by performing their Christian songs accompanied with music and dance. The women also educate their members about politics of the day. Women whose talents are to participate in politics are

motivated and encouraged to join politics. My sister, Mrs. Myada Bata Ndahi, is an active member of the Bura Christian Women's Fellowship. When she joined politics in 1988 and contested for the position of Councillor in Shani Local Government she received overwhelming support from the Christian women. Bura women who are Muslims voted for her also. She won the election by defeating her male opponent.

In another religious song, Song F9 below, Saraya describes what will happen to a Christian who disobeys the Word of God, and what will happen to someone who repents of his or her sins and accepts Christ as his or her personal Lord and Saviour.

Yesterday in the night I was thinking, I was thinking.
 What was I thinking about?
 Yesterday in the night I was thinking, I was thinking.
 What was I thinking about?
 Oh my sister you are thinking, you are thinking.
 What are you thinking about?
 Oh my brother you are thinking, you are thinking.
 What are you thinking about?

Jesus suffered and He endured
 And we turned His suffering into a joke?
 Jesus suffered and He endured
 And we turned His suffering into a joke?

He suffered and He was beaten.
 He receive it because of me and because of you.
 He suffered and He was nailed.
 He received it because of you and because of me.
 Jesus suffered and He died.
 He received it because of me and because of you.
 Jesus suffered and He died.
 He received it because of you and because of me.

Yesterday in the night I was thinking, I was thinking.
 What was I thinking about?

Oh my sister you are thinking, you are thinking.
 What are you thinking about?
 Oh my brother you are thinking, you are thinking.
 What are you thinking about?
 Jesus suffered and He endured,

And we turned His suffering into a joke?
 He suffered and He was beaten.
 He received it because of me and because of you.
 Jesus suffered and He was nailed.
 He received it because of me and because of you.

The singer's point of view tallies with the Christian idea that the thoughts of a sinful person are evil or corrupt, and that there is no peace for the wicked. The singer points out that such a person will not enjoy the peace of God. The singer does not exempt herself from this problem.

This song is one of the songs which Waziri says she sings especially at church services and at funerals as a medium for preaching to her listeners about Christ's gift of salvation and the need of her listeners to accept and obey the Word of God. Emphasized in this song is the Christian idea that Christ came into this world and suffered and was crucified on the cross of Calvary for the salvation of human beings from eternal condemnation so that they can have everlasting life.

Another of Waziri's evangelical songs in which she exhorts the listeners to obey the Word of God which has been preached to them from the Bible is Song F10 below:

Somebody who wants to have everlasting life
 If you hear the Word from the Bible
 You should not reject it.
 Somebody who wants to have everlasting life
 If you hear the injunctions from the Bible

You should think.

Somebody who endures will go and be with Him.
 She will be free from suffering in hell.
 Those who endure will go and meet Him.
 They will be free from suffering in hell.
 But if we play with it we will lose.
 We will cause our soul to lose.
 But if we reject it we will lose.
 We will lose our lives.

Somebody who wants everlasting life
 If you hear the Word from the Bible
 You should not reject it.
 Somebody who wants everlasting life
 If you hear the Word from the Bible
 You should think.

Somebody who endures will go and be with Him.
 She will be free from suffering in hell.
 But if we reject it we will lose.
 We will lose our lives.

She says anyone who wants to have everlasting life should do what the Bible says. Any one who hears the Word and obeys it will go to heaven. In this song as in many of her spiritual songs, Waziri reiterates the idea of going to heaven as being one of the rewards for obeying the Word of God, and going to hell as one of the consequences for refusing to obey what the Bible says.

Traditional Bura Deities and Ancestors

There is no evidence of well established cults in Bura society as in the case of the Hausa/Fulani *Bori* cult (Devil Worship) in northern Nigeria and the *Yeve* cult (the cult of the God of Thunder) in Ghana.³⁸ But there are Bura religious songs which are sung partly

in the contexts of Bura traditional religious beliefs and religious activities and partly in the context of community secular festival celebrations. This type of Bura traditional song is composed by followers of indigenous Bura deities such as *nua habtu* (the worship of nature and inanimate objects) and *nua angiramta* (ancestor worship). Some Bura religious songs focus on praises, worship and prayers of request and supplication to Bura *habtu* (deities) and Bura *angiramta* (ancestors). Followers believe that Bura deities and ancestors are endowed with supernatural powers -- powers which enable these supreme beings to provide for the needs of the Bura people. As a result, when there is *ula* (drought), the worshipers of traditional Bura religion take to the streets with *pelayari* (stones), *zwolayari* (long sticks) and *uuu at kusar mamzham* (bunch) of burning grass) and march in processions, praying through songs, chants and incantations to their deities and their ancestors to save them from impending famine by causing rain to fall on their farm lands so that they can plant crops and have bumper harvests.

Mjir nuwa haptu (followers of indigenous Bura traditional religion) often praise, worship and pray to Bura gods or deities and Bura ancestors through songs and incantations. Usually, when there is an abundance of food, relative peace and tranquillity, reduced mortality rate and adequate rainfall in Bura society, the followers of Bura traditional religion make material sacrifices with the *mamshi* (blood) of *gam* (ram), *kwi* (goat) or *mtika* (chicken). During the ritual sacrifice, participants sing songs of praise and supplication to the Bura deities and ancestors. Sometimes they deposit grain and pour *burkutuka* (locally brewed millet or corn beer as libation) on the grave stones of prominent

Bura ancestors and in sacred groves. Graveyards and sacred groves are believed to be the abodes of Bura deities and spirits. Other themes include appeals for the divine healing and protection from *ngawakur* (sickness) and *mta kakir* (untimely death). Supplications are also made to the deities and the ancestors for rain in times of drought and for children to those who are barren. Also, when *sur mahala* (a taboo) is broken, appropriate incantations and food offerings are made to the gods and ancestors.

In the following Song F4, recited by Mavi Dzrama, supplications and appeals were made to *Hyel Mthlaku*, the Bura supreme deity. The deity was asked to provide a drought-stricken Bura community with rain water so that they could get some water to drink as well as water for their crops to grow.

- Lead Singer: The sky is cloudy,
But there is no sound of thunder.
- Chorus: Oh! Oh God Almighty!
- Lead Singer: Give us water Grandfather,
Give us water to drink.
- Chorus: Oh! Oh God!
- Lead Singer: Give us water; there are tears
In my eyes.
- Chorus: Oh! Oh God Almighty!
- Lead singer: Children are crying for water
God our Father.
- Chorus: Oh! Oh God!
- Lead Singer: Give us water Grandfather.
Give us water to drink.
- Chorus: Oh! Oh God our Father!

The relationship between the people and *Hyel Mthlaku* is clearly reflected in the song. He is their father, their grandfather, and provider of their needs, such as water for drinking and growing crops, as well as their protector and saviour from their enemies and

their divine healer from sicknesses. This song in which people in a Bura community prayed for rain is quite similar with the following song from Malawi:

Chauta we beseech you, we beseech you!
 You have refused us rain, we beseech you!
 The whole land has dried up, we beseech you!
 Give us rain today, we beseech you!
 We are concerned, we beseech you!
 Have mercy on us, we beseech you!
 Do not abandon us your children, we beseech you!
 Do not harden your heart against us, we beseech you!
 Send us rain, we beseech you!³⁹

In the Bura song, references are also made to Bura weather lore and beliefs. For instance, the Bura believe that even if the sky is very cloudy, unless there have been loud sounds of thunder, rain may not fall. Thus, unless they hear loud sounds of thunder, the presence of clouds in the sky will not stop Bura people from appealing to *Hyel Mthlaku* for rain through songs.

Another Bura traditional belief reflected in this song is that children are innocent. If society is punished for its sins in the form of *ula* (drought), *mi* (famine) or pestilence, the children are not responsible. The Bura people also believe that because *Hyel Mthlaku* considers children to be innocent, He does not intentionally punish children with hunger and thirst as a result of sins committed by adults. Hence, in the song *Hyel Mthlaku* is asked to provide the community with rain even for the sake of the innocent dehydrated children who have been crying for water to drink.

Children are crying for water
 God our Father.
 Oh! Oh God!

Give us water Grandfather.
 Give water to drink.
 Oh! Oh God our Father.

Also, in a state of desperation and helplessness, adults become humble and they cry out to God for help or for rescue just as children cry to their human parents for help. They believe that by crying out to *Hye! Mthlaku* for help He will hear their cries and He will have compassion for them and bring solutions to their problems.

Give us water to drink.
 Oh! Oh God!
 Give us water, there is tears in my eyes.
 Oh! Oh God Almighty!

Many Bura elders and Bura children who live in Bura communities know how to sing this song. However, there were no Bura elders who could tell me the original composer of the song and the occasion for praying for rain at which the song was first sung. The song was composed a long time ago and has since entered into the stream of Bura folksong tradition to be transmitted orally from one generation to the next. As a child growing up in Bura land in the 1960s and the 1970s, I used to participate in singing the song at the annual procession organized by members of the Bura community to appeal to God for rain each time there was a drought. Like other children, I used to look forward to the occasion mainly because I enjoyed the singing, the dancing and the feelings of solidarity and commonality among the participants. Quite often, the annual processions organized by worshipers of indigenous Bura deities to appeal to the deities for rain are joined by Bura Christians and Muslims. This attitude reflects the freedom of worship and

the religious tolerance in Bura society.

POLITICS AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

Certain Bura folksongs express political issues and ideas in a variety of ways. Some songs inform and educate the populace on government policies and programs as well as the political ideologies and manifestos of political parties. Others contain ridicule, abuse or criticism of "bad" government policies and programs. As well, leaders whose behaviours and attitudes are not socially and culturally acceptable in Bura society are criticized through songs. For instance, governments and politicians who are corrupt, dictatorial, oppressive and exploitative are abused, criticized and satirized through songs on behalf of the populace. Other Bura political songs contain praises and admiration for governments, politicians and traditional rulers whose policies, activities and behaviours are considered benevolent to the citizens.

When Britain colonized the region of Africa which today is known as Nigeria, in 1914, Britain adopted indirect rule as a colonial policy.⁴⁰ As a result, unlike the French policy of cultural, social, and political assimilation of its African colonies, Britain allowed its colonies to retain a measure of cultural and political independence.⁴¹ Britain ruled and administered Nigeria through established traditional political institutions. For instance, in the northern part of Nigeria, the Sokoto caliphate, the Emir, Chiefs, *Kuthiyeri* (kings), *Lawanayeri* (Village Heads) and *Bulamas* (Ward Heads) were given the authority and the moral support to rule the northern region under the influence of the British Empire.⁴² In

the western Yoruba region, the *Alaafin*, the *Oba* and the *Ooni* retained their positions and roles as the traditional rulers of the people in the western region.⁴³ They were only supervised and overseen by officials of the British Empire. In the eastern region, traditional rulers such as the *Ezeulu*, the *Obi* and other local chiefs and title holders ruled and administered during the colonial era.⁴⁴ Representatives of the British Empire were in the colony primarily to oversee and ensure political stability and peace in the colony so that they could export natural resources and agricultural products to Britain.⁴⁵ Britain provided the traditional institutions with legal, military and logistical backing so as to enable the traditional rulers to effectively rule and administer their kingdoms, chiefdoms, emirates and communities.⁴⁶

As some people say, "absolute power corrupts." Because the traditional rulers were given so much power and legal and military backing by the British Empire, some of the traditional rulers became oppressive and dictatorial to their subjects. A case in point was the Pabir dynasty which ruled the Biu Division during the colonial era.⁴⁷ The Biu Division which is now called Biu Emirate is the area where the Bura ethnic group is predominant. The Pabir, which is the ruling family, share a kinship with the Bura people. As history records, Yamtardwala who was the founder of the ruling Pabir clan in Biu had a Bura mother. But the Pabir and the Bura have never been on friendly terms. During the colonial period, the Pabir ruled the Bura people who were then under their political jurisdiction with an iron hand.⁴⁸

I asked some Bura elders to describe the experiences of the Bura people during the

colonial period which lasted from 1914 to 1960. In 1988 I asked Mavi Dzarma and Zainabu Kubili Lawan how the situation was during the colonial days. Their experiences were horror stories. They told me stories of torture, slavery, exploitation and oppression suffered by the Bura people in the hands of the Pabir rulers. My informants both told me that the colonial era was described by the Bura people who experienced it as *Zamanir dika gomgom*. This means "the era of pounding tins." This common phrase was derived from one of the punishments given to Bura people when the representatives of the Pabir rulers came to Bura villages to force the Bura villagers to pay heavy taxes and to give the Pabir rulers their domestic animals such as cows, goats, sheep and chickens and food stuffs such as guinea corn, maize, groundnuts and beans. Whenever the Bura villagers refused to give away their domestic animals and food stuffs to the agents of the *Kuthlir Biu* (King of Biu), the "offenders" would be arrested and taken to the market place and they would be beaten by the *dandoka* (law enforcement agents) who were also the King's agents. Afterwards, the "violators" heads would be shaved and they would be forced to sit under the hot sun and some of the King's agents would pound empty tins on their bald heads until the tins became crumpled or flattened. My informants said it was a painful experience. Some Bura villagers who refused to surrender their animals and food stuffs were arrested and sent to jail at Biu.

Throughout the colonial era, the Bura people continued to experience oppression, exploitation and torture in the hand of the agents of the King of Biu. There was no political authority to whom they could lay their complaints about their treatments by the

Pabir rulers. This was because the Pabir rulers claimed that they were collecting the taxes, the animals and foodstuffs from their Bura subjects on behalf of the colonial administrator stationed at Biu. Song G1 is a Bura political song in which protest and resistance against the oppression and exploitation of the Bura people by the Pabir rulers during the colonial era is expressed. I collected the song from Zainabu Kubili Lawan. She said the song was originally composed and sung by Sakdiya Sakwa. She does not remember the exact date but she said that during the colonial period the Bura people used songs as a medium for expressing their protests and complaints. Sakdiya used to play *alkita* (flute) music during Bura folk music performances. Each time he performed he would produce tunes and the audience-participants would verbalize them by singing out the words. It was quite like the Bura drummers' use of talking drums to create songs through tunes enabling the audience-participants to verbalize the songs. This system was employed for reasons of safety because when the rulers or their agents accused the folk musicians of composing songs of protest, abuse and satire about them, the musicians would deny the allegations by saying that they only composed and played tunes. It was therefore easy for the Bura drummers and flute players to escape arrest and indictments by the rulers and their agents whenever they composed and sang such songs. The following is the song composed by Sakdiya Sakwa:

You are not nice people.
 You over there in Biu.
 You do not leave people's property alone.

Even if you take seven bags of money

And give it to them.
They will not refuse.

In this political song, Pabir rulers at Biu and their agents are criticized and ridiculed for their greed, corruption, their tyranny, oppression and their exploitation of the Bura people. The heavy taxes which Bura people were forced to pay is criticized: "Even if you take seven bags of money/And give to them they will not refuse."

The above statement reveals how the tax collectors were so greedy and inconsiderate that they were willing to squeeze every Bura tax payer dry of every penny which he or she had. As well the greed, corruption, tyranny and exploitation of the Pabir rulers and their agents demonstrated by their forceful seizures of Bura people's animals and foodstuffs have been described and criticized in the song.

You are not nice.
You over there in Biu.
You do not leave people's property alone.

Because the Bura populace could not voice their complaint and discontent with the Pabir rulers through other means without being punished by the Pabir rulers, Sakdiya Sakwa, with the help of his audience, composed and sang this song to voice their discontent. On the whole, this song mirrors the grim image of extortion and exploitation suffered by the Bura rural populace in the hands of their rulers at Biu during the British colonial era in Nigeria from 1914 to 1960. Contrast this protest song about the Pabir rulers in Biu with the following praise song about Leopold Senghor, a former president of Senegal, and you will see how oppressive and exploitative the Pabir rulers were to the

Bura people:

Senghor is our leader.
 All nations respect us.
 Everybody respects Leopold.
 Remember the time of the rice shortage
 And the increase in the price of ground-nuts!....

Senghor, you were our ambassador
 To Canada; you passed through the United States.
 On your return, ships berthed in Dakar.
 Each region received its fair share.
 You brought back peace and harmony.
 Oh! Leopold, oh! Independence is pleasant!
 You are not a man of war.
 Not a shot fired, not a sword drawn.
 (M'Bana Diop).⁴⁹

I collected another song about the people's show of resistance to Pabir oppression and exploitation during the colonial era. The song is Song G6. My informant for the song was Mavi Dzarma. I collected the song from her in December 1988. She could not remember the original composer and the first occasion at which the song was sung, but she said the song was originally sung during the colonial period by a Bura man to incite Bura listeners to resist being oppressed and exploited by Pabir rulers working as agents of the colonialists. The following is the text of the song:

Tell the Bura people
 They should not fetch water
 And tar the roads.
 You should tell the Bura people
 They should not fetch water
 And tar the roads.
 The Governor is tiny
 Like a newborn baby
 But we can't resist him.

This Governor is tiny
 Like a newborn baby
 Why can't we resist him?

The song depicts power and control exercised over the Bura by the Pabir rulers who served as agents for the British colonialists. In the song, the singer urges Bura people not to allow themselves to be oppressed and exploited by the colonialists and their Pabir agents. In particular, the singer encourages the people to resist forced labour such as fetching water and clearing and tarring roads for use by the colonialists and their Pabir agents.

The domineering and oppressive nature of the government officials are also portrayed, criticized and ridiculed in the song. The singer satirically described the colonial administrator stationed at Bui as being "tiny like a newborn baby," but very tough. In other words the colonial administrator whom the singer referred to in the song as *Gwamna* (Governor) is small in stature but tough and domineering.

According to my informant, many Bura male adults were forced to construct and clear existing bad roads to facilitate easy movement and transportation for the colonialists and their Pabir agents. Also many Bura adults were forced to fetch water for drinking and washing for the colonialists and their Pabir agents, especially during dry seasons when water was scarce. The song therefore reflects the ill treatment of Bura people by some of the colonialists and their Pabir agents. It also reveals the sentiments which the Bura people had towards the colonialists and especially towards their Pabir agents for subjecting Bura people to forced hard labour and for taking their money, animals and food m o stuffs.

From 1960 when Nigeria became independent, some Bura folksingers joined other northern Nigerian folk singers such as Dan Maraya Jos, Mamman Shata and Musa Dan Quairo, to serve as the mouthpiece of the government. Through songs, they helped to inform and educate the populace about the government's new policies and programs. The policies and programs included mass literacy, farming to combat hunger, war against indiscipline, health care, and planting trees to combat desert encroachments.

In one particular song, Song G8, which was composed and sung by a Bura folksinger named Saji Pindar at a music event marking Christmas celebration in the 1970s, the singer informs his Bura listeners about the government's new forestation program.

Even Maiduguri people value forestry.
 Even people in England value forestry.
 Forestry is valuable.
 Forestry is valuable.

People in England value forestry.
 People in Canada value forestry.
 Even people in America value forestry.
 Forestry is valuable.
 Forestry is valuable.

Through this song, the singer encourages the citizens to plant trees to check the threat of desert encroachment especially in the northern part of Nigeria where the threat is most potentially devastating. In his attempt to motivate his listeners to value forestry and plant trees, the singer cites examples of areas where tree planting is being enforced and where people value forestry such as in the town of Maiduguri and in foreign countries such as England, Canada and the United States of America.

When political parties and politicians in Nigeria are campaigning for election to democratic government, they usually use song as a medium for informing and persuading the voters to vote for them during the elections. There were five political parties during the democratic regime of the second Republic (1979-83) namely the National Party of Nigeria (NPN), Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP), Unity Party of Nigeria (UPN), Nigeria People's Party (NPP) and Progressive Republican Party (PRP). The National Party of Nigeria formed the majority government. In Bura society, political campaign songs are sung during political rallies and party conventions. Other occasions on which political campaign songs are sung are folk music events which are performed during festivals and wedding ceremonies. The campaign songs are composed by hired Bura folksingers and are sung by the singers joined by the politicians and their party supporters. Often the songs focus on topics related to politics. Song G3 was sung in 1982 by members and supporters of the now defunct Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP). They sang the song when they were traveling on the road in groups campaigning and whenever they assembled in Bura communities and villages to campaign for votes. The following is a version of the song recited by Patima Lawan:

Tell NPN members,
We want the rooster.
Tell NPN members,
We want GNPP.

We do not want maize,
We want the big rooster.
We do not want NPN,
We want GNPP.

NPN members are thieves.

This political song was used by Bura GNPP members in the 1980s to campaign for reelection as the ruling political party in Borno State of Nigeria. Through the song, members and supporters of the defunct Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP) try to win votes from the electorate by campaigning against and abusing the opposing political party. In the song, the GNPP supporters reveal to their listeners that NPN candidates are thieves. They encourage the voters to vote for the GNPP candidates because they are not thieves. The voters are asked not to vote for maize, the emblem of the National Party of Nigeria (NPN). Instead they should vote for the rooster, the Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP) emblem. This political song is a variant of an earlier election song in which two political parties hurled insults at each other during electioneering campaigns in Nigeria in the late 1950s. Each political party was described with its party emblem:

I: N.C.N.C.

The Palm tree grows in the far bush:
 Nobody allows the leper to build his house in the town:
 The palm tree grows in the far bush.

II: Action Group

The cock is sweet with rice,
 If one could get a little oil With a little salt
 And a couple of onions -
 Oh, the cock is so sweet with rice.
 Never mind how many cocks there are:
 Even twenty or thirty of them will be contained
 In a single chicken basket
 made from the palm tree!

III: N.C.N.C.

You have forgotten that the election is near.

You still show your greedy red eyes
 And make your tax assessment:
 You have forgotten that the election is near!⁵⁰

Bura political songs therefore comment on and express public opinion on political issues, disseminate government policies and programs and reflect the attitudes and behaviours of politicians and traditional rulers towards the citizens and vice versa. Even praise singers attached to traditional rulers and other leaders have often allowed themselves the freedom of advising the rulers on important matters, and their advice would include criticism of unwise conduct even if the harshness of the statement is somewhat controlled. This is all in the spirit that the society must be guided by certain standards of conduct from which not even the rulers are exempt.⁵¹

WORK

Songs are sung to accompany work, especially physical labour like farming, grinding, pounding and cutting firewood. Songs are sung by people while working, either in groups or solitarily. Songs which accompany work provide rhythmic structure for group labour and help to coordinate it.⁵² In addition to making references to the particular kinds of work that are being performed, Bura work songs also describe and reflect Bura cultural and social values and attitudes and beliefs. Song E1 below was sung by a group of Bura young men while tilling farmland with hoes so as to make the ground porous enough for planting seeds on a farmland.

Lead singer: Young men, young men, let us work hard.

Chorus: Yes, let us dig the ground!
 Lead singer: Leave the lazy young man behind.
 Chorus: Yes, let us dig the ground!

Lead singer: Let phlegm fall on the hoe,
 Let mucus fall on the tamarind tree.
 Chorus: Yes, let us dig the ground!
 Lead singer: Leave the lazy young man behind.
 Chorus: Yes, let us dig the ground!

This song is sung by workers themselves to accompany a group or communal work. This particular version was sung by a group of young men while tilling farmland in preparation for planting seeds. Apart from making reference to the work that they are doing, the song reflects certain Bura social and cultural values and social behaviours. An example of behaviour admired in Bura society is hard work, especially by young men. The young men doing the work are enjoined and encouraged through the song to work very hard. The lead singer warns that any one of them who is lazy will be left behind by those who are hard working. When a group of Bura young men are working on a farm they usually arrange themselves horizontally in single file. Any one of them who is left behind is considered lazy and weak. Every young man in the work group will work hard to keep pace with the other workers so as to avoid being left behind and considered a lazy man.

Usually, no matter how large the farm is, the working group is expected to finish hoeing the farm in a day. If the group fails, the members will be ridiculed, and girls may decide not to marry them. Therefore, the young men encourage themselves to work hard and complete the work they are doing early. To further spur the group to work hard, the lead singer tells them to work so hard as to cause mucus to flow from their noses and fall

on their hoes and on the tamarind trees. In a hot climate, it is easier to sweat than to have mucus flow from one's nose, unless one is doing very hard work.

There are other songs sung to accompany work. A case in point is Song E3 which was sung by a woman while grinding corn on a grinding stone in her room at night. The following is a version of the song recited by Zainabu Kubili Lawan

Oh, I deny myself sleep
 And stay up all night
 To think about the essence of living.
 Oh, I deny myself sleep
 And stay up all night
 To grind corn for my co-wife's son.
 Oh, I deny myself sleep
 And stay up all night
 To fetch some water for my co-wife's son.

Oh, I deny myself sleep
 And stay up all night
 To think about my co-wife's son.
 My drinking water is not appreciated,
 My food is not appreciated,
 No appreciation from my co-wife's son.

The singer refers to the work she is doing - grinding corn. At the same time, she reflects on other pressing issues bothering her. She seems to suggest that she is unhappy with her marriage. Her husband has two wives so she is a co-wife. The singer is frustrated with the competition for their husband's love and attention. To make matters worse for her, her co-wife's children do not show any appreciation to her for the food she cooks and the drinking water she fetches from the well for them. As tradition demands, she is supposed to feed and take care of her co-wife's children as she does her own children. She is

unhappy with her co-wife's son's ingratitude so she expresses her frustration and displeasure through a work song. She feels the boy should appreciate what she does for him even though it is her marital responsibility. Ingratitude is one of the attitudes most Bura people dislike because it cripples one's desire to continue to serve or to help others. The tone of the song suggests that the singer has other things "up her sleeve." It seems the husband favours the other wife and her children more than herself and her own children so she is jealous and unhappy about it. She indirectly complains against this neglect through the song.

In the song she reveals that she feels so unhappy and frustrated because of the neglect and lack of appreciation that she sometimes stays up all night and ponders the essence of life in general and of her marriage in particular. She sings the song in the quiet of night when the co-wife's son, her co-wife and their husband are at home in their beds because she wants them to hear the content of her song.

Thus, Bura work songs function as the hollers sung by African-Americans while working on plantations during the period of Black slavery in America.⁵³ Individuals or group of people accompany physical labour such as farming, grinding and pounding with singing. Apart from providing entertainment and rhythmic structure for the labour, the songs make references to the particular kinds of work that are being done. Furthermore, work songs are often employed as a medium for expressing Bura work ethics and topical issues such as politics, relationships and beliefs.

CHILDREN'S GAMES

Like their elders, Bura children love to turn any physical movement into song. But the emphasis in Bura children's play songs is on the play. Like Ewe children's play songs in Ghana, the subject matter of the songs is typically African, commenting on life as the children know it.⁵⁴ There are references to circumstances of birth, to parents and siblings, to poverty, to foods, to animals and even to 'boyfriends' and 'girlfriends,' or the songs may just refer to the game being played. An example of Bura children's play songs is the traditional Song H1 below. It is often sung by Bura children when they are performing plays at night under the bright moonlight. The song was originally composed a long time ago but has continued to be transmitted orally by Bura children from one generation to the next. The following is a version of the song sung by a group of children from Kidang, while playing at night:

Lead singer: Blood, has blood.
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A human being has blood?
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A horse has blood?
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A dog has blood?
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A chicken has blood?
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A cow has blood?
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A stone has blood?

In the song, the lead singer asks the other participants whether human beings, horses, dogs, chickens, and cows have blood. As well, they are asked whether things like stones and trees have blood in them. The participants in the play are expected to give the correct answers. If the thing mentioned has blood they are expected to answer by saying "blood." For something that does not have blood, the players are expected to keep quiet. Therefore, for the lead singer's last question as to whether a stone has blood, the participants are supposed to keep quiet since a stone has no blood.

Sometimes as a result of the frenzy and the quick manner in which the questions and answers are chanted during the play, some children become confused or forget and answer "blood" when asked if a stone or a tree has blood. Usually the children who answer "blood" to such questions are considered foolish or unintelligent and are consequently ridiculed or spanked by the other participants. The song not only enhances the play and entertains the children but it also encourages the children to be smart, attentive and alert by giving quick, correct answers to verbal questions.

Another children's game song is Song H4 below which is often sung by Bura children during moonlight plays.

Lead singer: Dika ya.
 Chorus: Oh yes!
 Lead singer: Oh, Dika my friend.
 Chorus: Oh, yes my friend.
 Lead singer: Try and hook him.
 Chorus: Oh yes!
 Lead singer: Try and hook a boy for us.
 Chorus: Oh yes, my friend.

Versions of this song are usually sung by boys and girls who are in early puberty as well as youngsters. The song is often sung to accompany *bathir katidzi* ("courting" games) at night. The girls line up across the street and the boys line up along the same street but at a distance from the girls. The song is sung by the girls while two girls at a time dance or hop to the boys' domain and each of the girls identifies the boy she loves by holding his hand. If the boy accepts her love advances he will follow her to the girls' domain, both of them dancing and holding hands. At the end of the game, some boys may be left "untouched" or "unloved." They usually feel embarrassed and rejected, and if such an experience is repeated more than twice, they will refuse to participate in this type of children's game again.

As portrayed in this song, one of the girls, Dika, is on her way to the boy's domain to court the boy she loves and the other girls advise and encourage her through the song to "hook" the right boy. She should be bold in making a choice but most importantly she should make the right choice.

In some versions of this song, the girls are warned against "hooking" boys whose attitudes and behaviours are not socially and culturally acceptable in Bura society, such as boys who steal, fight others, are dirty or lazy. Usually the girls will identify the name, and describe the character and physical appearance of each of the boys participating in the "courting" game. Boys who are bullies, lazy or dirty are abused or ridiculed through the song so that the girls will avoid choosing them. The song therefore says much about the art of match-making among Bura boys and girls. The themes of love and friendship

between a boy and a girl and female solidarity and support for each other in their choice of boyfriends are portrayed in this song.

The following Song H5 is another example of children's game songs sung by pupils of Marama Primary School:

Lead singer: He does not like bathing.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: He does not like bathing.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him for me.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His head is dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him for me.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His eyes are dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His teeth are dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His legs are dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His hands are dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!

In this song children who are dirty are ridiculed. The main aim is to make the dirty children feel embarrassed and consequently try to keep themselves clean or neat. Also,

other children are implicitly warned not to be dirty. In a primary school, school children who are dirty are identified and placed in front of the school assembly or in the centre of a circle formed by their neat classmates and this song will be sung to them by all the other school children.

The singing is highly dramatic. The parts of their bodies that are dirty will be mentioned and be touched by the neat children as they dance around the dirty children sometimes in a circle. Sometimes the dirty children are subjected to mimicry, jeering, and pushing by the other children. The performance is often co-ordinated and supervised by the Physical and Health Education teacher or the teacher on duty who ensures that the dirty children are ridiculed but not physically injured by the other children.

Both Bura youths and adults dislike dirtiness; hence children who appear dirty are ridiculed and discouraged through songs by other children. The song describes the parts of the boy's body which look dirty: the hair on his head, his eyes, teeth, feet and hands. The boy is described as someone who does not like to have his bath or shower. As a result, he appears dirty. The neat children are asked to look at the dirty boy and presumably laugh at him or ridicule him. The chorus "Ah-ha!" is a mockery and an affirmation of the boy's dirtiness. The song depicts one of the ways in which children help to discourage other children from being dirty, and to convey to them the message that a "healthy mind is in a healthy body."

Lullabies, which are songs sung for children but primarily are composed and sung or chanted by adults particularly by mothers, nannies or babysitters when they want to lull

children to sleep.⁵⁵ An example of a Bura lullaby is the Song H6 below recited by Zainabu

Kubili Lawan:

Smile, smile,
 Silver metal, silver metal.
 Woman's cooking.
 Our mother.
 King's daughter, daughter of Yamta.
 My daughter who lives in this room,
 Daughter of Dikwa clan.
 What are you laughing at?
 I am laughing loudly!
 There is something in your cover-let,
 Crying like a bird!

In this lullaby, the singer who is trying to lull her daughter to sleep requests and motivates the daughter to smile as she gradually falls asleep. The singer pleases the daughter by calling her with various praise names. For instance, she refers to her child as "silver metal," suggesting that the child is beautiful, precious and strong. She also calls the daughter "mother" and princess ("king's daughter") which portrays the daughter as honourable, noble and commanding of respect. These praises make the daughter keep quiet as she listens to the praises being showered on her. The singer also uses humour to lull the daughter to sleep by telling the daughter that there is something in her cover-let crying like a bird. The purpose of this is not to frighten the child. Rather, the mother hopes to lull the child and make the child listen to the bird crying (singing) under her cover-let. As the child keeps quiet so as to listen to the bird's cry, she closes her eyes and falls asleep.

The mother also comments on important social issues through the song. She mentions that "cooking" is the expected responsibility of women in Bura society. Apparently, she wants her daughter to be aware of this social responsibility and to start learning how to cook right from her teens.

In the foregoing analysis of the themes of Bura folksongs, some salient facts have been revealed, either implicitly or explicitly. This examination of the themes of Bura folksongs reveals are all-encompassing. These fundamental issues range from Bura socialcultural values and experiences to beliefs. There are songs about human relationships such as marriage, kinship age, gender, as well as death and the philosophy of life. Some songs focus on moral and social issues, indicating how things ought to be and how they ought not. Many songs are inspired by religious beliefs and ritual observances. Other front-page matters expressed in Bura songs are the issues related to politics, protests and resistance, and power relations. Other noteworthy topics explored in Bura songs are survival, achievements, and human strengths and weaknesses. In the following chapter I will show how these themes are communicated in performance.

Notes

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CHAPTER FIVE

TECHNIQUES OF BURA FOLKSONGS

In this chapter, the technical features of Bura folksongs will be outlined and analyzed. Folksong technique denotes a variety of meanings. Firstly, "technique" can be defined as the manner in which a song is composed.¹ Secondly, folksong "technique" can refer to a mode of performance used by the singer to perform his or her song.² Technique can also involve the stylistic features of song texts. These include the use of figures of sound and figures of speech used by Bura folksong makers. These three notions of technique are all relevant to this study, and in this chapter the methods of composing and performing Bura songs will be discussed. As well, the stylistic features of Bura song texts will be analyzed.

In Bura folk music tradition, making music always involves singing. There is no distinction between *tša su* (music) and *ha* (song). When you ask a Bura musician to play music for you he or she will sing. As a result, Bura musicians and the audience use the terms *hara ha* (singing song) and *tša su* (performing music) interchangeably. Songs are considered music because the singing of songs is often accompanied with instrumental music. Even *a cappella* songs, that is, songs which are sung without instrumental accompaniment such as dirges and lullabies and some of the children's rhymes and game songs are still referred to as music because of their poetic, melodic and rhythmic nature. In this chapter therefore, the terms folk music and folksong will be used interchangeably.

Furthermore, most Bura *mjir thla ha* (songmakers) if not all of them, sing the songs which they themselves compose. Because all Bura *mjir thla ha* (songmakers) are also *mjir hara ha* (singers), the terms *mjir thla ha* (songmakers) and *mjir hara ha* (singers) are often used interchangeably. In this chapter, the two terms will also be used interchangeably. In addition, most Bura songmakers accompany their singing with music produced by playing musical instruments. As a result, Bura folksong makers are also called musicians by themselves and by their audiences. Similarly, in this chapter, the terms Bura folksong makers or folksingers and Bura folk musicians will be used interchangeably.

Although the present assessment of Bura folksongs is dependant upon oral composition and oral performance, I have observed that Bura folksongs have their own artistic features analogous to, but not always identical with written songs or poems in other cultures.³ Bura folksongs are comparable to folksongs from other parts of the world as a genre of folk literature. A range of technical features used by Bura songmakers such as style of composition, figures of sound, figures of speech and modes of performance, make Bura folksongs unique.

COMPOSITION

Bura songmakers do not compose music or lyrics with the aid of written notation. Instead, Bura musicians compose songs by making use of oral formulas handed down through the oral tradition, which they have heard, learned and memorized. In the process, a style is achieved which is suited to the public expression of strong feelings.⁴ Often, Bura

folksongs are spontaneously composed and performed at particular occasions. But today, as a result of the influence of technology on Bura folksong tradition, Bura folksongs are now transmitted through the electronic media such as radio, television, video and audio tapes.

When I asked four Bura folksong makers to describe when, where and how they compose their songs, each one of them said that he or she composes and sings songs spontaneously at particular social occasions. The singers spontaneously compose and sing about topics suggested to them by members of their audience and from their own personal experiences. They also compose songs based on local legends and events. Usman Boaja told me that he composes and sings his songs spontaneously as he is performing his *tsindza* music during particular social occasions.

I compose songs when I am performing the *tsindza* music. When I am performing at the same time I will be observing members of the audience so as to determine the social status, personalities and occupations of some individuals in the audience. I will then praise or describe those attributes in songs. The words, phrases and the ideas which I express in songs usually appeal to my audience because I describe their personalities, social status, occupations and experiences, or those of some individuals whom they know. The types of song which I sing, and the style of music which I play vary, depending on the occasion at which I am performing and the social composition of my audience.³ [Appendix II]

Describing to me when, where and how he composes and sings his songs, Anthony Audu said he composes his songs while performing at folk music events organized to accompany certain social activities such as weddings, funerals and political campaigns. Audu further maintains that his compositional skill is partly hereditary and partly a divine

gift.

Right now I can compose and sing a new song for you. This is a talent which God has given to me I can spontaneously compose new songs when I am performing music. I do not have to spend time to compose my songs and memorize them before I perform them at particular occasions. This will be a waste of time. But there are some songs which I compose and perform at particular social occasions such as at wedding ceremonies and I memorize them and sing them again, at other social occasions. For instance, the songs which I dream about.⁶ [Appendix II]

Most Bura musicians spontaneously compose and sing their songs during performance. A kind of cognitive framework in the form of oral formulas provide skeletal ideas for the musicians while details of the events and local news provides flesh for the musicians' songs. The songs are composed from skeletal ideas artistically employed by the musicians. The meaning of the song may depend upon how well the songs are performed by the musicians and by how well the audience-participants are acquainted with the oral formulas and the issues described in the songs.

PERFORMANCE

As Richard Bauman points out, performance is an aesthetically marked and heightened mode of communicative behaviour and a type of communicative event.⁷ And as Ruth Finnegan has observed, oral literature such as folksong, is dependent on a performer who formulates it in words on specific occasions.⁸ In Bura society, the oral performance of folksongs is still one of the endearing aesthetically marked and heightened modes of communicative behaviours and communicative events. Like the Venda of South Africa,

the Bura assume that every Bura is capable of musical performance, unless he or she is totally deaf, and even then, he or she ought to be able to dance.⁹

As discussed in Chapter Three, the Bura songs collected for this study were performed on specific occasions. In the process of creating the songs, the song artists employ formulaic words, phrases and expressions which are frequently and widely used in Bura oral tradition.¹⁰ Bura songs therefore are created mainly in oral performance but depend on formulaic materials. Generally, written notation as a prescriptive creative device is still not used by most Bura songmakers. As an insider to Bura folk music-culture, as a participant-observer of folk music performances in Bura society, and as a folklore scholar, I have noticed that the performance of Bura folksongs involve various interrelated processes and dimensions including the styles of composition, transmission, and the modes of performance.

Modes of Performance

Bura folksong performance is always realized and delivered orally through imitation and demonstration or dramatization by both performers and audiences. The result of this oral transmission is that Bura folksongs exist mostly in performance. In some folk music performances, variation, innovation and improvisation in performance are actually encouraged. For instance, during each music event, a Bura musician is expected by his or her audience to sing new songs. This practice portrays the musician's creative and innovative skills and ingenuity. Because variation, innovation and improvisation are encouraged, it is often difficult to find a fixed Bura folksong and a fixed Bura folk music

performance. This is in contrast to songs composed through written notation which exist in fixed written texts. The view of Albert B. Lord concerning oral formulaic theory is relevant to Bura folksong performance. In particular, Lord's assertion that a songmaker or performer is not merely a memorizer and a reproducer of what has already been performed can be applied to Bura song.¹¹ While some Bura singers are indeed memorizers of other people's songs, many of them are the makers and performers of their own songs. Usually, the performers who perform their own songs either spontaneously compose and sing their songs during folk music performances at specific social occasions, or they repeat the songs which they created during performances at previous folk music events.

People who are not songmakers but are active bearers and oral transmitters of Bura songs also sing or recite songs which they heard, learned and memorized when the songs were sung by their original makers. Usually, these individuals are ardent Bura folk music fans who attend every Bura folk music event they know of, so as to dance, socialize and learn new songs. When they hear the songs being sung by the composers, they learn the songs and commit them to memory and then sing, recite or intone the songs at other occasions. They may sing the songs out of context. This is common especially with funeral songs, religious songs and wedding songs. These active bearers of Bura folksongs sing or recite versions of the songs which they learned. Their variations may be intentional such as the adding and or deleting of certain names, ideas, words or phrases in order to suit the current social and situational contexts. But variation may also occur as a result of memory loss.

Today, many and various Bura songs and song performances are transmitted through the mass media including radio and television. My informants said that they want the mass media to promote their music. But at the moment, most Bura musicians still rely heavily on their local fans, politicians, religious groups, wedding planners and funeral planners to promote their music. Some Bura folk music fans attend particular musical events and they record the music on audio tapes which they duplicate and sell to the general public in market places or on streets. According to two of my informants, Usman Boaja and Musa Gwoadzang, most of the music fans who record and sell their music on tapes neither obtain permission from the musicians nor pay the musicians royalties.

The performance of Bura folk music is not limited to singing but also involves playing instrumental music with drums and xylophone, ululating and clapping. Usually, Bura musical performance involves dancing. Types of Bura musical instruments and types of Bura dance will be discussed later in this chapter. The following discussion is a survey and description of the modes of performing Bura music.

Songs

Usually, Bura folk music performance involves the singing of songs either by the musician or by the musician and his or her audience. Some songs are sung with choruses. The choruses may be sung by the audience or by other members of the band. The pattern whereby the statement of a theme by a lead singer is repeated by a chorus or a short choral phrase and is balanced as a refrain against a longer melodic line sung by the soloist is fundamental.

Repetition of Old Songs During New Performance

My informants said they sometimes repeat old songs in their repertoires due to popular demand by their audiences. They also sing their favorite old songs and songs which are relevant to the current social and situational contexts, especially when new topics for creating new songs are not forthcoming from their current audiences. Therefore, old songs are sometimes sung by Bura folk musicians to keep a performance going until they compose new songs. Usman Boaja also said that he repeats a selection of songs from his repertoire during a musical event when prompted by the audience.

I may commit a song which I composed and sung on a particular occasion into memory and sing it again later on another music occasion, but with variation. Usually I do not repeat the songs which I sang at a particular occasion at another occasion unless I am asked to sing the songs by members of my audience. Each musical event will have its own songs.¹²

Variation

Each folk music performance is unique. It varies from one group of performers to another, from one social occasion to another. Even changes in the social composition of the audience can result in changes to certain aspects of the performance. For instance, the content of a song may vary when sung on different occasions or for different audiences. Even the folk music performed by a particular folk musician will vary when he or she performs music at different times or at different occasions. For instance, Usman Boaja, Musa Gwoadzang and Anthony Audu said that at funeral occasions, they sing songs which contain messages of comfort and condolences to the bereaved. The tempo of their music becomes slow when they are performing at funerals, reflecting the sadness of the

mourners. But at naming ceremonies, wedding ceremonies and festival celebrations the tempo of their music is usually fast and they sing at a high pitch to reflect the joyous atmosphere in these ceremonies. Even when a particular musician performs at the same type of occasion but at a different time and for a different audience, his or her musical performance will vary to reflect the current primary audience. New things such as new songs and new dances may be introduced and old ones may be excluded in order to suit the current situational and social contexts. The variations show that folk music performance is not fixed but subject to change.

My informants all told me that their song performances are usually determined by the types of occasion and the types of audience. However, there are certain folk music performances, particularly the ones performed during religious rituals, which tend to be quite fixed. The belief is that, if the performance is changed, the ritual will not be successful. That is, the purpose of the ritual will not be achieved.

Drum Songs

Though unfamiliar to many Western audiences, 'drum poetry' is common in West Africa, especially in Bura singing tradition.¹³ In this mode of performance, the musical instruments do not merely produce music to accompany songs. Rather, the musical instruments, especially the *ganga* (drum) and the *alkita* (flute), are used mainly as media for composing and transmitting the actual words of songs. This is made possible because of the tonal nature of the Bura language. For instance, tonal patterns intelligible to Bura speakers can be directly reproduced on two or three-toned drums, as can the rhythmic

patterns and frequently used oral formulas. In this particular method of Bura song composition and delivery, the drumming represents the spoken utterances in a way intelligible only to a Bura audience. Drum poetry can sometimes be interpreted differently by the audience or the recipients, to suit the audience's own opinions or feelings towards the subject of the song. In this situation, the audience will verbalise the song by using words or ideas which may or may not correspond with the words or ideas which the drummer has in mind. Song G2 was intended by the *alkita* (flute) player, Sakdiya Sakwa, to be a praise song about a one time district head of Sakwa named Saji Yikuwuta. But the audience changed the meaning and the purpose of the song to a song of abuse and ridicule when reciting the song in its verbal form to express their sentiments for Saji Yikuwuta. It was alleged that the former district head denounced his true lineage which is Bura and he claimed Pabir lineage so as to be appointed the district head of Sakwa District by the Biu Emirate Council which at the time was comprised mostly of people of Pabir lineage. The intended elegiac song about Saji Yikuwuta is Song G9.

The drummers and the audience never lose sight of the fact that the sounds produced by musical instruments have the implications of utterances.¹⁴ To the Bura people, as the Akan people of Ghana,

....the drum can and does speak. Words, phrases and sentences may be transformed into drum sounds which are then re-interpreted in verbal terms by the listener.¹⁵

This is mainly because as insiders and as audience participants, they can recognize and differentiate between the patterns of drum sounds which do not have verbal correlates and

those that can be translated into verbal texts. (See Figure 5a-b, Bura drummer -- Bukar Bishi).

Active Bearers

Many Bura folksongs are repeated or recited by individuals who are not the original composers of the songs but active bearers of songs composed by Bura folksong makers.¹⁶ Usually, they attend musical performances of particular Bura folk musicians, and they listen attentively to the new songs which the musicians sing. Then they will learn the songs, commit the songs to memory, and they will sing versions of the songs later on at other occasions. Many of the singers in this category are good transmitters of Bura folksongs. Some of the folksongs which I used for this study I collected from these bearers of Bura folksong tradition such as Zainabu Kubili Lawan, the late Mavi Dzarma and Dauda Thlama Malgwi. Many of the music fans who are active bearers sing the songs they learned without music produced by musical instruments. Furthermore, the occasions at which they recite the songs are not necessarily the appropriate occasions for singing the songs. For instance, they sing the songs in their households to members of their family, friends and neighbours. An active bearer may sing a dirge or a funeral song which he or she learned at a funeral occasion at home to her family, friends or neighbours. The songs which the person sings at home can also be wedding songs which the person learned at a wedding ceremony or satirical songs learned at a festival. But it should be pointed out that there are some active bearers of Bura folksongs who sing the songs which they learned in the appropriate contexts. For instance, a Bura woman, Shetu Alasa, is an active bearer of

Bura Christian songs. She learns Christian songs from the original composers such as Saraya Mwarinkir and she sings them during Christian events such as Sunday church services, crusades and Christian weddings, and she repeats the songs at other church services, crusades and Christian weddings, but with variations either due to memory loss or to suit the current occasion. Also, each time Shetu Alasa sings the songs which she adopted from Waziri's repertoire, her singing is accompanied with music produced by playing musical instruments, just the way Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri performs music.

Dan ma'abba

During Bura folk music performance at almost every social occasion such as at a wedding ceremony and at a festival event, the musician, particularly if a male musician, will always find himself accompanied with or without his consent by at least one *dan ma'abba*. The term "*dan ma'abba*" is adapted from Hausa language. The *dan ma'abba* works as a "go-between" or a spokesperson for both the musician and the audience. He collects messages or topics from members of the audience and conveys them to the singer to incorporate in his on-going singing. He searches through the audience to see who in the audience are wealthy, especially lawyers, doctors, teachers, engineers or government officials and then he notifies the musician of their presence. The musician will then compose praise songs about those individuals and praise their avocations, their families, social lives and their wealth. Usually, the individuals who have been praised by the musician through songs will feel very happy, honoured and proud, and reward the musician and the *dan ma'abba* with money. In addition, the *dan ma'abba* enhances the

singer's performance by correcting the singer and reminding the singer of topics left out. Also, the *dan ma'abba* amuses and entertains the audience by making malevolent and benevolent jokes about the actions and behaviours of some individuals in the community, some of whom may be in the audience. Graham Furniss's description of the image and the role of the *dan ma'abba* for Hausa singers who are also in northern Nigeria perfectly fits the image and the role of the *dan ma'abba* for Bura singers.

...an individual who shouts over the top of the singers, occasionally correcting them, calling out praise-epithets and providing additional, often specialised, information both directly to the audience and to the singers for incorporation in the song as it goes along. Particularly where the praise-singer is not local, these local *yan ma'abba*, who may well know the details of genealogies and history, will be an invaluable source of information for the singer[sic] as they look for background and detail to incorporate in their song, but in the view of the singers, they can also constitute an unwelcome distraction.¹⁷

Social Background of Performers

Some folk music performances may be gender specific. Others may be based either on religious identity, age or marital status. However, there are relatively few Bura folk music performances which are restricted to a particular social status. Those who participate in the musical performance either as *mjir dlu ha* (chorus singers), *mjir bathla* (dancers), *mjir mbu tsi* (clappers) or *mjir pilla* (rewarders) include both men and women, children and adults, Christians and non-Christians as well as the rich and the poor. One example of a musical performance which can be considered to be a strictly male performance is *tsa gangar kuthli* (court music) which is regularly performed by court musicians in front of the emir of Biu's palace to entertain and to praise the emir and other

members of the royal family. Not only are the musicians wealthy male adults but the audience is as well. An example of music performed strictly by women is the music performed at wake keepings of deceased Bura elderly women such as the music performed by Yankirda Zoaka, Yangwasa Audu and late Uma Kida Yerima. There are, as well, other Bura folk music performances which are mainly, but not strictly, gender specific. That is, they are performed mainly by either men or by women. An example of a Bura performing group consisting mainly of women are the musical performances of Saraya Mwarinkir which she performs with Bura *Zumunta Mata* (Christian Women's Fellowship). Bura folk music performed mainly by men include the music performed by Usman Boaja, Anthony Audu, Musa Gwoadzang, Avi Pwasi and Shehu Wida. Furthermore, some Bura folk music is performed mainly for children and by children such as rhymes and play songs. But in general, much Bura folk music performed especially at social occasions such as weddings and festivals will include adult and teenage performers. The formation of performing groups on the basis of either gender, age or religion rarely applies to the social composition of the audience.

Playing Musical Instruments

During Bura musical performances, music is often produced by playing musical instruments. The musical instruments may be played by all the performers, some of the performers or by the performers and some members of the audience. Many and various musical instruments may be played during a particular folk music performance or only a few musical instruments may be used. A wide range of musical instruments are played by

Bura folk musicians including idiophones, membranophones, aerophones and chordophones.¹⁸ The kinds of musical instruments which are usually played during Bura folk music performances include *ganga* (drums) of various sorts and sizes, *tsindza* (xylophone), *alkita* (flutes) of various types and shapes, *timbil* (horn), *tuhum* (pots) of various sizes and shapes, *yakandi* (banjo), various kinds of *gulum* (guitar) and *kugwa* (calabash) of various sizes and shapes. Among Bura singers who play musical instruments themselves as they spontaneously compose and sing songs are Usman Boaja, Musa Gwoadzang, Anthony Audu, Avi Pwasi, Hassan Yakwa, Audu Nggafan and Shehu Wida. In contrast, there are Bura singers who do not themselves play the musical instruments which accompany their singing. Rather, the musical instruments are played by other individuals in the musical group or by some members of the audience. In this kind of folk music performance, the people who play the musical instruments may also be chorus singers.

The following section is a survey and a description of types of Bura musical instruments and selections of the musicians who play them. The musical instruments are categorized on the basis of the sounds they produce.

INSTRUMENTS

Membranophones

These are hollow musical instruments with animal skins used to cover both ends.¹⁹ The sound is produced by exciting the membrane stretched over the opening.²⁰ Most

membranophones are called drums.²¹ While there are single-headed and double-headed drums, most bura drums are double-headed.²² The skins are glued, nailed or braced.²³ Membranophones are played in various positions such as standing on the ground or placed on the player's knees.²⁴ The manner of playing membranophones is either by percussion or by friction.

One example of a membranophone is the *ganga* (drum). The *ganga* is a big hollow wooden bass drum with a cow or goat skin used to cover both ends. Drums can be found of various shapes and sizes. A thin stick in the shape of a bent-top walking stick is used for beating the drum. Sometimes a drummer may use his palms or fingers to beat the drum. Among Bura musicians who play the *ganga* are Bukar Bishi and Jirbi Mbilari. Another Bura membranophone is the *kwala-kwala*. *Kwala-kwala* is an onomatopoeic term for a figure eight shaped small drum made from a piece of hollow wood, covered at both ends with stretched alligator skins. It is played in pairs. Usually it is played along with the *ganga* as part of the ensemble whenever the *ganga* is being played at a musical event. Musicians who play the *kwala-kwala* are either apprentice drummers or drum music fans who may volunteer to play the *kwala-kwala* for the drummer. A good example of *kwala-kwala* player is Abori Pakilama who is nicknamed "Abori Kwala" because of his popularity in Bura society as an endearing and a skillful player of *kwala-kwala* during musical events. (See Appendix III Figure 6a-b for examples of Bura membranophones).

Chordophones

Bura chordophones are stringed instruments. Used as strings are leather thongs or special threads called *kirtani*.²⁵ The vibrating sounds from this type of musical instruments are produced by plucking, striking the stretched strings with bare finger or a bow.

Following are examples of Bura chordophones.

Gulum: The *gulum* is a three-stringed guitar-like instrument. It is played by plucking with the fingers. The *gulum* instrument produces a bass tune. The materials used for making *gulum* are a round, empty gourd with a small round opening, three strings made from *kirtani* threads or animal skins, and a stick. A *gulum* player wears an iron bracelet as a complimentary musical instrument. As he plays the *gulum*, he would once in a while hit the bracelet on the *gulum* to produce a percussive sound. Among the Bura *gulum* players are Avi Pwasi, the late Saji Pindar, the late Danja Kiling and the late Gunda Malala.

Yakandi: This is a banjo-like instrument, a two-stringed instrument with one of the strings shorter than the other. "It is composed of a body, and a neck which serves both as a handle and as a means of stretching the strings beyond the body."²⁶ The music is produced by plucking the strings with fingers. Additional percussive sounds are produced by rings of tins which are fixed inside a flat tin and placed on top of the stick of the banjo. The materials used for making the *yakandi* are: two strings made with *kirtani* threads or strings of animal skin; a small gourd which has been cut into half and covered with a crocodile skin; a stick, and rings of iron fixed into a beaten flat tin and placed on top of the stick.

Bura musicians who play the *yakandi* to accompany their singing include Musa Gwadzang, Audu Pindar and Hassan Yakwa.

Goge: This is a pair of two bow-like stringed instruments. One *goge* is shorter than the other. The strings which are tied to each of the bow-like sticks are usually made of long strands of hair obtained from the tail of a horse. One of the pair of instruments is smaller than the other. The big one is held in the arm and placed on the musician's lap while the smaller one is held in the right hand if the musician is right handed, and then rubbed against the big one to produce sounds. *Goge* is a Hausa word, meaning "to scratch" or "to rub against." There is no Bura word for this particular musical instrument. (See sketches 2a-c for Bura chordophones).

Idiophones

Idiophones are percussion instruments. They are set into vibration by either striking, stamping, shaking, scraping, plucking or rubbing.²⁷ The following is a survey and description of Bura musical instruments which are idiophones.

***Tsindza* (Xylophone):** One type of Bura musical instrument which belongs to the category of idiophones is the *tsindza*. It is a xylophone-like, complex idiophone. It is made of seven bars of wooden keys and seven cow horns functioning as resonators. It belongs to the category of "struck idiophones" because it is usually played by striking it with two small Y-shaped hardwood beaters which are held in both hands. There are types of *tsindza* which are played in other societies of the world. These include the *shinji* played by Tera folk musicians in Borno State of Nigeria, the *akadinda* used in Uganda, and the

xylophones played by Akan musicians in Ghana and by Bantu musicians in South Africa.²⁸ Other types of xylophones are the *marimba* played by musicians in Cuba, Haiti and the United States of America; the xylophone in south east Asia and the "leg" xylophone played by women in Madagascar.²⁹

Usman Boaja described to me his art of playing the *tsindza* (xylophone). Boja said that he plays xylophone to accompany his singing whenever he is invited to a social occasion to perform music. Often he plays it by sitting down and placing the xylophone between his two thighs, but sometimes he hangs it around his neck with a rope or a piece of cloth attached to the xylophone.

I play a musical instrument called *tsindza* and produce the music that will accompany my singing of songs. I always accompany my singing with the playing of *tsindza* music. I compose the songs spontaneously with my *tsindza* music. I play various musical styles and tunes. Each musical style and tune are created to suit or match the songs which they accompany. Even during the same musical performance, I play various styles and tunes, and I compose and sing various types of songs. Each of my musical performances varies from the others. For instance, new tunes may be introduced and new songs may be composed and sung during every musical performance.³⁰ [Appendix II]

Usman Boaja said that he now makes his own xylophones. He said nobody directly taught him the skill of making the xylophone. He said that after about forty years of playing xylophones made for him by other people, he was able to partly observe and partly determine how to make them, so he decided to make xylophones for himself and for his sons who are interested in performing xylophone music. He described the materials used for making the *tsindza* and the process of making it. But before describing the materials

used and the art of making the *tsindza*, Boaja told a legend about the origin of the *tsindza* as told in Bura oral tradition. The legend links the origin of the *tsindza* with the transitional period from a hunting and gathering society to a farming society. The role of the two brothers in the bush according to this legend is an important phenomenon to be considered.

It was said that a very long time ago, two brothers were living together in the forest. They used to hunt animals and gather foods for themselves and their families to eat. But they used to eat their foods uncooked because by then there was no fire. One night, when they were sleeping, one of the two brothers dreamt about how fire is made. The following morning, he told his brother his dream about how to make fire. He then took a dry corn stalk and demonstrated how to make fire which he learned in his dream. Fortunately, flames of fire lit up. His brother bought the fire from him and used it to smelt metal and make a hoe with it. He used the hoe to clear the bush for farm land. He planted guinea corn on his farm. Because he used the hoe to work on his farm, that year he had a bumper harvest. He and his family had plenty of food to eat. They also used the fire to cook their foods. They were very happy. One night, he and his children sat together and were laughing. They wanted something for entertainment. When their father went back to the bush the following morning to gather some dry *udzum* (wood), one piece of wood fell from his hand to the ground and it produced a very nice sound. Then he picked up the piece of wood and threw it again on the ground and it produced the same nice sound. He cut the wood and dropped it again on the ground and the sound was even sweeter. He cut the wood and made it smaller and he cut six other pieces of wood and made them into similar size. He put them together and played them and they produced nice music. He took the seven pieces of wood home and he tied them together to look like a platform. At night, when they had had their supper and were resting, he took the instrument and placed it between his knees and he played for his children to dance. He made one for his brother to take home and play it for his children. That was how the *tsindza* instrument was first invented.³¹

In constructing the *tsindza*, seven pieces of wood are cut from the trunk of a tree that has

a sound-producing wood. Especially desirable is the *nfur anglima* (ebony tree). The seven pieces of ebony wood are carved into a flat shape with an axe, and made smooth. After the seven pieces of ebony wood have been carved and made smooth, they are arranged inside a horizontally dug hole with sand levelled under and on top of the pieces of ebony wood. The woods are then heated with fire continuously for seven days so as to dry out the gum inside the pieces of wood, which enhances their sound. Seven *timbula thla* (cow horns) are obtained to serve as resonators. Traditionally, each of the seven horns must be obtained from market on seven different days. This means that the horns are collected, one from each day of the week. It is believed that failure to follow this norm will result in creating a *tsindza* which will not only have a poor sound quality, but the owner may not have a successful musical career. A small sharp carving knife is used to remove the contents of the horns so as to make the horns hollow, lighter in weight and "easy to catch vibrations."³² The tip of each of the horns is cut, leaving a small orifice on top. The small orifice is covered tightly with *mbwa titau mwapu* (a white type of cobweb) glued with *ndivir ciri* (beewax). Before the white cobwebs are used to cover the holes created on the tips of the horns, they are brushed with ashes until they become smooth and transparent so that they can capture the vibration easily and filter the sound. The cobwebs create a buzzing timbre. *Kugwa tsindza* (a curved wooden plank) is made from a type of tree called *debro*. Two big holes and seven small holes are made on each side of the curved wooden plank for tying and suspending the seven pieces of wood. The back of the plank is often covered with beautiful designs like those made on the backs of calabashes for decorative

purposes. The back of the plank of Boaja's xylophone is decorated with beautifully designed patterns and posters which imply his religious identity, political affiliation and his philosophical views. A rope made from a strong piece of cloth or *kisim thla* (cow skin) is tied on both ends of a hoop so that the musician can hang the *tsindza* around his shoulders when playing it while standing.³³ For the beaters, a pair of short Y-shaped sticks are cut from the branch of a tree which has hard and durable wood. The bark of the sticks are removed to make them feel smooth and look beautiful. The purpose of using a pair of Y-shaped sticks is to enable the musician playing the xylophone to strike four keys at the same time to produce various tunes.³⁴

To construct the *tsindza*, the maker arranges in an orderly and artistic manner, its various components including the seven carved pieces of ebony wood, the seven cow horn resonators, the wooden plank, the circular wood and the Y-shaped sticks. The first thing the maker does is to arrange the horns in the hoop on the curved wooden plank and glue them with beewax. The horns are arranged to match the pitches of the keys. Usually, the smallest horn is placed below the key which has the highest pitch, while the biggest horn is placed below the key with the lowest pitch. The curved wooden plank bearing the cow horn resonators is tied to the circular wooden frame. The seven keys are arranged in accordance with their respective pitches and they are tied beside each other vertically with strings made from animal skin. They are arranged from large to small, named in Bura as follows: *angira tsikar*, *elang matsikar*, *kubatakiri*, *elang diffu*, *angira diffu*, *elang maxim* and *angira maxim*.

In most cases the *tsindza* is made to look decorative. Stickers with religious or political figures may be placed on the back of the wooden plank of a Bura xylophone. In addition, the xylophone is adorned with hanging tassels made of cotton threads in a variety of bright colours such as red, blue, green, white, pink and yellow. Also, the neck of the pair of Y-shaped wooden beaters is carved out in a ring- like design to make them look decorative.³⁵ (See Appendix III Figure 7a- d, Bura xylophone, and its component parts). Apart from Usman Boaja, other Bura folk musicians who also play the *tsindza* (xylophone) instrument include Anthony Audu, Maidugu Fori Bilatum, Audu Ndajara, Audu Bata, Saidu Mhita and Yahaya Boaja.³⁶

There is another type of *tsindza* instrument known as *tsindza kwangula*. It is made of *kongula* (dry corn stalk) tied together with strings. It is often played by children rather than by adults.

Tuhum Humbutu (Pot Instrument): Another Bura musical instrument which belongs to the family of the idiophones is the *tuhum humbutu*. This is a clay pot found in various shapes and sizes. Some are made small with short necks. The small type has a small round opening created on its body in addition to its original mouth. There are two main ways of playing the small *humbutu*. It can be placed on the musician's lap and beaten with the two palms, one palm beats on the small opening and the other palm beats the big opening which is the main mouth. The small round opening is created so as to enhance the tone and the musicality of the *humbutu* when it is being played. Other sound producing materials such as pebbles, beer bottle caps, Coke or Fanta bottle caps are put inside the

humbutu to enhance its percussive sound. This method of playing the small *humbutu* is used particularly by the Christian Women's Fellowship during Sunday church services, Christian festivals and celebrations such as Christmas and Easter, and Christian ceremonies such as Christian weddings, naming ceremonies and funerals. The other method of playing the small *humbutu* is by placing the mouth on the stomach to cover the navel with the bottom part resting on the ground between the musician's spread legs. This type of small *humbutu* only has one opening which is the main mouth. While playing it, the musician hits or rubs the pot with one hand and holds the pot with his other hand. Sound producing items such as coins and small pebbles are put inside the pot. It is only men who play the *humbutu* instrument in this manner. Among the male musicians who play *humbutu* instrument in this style are Shehu Wida and Alhassan Saltuwa.

Gilam Humbutu (Big Pot Instrument): The other main type of *humbutu* which is played by some Bura musicians is the *gilam humbutu*. This is a big, round and short necked type of pot. It does not have a small round opening created on its side. The big *humbutu* is usually placed vertically on the floor and the mouth is beaten rhythmically with a padded stick to produce a bass tone. Usually, the big *humbutu* instrument is part of the Fellowship of Christian Women's ensemble. The exterior of the big *humbutu* instrument is often painted with two or three bright colours such as red, blue and silver. Furthermore, the name of the particular group of Bura Christian Women's Fellowship which owns the big *humbutu* can be written on the back of the pot for easy identification, especially if the group is performing together with Christian women's fellowship groups from other local

churches. This collective musical performance often happens at Christian social occasions such as wedding ceremonies and regional Christian crusades, conventions, and music festivals where musical groups from different churches in Bura society or in Borno State are invited to perform music. (See Appendix III Figure 8a-b, big *humbutu* and small *humbutu* ensemble).

Kugwa (Calabash): This is one half of a big calabash which is placed face down; its back is beaten with two thin sticks. The back is sometimes decorated with *ndaha*, a design created with a hot *indla ndaha* (designing knife). In addition to the *tsindza*, Anthony Audu also has a *kugwa* in his ensemble. The calabash is usually played for him by his apprentice musicians or by his fans while he plays the *tsindza* (xylophone) instrument. (See Appendix III Figure 9, *kugwa* (calabash) instrument).

Kice kice (Beaded gourd): This is another type of idiophone played by Bura musicians. It is a small gourd covered with beaded net. Musicians who play the *kice kice* either place it on their laps and beat it with two fists or hold it in their palms and shake it to produce sounds. The beads are of various colours so as to make the *kice kice* look decorative. It is often played by the Christian Women's Fellowship as part of their ensemble.

Rattle: This is made with strings of cowrie shells or beads that are tied on the ankles by men who perform the *waksha-waksha* dance and produce rhythmic sounds in accompaniment. (See Appendix III Figure 10a-b, *kice kice* and rattles.)

Zhamtu: This instrument is made with a long and slender variety of gourd. The inside is emptied of its contents and two small round holes are created, one at the top and the other

at the bottom. To play this instrument, the musician uses one hand to rhythmically hit the bottom of the *zhamtu* on her lap while she opens and closes the hole on top with her palm. The *zhamtu* instrument is usually played by Bura women, not men. It is also played by women musicians in other tribes in Nigeria such as Hausa and Kanuri. The outer part of the *zhamtu* is often decorated with figurative or geometrical *ndaha* (designs or patterns), executed with the use of the *indla ndaha* (designing knife). (See Appendix III Figure 11, *zhamtu* instrument).

Aerophones

Aerophones are wind instruments.³⁷ When an aerophone instrument is being played, an enclosed column of air is made to vibrate and produce sounds. They are blown with the mouth. Below are examples of Bura musical instruments which are played as aerophones.

Timbil (Horn): This is a musical instrument which is made of an animal horn, especially the horn of a cow or an antelope. The content of the horn is removed to make it create sound when it is blown. A small orifice is created near the tip of the horn where the player blows into the horn to produce the sound. It is usually played by men only. Among the Bura male musicians who play the *timbil* are Badawi Mbayá and the late Wabara.

Dlika: This flute-like aerophone is made from corn stalk. A fresh but ripe stem of a corn stalk is cut and the contents are extracted out so that it becomes hollow. A narrow cut is created on the tip where the musician blows. A small hole is also carved out at the bottom. The musicians systematically open and close the narrow cut with their fingers as they blow

the opening at the tip across their mouths. The *dlika* instrument is often played by children and adolescents to accompany their play when they are guarding crops on their parents' farms so that the crops will not be eaten up by wild animals such as monkeys and baboons. Children also play *dlika* to entertain themselves and reduce boredom when taking domestic animals such as sheep and goats to the bush for pasture. The *dlika* is a local version of the flute.

***Alkita*:** This is a flute-like, complex aerophone. It has a slim and elongated body and a semicircular top. It is a wooden heteroglot harp. It is a Bura version of the metal heteroglot Jew's harp. This instrument is also played by some musicians from other ethnic groups in northern Nigeria such as the Marghi *sumbul*, the Shuwa *bombera*, and the Kanuri and Hausa *algetta*.³⁸ *Alkita* is used mainly by court musicians although some freelance musicians also own and play this instrument. The musicians who have been employed to perform music regularly for the emir of Biu in front of the emir's palace have the *alkita* in their ensemble. Among the Bura freelance musicians who specialised in playing the *alkita* were the late Kida Bwala and Sakdiya Malgwi Sakwa. (See Appendix III Figure 12a-c, examples of Bura aerophones.)

Electronophones

"These are instruments which are based on vibrations produced in the usual mechanical ways and transformed into electric vibrations."³⁹ They are dependent on oscillating electric circuits. These are modern types of musical instruments that rely upon modern technology. Electric instruments are celebrated for their unlimited capacity for

dynamic power and varied timbre.⁴⁰ Bura folk musicians have yet to start playing electronic musical instruments. The only electronic equipment which they occasionally use is the microphone when performing at special occasions such as radio and television broadcasts and Nigerian Independence Day celebrations. Electronophones are widely used by many folk musicians from other societies in Nigeria, especially "high life" musicians like Sunny Ade and Fela Ransome Kuti, Sony Okosun, Bongus Ikwe and Onyeka Onyelu.

Bura Folksingers Who Do Not Play Musical Instruments

There are some Bura folksingers who do not play musical instruments when they are performing their music. Instead, they sing while others in the group provide instrumental accompaniment. Among them are Saraya Mawrinkir D. Waziri, Yankirda Zoaka and Madaki Auta Ndahi. They can be compared to some Hausa folksingers in northern Nigeria such as Mamman Shata, Musa Dan Kwairo and Hajia Maimuna Barmani Choge.⁴¹ These Hausa folksingers often sing while others provide instrumental accompaniment.

A Cappella Singers

Some Bura folksingers sing with no accompanying instrumental music.⁴² Among the singers in this category are dirge singers.

Solo Singer-Instrumentalists

Some Bura folk musicians accompany themselves while singing solo. Only one of my four informants, Musa Gwoadzang falls into this category of Bura musicians. Another Bura soloist is Avi Pwasi who plays the *gulum* to accompany his solo singing. Although

Bura musicians are not familiar with Hausa musicians, as a folksong scholar, I noticed that some Bura musicians' style of singing can be compared to those of some well known Hausa singers, who are also from northern Nigeria. One such Hausa singer is Dan Marya Jos who accompanies his solo singing with music produced by a musical instrument known in Hausa as *kuntigi*. *Kuntigi* is a tiny single-stringed lute. Another is Haruna Oji who plays the *gurmi*, a two-stringed lute to accompany his singing.⁴³

Dance

Bura folk music performance at social occasions such as weddings, funerals and festivals is often accompanied by *bathlir Bura* (Bura dance).⁴⁴ The tendency to dance is commonplace, whether the music is performed at religious or secular events. There are various types of Bura dance. The type of dance is determined by the occasion at which the music is performed, the type of musical instruments played, and in some cases, the gender of the dancers.⁴⁵ There are three main types of Bura dance: *bansuwe*, *waksha-waksha* and *hadla*. (See Appendix III Figure 13a-d, types of Bura dance.)

***Bansuwe* dance:** This is a type of Bura dance which is danced to a particular melodic family and rhythm of *ganga* (drum). There are various styles of *bansuwe*. One is the style in which the dancers arrange themselves vertically in single file and they dance three steps forward, two steps backward, one step to the left and one step to the right while still facing front, and then repeat the cycle. Another style of dancing *bansuwe* is for the dancers to arrange themselves in single file, and dance three steps to the right and two steps to the left, and then repeat the cycle. This type of *bansuwe* is called *bathir*

mwamwari. There is a contemporary version of *bansuwe* created probably in the 1980s, and it is called "electric" dance. The "electric" dance reflects the influence of popular culture on Bura folk dance. The people who invented and popularized the "electric" dance are secondary school and college students who had seen and learned Western popular music and popular dance in their schools and in the cities, and decided to incorporate some styles of dancing to popular music into Bura folk dance. It is called "electric" dance because the dance is fast, vigorous and the dancers shake their bodies as if each one of them is connected to an electric vibrator.

To keep pace, especially with the "electric" dance, Bura drummers invented a drumming style which produces quick vibrating rhythms. The lead musical instrument which is played to accompany *bansuwe* is *ganga* (drum). The drum accompaniments to *bansuwe* feature from more than one instrument. Bukar Bishi, for instance, is a Bura drummer who plays two or three drums simultaneously to accompany *bansuwe*. Usually drumming is accompanied by other musical instruments including *kwala-kwala* (a pair of two small drums) and *tsindza* (xylophone). During most *bansuwe* performances, the ensemble will also include *timbil* (horn), xylophone and flute, especially at the funerals of deceased elderly Bura men who were hunters, during turbaning or installation of a new king, as well as at Christmas, *Sallah* and Nigerian Independence Day celebrations.

Waksha-waksha Dance: There are two forms of *waksha-waksha* dance. One of them is danced by men. The dancers move in single file. Bare chested, they wear pants, and tie around their waists cow or goat skins and bright multicolored woollen shawls around their

waists. They dance with wrappers folded and tied around their waists by women who either have crushes on them or admire their dance. Also they wear sound-producing anklets made of either cowrie shells or pieces of metal. They bend slightly forward, slightly raising their hands to the front holding cow tails between their hands. The other *waksha-waksha* is performed by women. It is called *turkwa hili*. The dancers arrange themselves horizontally in single file. The dance is a slow motion movement involving dragging of the feet two steps to the right and one step to the left. The music is similar to that played for men's *waksh-waksha*.

There is another form of *waksha-waksha* called *hadla kidzi-kidza* which is performed by women. It is performed during *hadla* described below. Women who perform *waksha-waksha* during the *hadla* usually kneel down in front of the musician, raise their hands slightly and shake their arms as if they are shivering. It is also simply called *kidza-kidza*. *Kidza* in Bura means to shiver. Not every Bura woman can dance the *waksha-waksha* and shake her arms fast enough. The women's *waksha-waksha* is danced to particular *tsindza* (xylophone) melodies and *yakandi* (banjo) music.

Hadla : The type of dance called *hadla* is usually performed at a music event in which the lead instrument played is either *tsindza*, *gulum* (a type of bass guitar) or *yakandi* (banjo). Danced to the music of *humbutu* and *goge*, *hadla* is usually performed by women only. Men who are at the *hadla* event only watch and admire the *hadla* performed by the women. During *hadla*, the women dance in pairs on their knees in front of the musician and surrounded by the audience, which is often comprised of both men and women. The

two women will dance for ten minutes or more, depending on how energetic they are and how appealing their dance is to the audience. Members of the audience, especially the men, show their admiration and approval by giving them gifts of money, and they show their disapproval by asking the *dan ma'abba* (the musician's and audience's spokesperson) to ask the dancers to get up so that a new set of dancers can kneel down and dance.

Other Types of Bura Dance

There are certain types of Bura dance which are described by the occasion on which they are performed or the activities which they accompany rather than by specific names. One of these types of Bura dance is *bathir tuwa* (funeral dance). There are subtypes of *bathir tuwa* (funeral dance) which are known to insiders of Bura culture. One of the funeral dances is *timbil kum* -- the hunters' dance performed at the funerals of deceased hunters. Another is *bathir pira mshi* -- the dance that accompanies the ritual bathing of the corpse; *bathlir bar mshi* -- dance that accompanies the wrapping of the corpse inside *bull* (a hand woven cotton large piece of cloth used for wrapping the corpse of a deceased elderly Bura person); *nkwi-nkwi* and *kithla-kithla* -- danced at the burial rites and funeral ceremonies of blacksmiths; *bathlir nyermbwa* -- danced in front of the room in which the corpse is laid before it is taken out for burial; *bathlir kukula* -- rhythmic dramatization of how the deceased used to till the ground and plant seeds in his or her farmland; *bathlir kila mbwal* -- dance that accompanies the taking out of the deceased person's *bwal* (totem); *bathlir kibila mshi a mbwa* -- dance that accompanies the removal of a dressed corpse from the room to be taken to the graveyard for burial; *bathir pwara*

mshi ata mwari ata kula -- a type of dance that is performed when taking the corpse to the grave in a procession for burial, and *bathir har mshi akwa kula* -- dance performed by the graveside when the corpse is being buried. The sub-types of *bathir tuwa* (funeral) dance are danced to a musical ensemble consisting of *ganga* (drum), *kwala* (small drums), *tsindza* (xylophone) and *timbil* (horn) which are played at burial and funeral occasions of bereaved old Bura individuals from the ages of sixty and above.

Other types of Bura dance include: *kathladzi* -- the dance performed by teenage girls during moonlight games and *bathir kukula* -- the dance which accompanies the tilling of farm land to prepare the ground for planting at the beginning of the planting season.

Drama

Hara ha (singing), *bathla* (dancing) and *tsa su* (playing of musical instruments) are not the only artistic activities that are performed at Bura folk music events. Drama is also performed.⁴⁶ During a wedding ceremony for instance, the *hadla* dance, which is usually performed at the night of the wedding as the last phase of the ceremony, involves a series of drama-like scenes and acts. The actors and actresses in the drama include the musicians, the *dan ma'abba* and the audience. As an actor, the *dan ma'abba* runs back and forth from the audience to the musician collecting messages or information from the audience to the musician with which to compose and sing songs. In a scene in which a non-Bura speaker in the audience wants to request the singer to compose and sing a song for him about a particular issue or individual, the person who is making the request will leave his seat and come and stand in front of the musician and he will speak to the

musician in Hausa or in English and his speech will be interpreted in Bura for the musician. Often, it is the *dan ma'abba* who plays the role of the interpreter unless he cannot speak the language of the person making the request. Then someone else in the audience will volunteer to do the interpretations. Often, even though most Bura musicians can speak Hausa, the *dan ma'abba* will still want to interpret, amplify and exaggerate the clients' requests so as to be rewarded by the clients if they are pleased with the songs that are composed and sung for them. Folk drama during folk music performances also includes scenes in which the female dancers argue amongst themselves as to who should be the next pair of dancers to go forward and kneel in front of the musician and dance. Another scene involves two rivals or opponents with a clash of interests. They may be rival suitors who are both in love with the same lady, politicians who belong to opposing political parties or individuals from rival communities. Each of the opponents in the audience in turn comes forward and pays the singer to compose songs of abuse or satirical songs about his or her rival. The abused individual will try and retaliate so he or she will come forward and pay the singer more money and request the singer to compose songs that will invalidate what his or her opponent has said about him.

A specific example of folk drama performed during Bura folk music performance is one performed during the *hadlla* dance at the wedding ceremony of Mr. Nicolas Msheliza and Mrs. Florence Msheliza on the night of December 17, 1994. In one of the scenes of the drama, a man in the audience came forward and announced that he wanted the bride to come forward and perform the *hadlla* in the traditional way so that her in-laws and other

members of the audience could watch and assess her expertise in the *hadla*. The traditional way of performing *hadla* is for the bride, in the company of one of her bridesmaids, to kneel down in front of the musician and *hadla mthli* (grind guinea corn or cubes of sugar) on two separate grinding stones. The purpose of the bride's *hadla* is to demonstrate to her husband and to her in-laws in the audience that she is strong enough to grind guinea corn into flour with which she will prepare *ndiva* (corn mush) meals for herself and her new family. With the advent of modern technology, particularly the invention of grinding machines, today Bura brides no longer perform the traditional *hadla*. Today, it is very rare to see a Bura woman grinding guinea corn on a *burkau* (grinding stone). Therefore, the man who insisted that the bride should demonstrate her ability to grind guinea corn on a grinding stone wanted to embarrass the bride rather than revive the tradition of *hadla mthli*. The drama continued with one of the bridesmaids, arguing on behalf of the bride, that the bride did not need to use a grinding stone to demonstrate her ability because contemporary wives no longer continue this practice. Rather, they take their bags of guinea corn to commercialised grinding machines or they buy bags of corn or semovita (wheat flour) which is processed in flour mills and sold in bags. The bride was a university graduate who was employed. Hence she could afford to either buy bags of processed corn or take her guinea corn to a commercial grinding machine and have it ground for her. The bridesmaid also argued that grinding on a grinding stone brings aches and pains on the bride's soft and tender knees. It was further argued that grinding corn would make the bride dirty. The bridesmaid and the man who wanted the bride to grind the guinea corn

stood in front of the musician as they argued back and forth between themselves.

Eventually, the bridesmaid succeeded in persuading the man to let the bride perform the new version of the *hadla* dance without accompanying the dance with the grinding of guinea corn. The bride, however, knelt down on a mat covered with a piece of cloth so that her knees would neither be hurt nor become dirty. Finally, the bride got up, knelt down in front of the musician and performed the *hadla* dance while the musician played his music and praised the bride through songs. As the bride danced, her husband, friends and in-laws from the audience, came forward and showered her with gifts of money. The longer she danced, the more money she obtained. A large *daro* (dish or basin) was placed in front of her and was filled with the money given to her. The theatricality of the *hadla* dance event was reinforced by the presence of various actors on the stage and the arguments that went on between the two opposing actors. In addition, the actors' gestures, body movements, and non-verbal communications were very theatrical. This event qualifies as a folk drama because it is traditional and because its setting, its performers and its themes are all local.

Work

In Bura society, music can be performed to accompany work.⁴⁷ Whether the work is being done by an individual or a group it is not uncommon for work to be accompanied with some sort of music such as singing and or drumming. In some cases the music is performed by the workers themselves but in others the music is performed by others who are hired or invited to perform music for them as they work.⁴⁸ Music, especially

drumming and xylophone music help to reduce boredom, the tension and the stress caused by work. The music entertains the workers as they work. The music also creates rhythms that can go with work that involves certain patterns of body movement, especially grinding, pounding millet, rice or corn in a mortar, tilling the ground for planting, weeding, harvesting and threshing.⁴⁹ One example of work for which musicians are invited to play music to accompany the work is the *mbal tswhur laku* (road clearing festival). This festival is performed annually in a Bura community known as Gusi. The main purpose of the festival is for the male adults in the community to repair the roads in their community after every rainy season. Usually the road clearing festival takes place between November and December. The work involves clearing the grasses and shrubs that have grown during the rainy season as well as filling up pot holes and removing stones brought on by floods. During the road clearing event, local musicians are invited to play music for the workers. Because it is a community festival, usually the participants and guests at the festival feast and drink *burkutuku* (Bura locally brewed beer) free of charge.

Another example of group work during which local musicians perform music to accompany work is the annual farming event. During this activity the male adults of a particular Bura community perform their civic duty by organizing themselves and working free of charge on the farm of their community leader between the months of June and October. Like the annual road clearing event, the communal farming on a community leader's farm is accompanied with singing, drumming and xylophone music. Also, the men who participate in the farming for the king are entertained with free meals and drinks after

they have completed the work.

Audiences

Bura folk music performance usually involves a live audience.⁵⁰ Not all performers of songs have an audience. An example of the latter would be children's play songs. But when an audience is present, it motivates the performer(s) and a reciprocal relationship develops. There are various roles which the live audience plays during a particular performance. The audience may serve as listeners, dancers, singers of choruses and players of musical instruments.⁵¹ The audience also contributes to the successful realization and delivery of the songs during performance by suggesting new topics to the songmakers to compose and sing songs about. An audience can motivate and also demoralise a performer. Thus, it is obvious that without the presence and participation of the audience, there may not be a successful and satisfactory realization and delivery of the music.

Social Background of Audience

In Bura society, there are few performances that strictly have either class, age or gender-based audiences. Also, because there is a religious tolerance in Bura communities, Christian music performances may have non-Christians in the audience, especially at weddings and funerals. Thus, the audience for folk music performed by men only, may include both men and women; the audience for folk music performed by women only may be comprised of women and men; and the folk music performed by children may either have only children in the audience or children and adults. Gender based folk music performance can influence the content of the songs, and the style of performance. For

instance, women performers, may sing songs that deal mainly with issues that affect or relate to women. Sometimes the main subjects or targets of songs sung by women are men. The same thing applies to folk music performed by men. The primary audience of some songs sung by men are men. But there are some songs which are aimed mainly at a female audience such as the love songs composed and sung by some Bura men to the women they are in love with.

Audience Participation

In most Bura folk music performances, members of the audience participate actively. Audiences participate in various ways including singing of the choruses or refrains, dancing, ululating, rewarding the performers with money when they are impressed with the music and suggesting new topics or subjects for the musicians to spontaneously compose and sing songs about.

Usman Boaja said that his audience participates in his musical performance in various ways:

There are various ways in which members of my audience participate in my musical performance. They sometimes sing the songs along with me. They sing the choruses or they repeat words and phrases which are familiar and appealing to them. Also, members of my audience suggest topics for me to compose and sing songs about. They make the suggestions of topics for me through my *dan ma' abba* [spokesperson]. The audience also participate in the musical performance by coming forward and "spraying" me with some money if they are pleased with my musical performance. Dancing to my music especially by ladies is another way in which the audience participates in my musical performance. Also when my music is very affective to my audience some women in the audience will come forward and start ululating to show that they love my music.⁵² [Appendix II]

Like Usman Boaja, Anthony Audu said that his audience participates in his musical performance by *pila ni ka kwaba* (rewarding him with gifts of money) and by suggesting new topics for him to compose and sing songs about. Also, his audience, especially women, participate in the performance by dancing to his music and ululating when they are impressed with his music. Likewise, Musa Gwoadzang revealed that his audience participates in his musical performance by rewarding him with money when pleased with his music, by suggesting new topics for him to compose and sing songs about, and women in particular dance and ululate to his music. Furthermore, he pointed out that some members of the audience at folk music performances, especially those who want to become musicians will volunteer to play minor musical instruments in the musicians' ensemble. This enables the budding musicians to learn or practice how to perform music. Musa Gwoadzang told me that when he was a teenager, one of the ways he learned how to perform was by volunteering to play *yakandi* at a folk music event whenever the musician who was performing *yakandi* music at the occasion became tired and decided to take a break. Musa Gwoadzang would then take the *yakandi* belonging to the invited musician and start to entertain the audience by practising how to spontaneously compose and sing songs to the accompaniment of the instrument⁵³

In the case of Saraya Mwarinkir Waziri, she said that her audience participates in the performance of her music by singing the choruses, ululating, dancing to her music and by playing musical instruments including *tuhum* (pot) of various shapes and sizes, *kice-kice* (beaded gourd) and iron gong.⁵⁴

Face-to-Face Interaction Between Performer and Audience

The oral performance of folk music relies on group cooperation to be successful. There has to be cooperation and good coordination between the folk musicians and the audience participants. At almost every Bura folksong performance, the performers and the audience closely interact by symbiotically participating in the singing, dancing and other activities that contribute to the successful and satisfactory creation, realization, and delivery of the folk music. Generally, the musicians are central to the performance, but the audience is also an integral part. Usman Boaja said that he always has face-to-face interaction with his audience during his musical performances.

When I am performing my *tsindza* music at any social occasion there is always face-to-face contact and interaction between me and my audiences. There are various ways in which my audience influence or determine the type of songs I sing, and the style of my music. On many occasions, it is the members of my audience who suggest to me the themes of the songs which I compose and sing. Also when I am performing and members of the audience are pleased with the music and the songs I sing they reward me and treat me well, and this encourages me to perform well. The social status and the age of members of my audience can influence the types of song I sing and the style of my music. If my audience consists mainly of government officials or politicians I will sing songs that either appeal to them or are relevant to them. The songs which I sing for youths may vary from the songs which I sing for adults.⁵⁵ [Appendix II]

Costume

Another non-verbal means of communication that goes on in performance is clothing. Like the folk drama and the instrumental accompaniment, clothing worn by the performers and the audience participants heighten the mood of the music and heightens its reception by creating visual beauty. Striking examples of folk costumes worn by

performer audience participants include skinwear worn by men and the women's *zhabi* (wrapper outfit), which consists of a scarf, a blouse and a two meter piece of fabric wrapped around the waist. The costumes emphasize the gestures and therefore create visual beauty.

STYLISTIC FEATURES OF BURA FOLKSONG TEXTS

Style involves the various verbal communicative devices employed by Bura songmakers to compose songs.⁵⁶ Unlike European and Western literary poets and songwriters, Bura songmakers do not consciously study, select or use literary styles to compose their songs.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, various forms of figurative language such as figures of sound and figures of speech and certain oral formulas and other verbal patterns can be identified in many Bura folksongs. Most Bura folksong makers use figurative language unconsciously when composing and performing their songs. Unless told by a literary critic, most Bura songmakers are not familiar with the literary terms alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia and rhyme. In Bura language there do not seem to be any common terms that mean "metaphor," "simile," "alliteration" or "onomatopoeia." The literary term which most Bura songmakers are aware of and can identify in songs is the *karapu* (proverb).⁵⁸ But in the course of analysing Bura folksong texts for the purpose of this study, I have identified some stylistic features employed by Bura songmakers which are similar to the ones used by songwriters and poets.⁵⁹

Figures of Sound

"Figures of sound" refer to the various sounds of vowels, consonants and clusters of consonants which appear in the songs.⁶⁰ The basic figurative language which constitutes figures of sound especially in Bura folksongs include conventional devices such as onomatopoeia, alliteration, repetition, rhyme, consonance, assonance and tone.⁶¹ The figures of sound help to enhance and reveal the rhythm, the tonality and the musicality of Bura folksongs.

Alliteration

One of the figures of sound employed by Bura folksong makers is alliteration. As defined by M. H. Abrams, alliteration is "the repetition of speech sounds in a sequence of nearby words...; the term is usually applied only to consonants and only when the recurrent sound occurs in conspicuous position at the beginning of a word or at a stressed syllable within a word."⁶² Alliteration therefore is a recurrent consonant sound. There are many instances of alliteration which can be identified in Bura folksongs. An example of alliteration in Bura folksong can be found in the Bura version of Song A1. In line three of the first stanza, there is an alliteration of the sound /m/:

Ar mwalar msha marni ya?

Also in lines one and two of the second stanza and line one of the third stanza, the consonant sound /k/ alliterates:

Ka bara kwaba ka ga timta.
Ma kwaba adi wa ki nta ka miri?

Kum ka mal ka mal mda adiya bara jawa

Also, in lines one, two, three and four of the Bura version of Song D6, the consonant sound /k/ alliterates:

Kura ka mdir kyirna ni msira aliwa.
 Sai kura ka bangirna ani msira ali.
Ka kita mdir kyirna ka psu kusar
Ka kibila ali bangirna ka yeru tira.

And in the following excerpt of the Bura version of Song A10, the consonant sound /d/ alliterates in the third line:

Ga ku piya Dina.
 Ga ku piya.
 Msha dzin dzing thlim
 Ga ata hila kwi?

Furthermore, there is alliteration of the consonant /m/ in the following line in the Bura version of Song H6 in Appendix I:

Mayer mwa, nkwar kuthli, nkwar Yamta.

Likewise, in the following lines of Song D11, there is alliteration of the consonants /t/ and /z/:

Tsuwulib tsuwulib nkwanı ata tira.
Zule zule Jija ata tira ndzi tsu apa jilki na ata ku~~t~~a hyel.

The alliterations reinforce the rhythm and musicality of the songs.

Assonance

Assonance is a repetitive vowel sound.⁶³ Examples of assonance can be found in Bura songs such as Song A19. The song has a regular beat of the vowel sound /a/ in the

following excerpts of the Bura version.

Y_a, I at_a h_ir_a j_a w_a
 Y_a h_ir_a w_a, y_a g_a k_il_a s_al g_aj_ang w_a.
 M_a i k_il_a s_al g_aj_ang m_a t_sa s_im_bw_a a_dz_a r_a
 T_ing b-o-o-om t_sa p_um_ta h_id_i.

In the following lines in Song H5, there is a repetition of the vowel sound /i/:

T_sa h_ir p_ir_a w_a
 K_a g_ir_i w_ul_a n_i w_a
 K_ir_a r_i k_a d_i n_di
 K_a g_ir_i w_ul_a n_i a_li.

As is the case with the repetition of alliteration, repetition of assonance enhances the musicality of the songs.

Breath-Space

Breath-space is the moment when a Bura singer pauses in the course of performing. The pause could be short or relatively long. This oral device reflects the difference between songs composed through writing and songs which are orally composed and orally transmitted. The stanzaic structure and the punctuation of the transcribed Bura folksong texts used for this study are based on the breath-space. Often the breath-space is filled or punctuated either by melodies and repetitive rhythms created by playing musical instruments, by vocables uttered by the singer or the audience-participants or by refrains or choruses sung by other members of the singing group or by the audience participants. An examination of excerpts of some of the song texts will reveal the stylistic elements that help to provide breath-space for the lead singer. One of them is the use of responsive choruses such as in the following excerpt of Song A4:

Mdir psa ha: Ya ki ngilni Baktaku?
 Mdir dlu ha: Ngilni raka, yamana!

Mdir psa ha: U'uwa bziimkwa ata shiwuri
 Apa dlimbilir kwara
 Mdir dlu ha: Dakwi a hirni wa, yamana!

(Lead singer: Should I abuse her Baktaku?
 Chorus: Yes abuse her, a little, yamana!

Lead singer: The lady's breast is smelling like a donkey's stable.
 Chorus: Boys do not like her, yamana!)

The choruses in the following excerpts of the children's game song, Song H5, serve similar purpose:

Mdir psa ha: Tsa a hir pirwa.
 Mdir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Ka giri wula ni ali.
 Mdir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Kirari ka dindi.
 Mdir dlu ha: Ah-ha!

(Lead singer: He does not like bathing.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His head is dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!)

The vocable *Ah-ha* does not have a clear or direct lexical meaning, but it signifies an affirmation by the chorus singers that the boy who is the subject of ridicule is indeed a dirty person. In other words, the expression *ah-ha!* implies "yes!"

As Saraya Mwarinkir Waziri reveals, the pauses go beyond mere breath-space. She told me that the breath-space has been very helpful for her. She said that she uses the

moments when she pauses while singing to catch her breath, relax her vocal cavity and to compose the next part of the song.⁶⁴ That is, she will use the moment of the breath-space to figure out the next thing to say when she resumes the singing. Also the lead singer's breath-space gives the audience an opportunity to participate by singing the choruses.

Vocables

A vocable is a verbal communicative device which does not convey direct lexical meaning.⁶⁵ Its meaning can only be implied. Vocables frequently occur in Bura folksongs especially in *ha tua* (funeral song), *ha kertikur* (satirical song), *ha vinkir sili aka Hyel* (religious song), *ha ngungur mya* (protest song), *ha hirdzi* (love song) and *ha fwala* (praise song). Musa Gwoadzang often includes vocables in his songs. When I asked him why he does it he said that he uses vocables whenever he lacks words or phrases when he is spontaneously composing and singing his songs. Also he uses the moment he is uttering the vocables to think of what word, phrase, sentence or statement to say next.⁶⁶ It is also obvious that the vocables used by Musa Gwoadzang and other Bura singers enhance the continuity of their songs.

The chorus or refrain *wha-a wha* in Song F4 is an example of a vocable. It is a sound that a Bura person makes when crying.

Mdir psa ha: Hyel ni ku ta ama tsa adi ka ddir wa.
Mdir dlu ha: Wha-a ! Wha Hyel Mthlaku!

Sometimes the vocables occur at the beginning of songs. For instance, Song A7 starts with the vocable *Ya-ah*. *Ya-ah* is an expression which suggests clamour or worry. It is

equivalent to the English expression "oh."

Ya-ah, madankwi Pakilama
 Simiti giri ana hara apani ja?
 Ma mbru ku tsaptadzi abir mbru ata vi bathla
 Ma pci ku tiri ting giri akwa viyir tiksha.

Ya-a, madankwi Pakilama

Also, Song C2 in Appendix I starts with repetitions of the vocable *ra*. The utterances or exclamations *Ra ! Ra! Ra!* are made by a Bura person when the person is crying or mourning.

In many call and response songs, the responses of choruses or refrains contain repetitive vocables such as the expressions *Aye* and *Aye-ye* in Song B3. The vocable in a particular song may be repeated many times either by the lead singer or by those singing the choruses such as the *Aye* and *Aye-ye* in Song B3, the *Wha-a* in Song B12 and the *Ah-ha!* in Song J5. One of the functions of the vocables in Bura folksongs is to enhance and maintain the rhythm and the melody of the songs especially during a *cappella* performances of songs such as dirges. Furthermore, the vocables in some songs serve as an indication of an impending shift or change in thematic emphasis. Some examples are the *Ah-ha* in Song H5, the *Aye* in Song B3 and the *Wha-a* in Song F4.

Tonality

Because the texts of Bura songs are performed by human voice, they benefit greatly from the flexibility of the voice, which is not easily represented on the printed page.⁶⁷ The songs' appeal come first through the sound of the words. Thus the singer

whose voice is not strong enough gains little popularity.

There is abundant evidence of the manipulation of vocal sounds by Bura singers, especially in the call-and-response songs. Those who are not familiar with performances of folk music in West Africa may, as a way of understanding the role of the voice in Bura folksong performances, consider the chanting of hymns or litanies in Christian churches. In the antiphonal singing between the officiating priest or the lead singer and the congregation, words and lines are frequently stretched out to unusual lengths by giving individual syllables a variety of tones so as to produce a lyrical effect.⁶⁸ Bura songmakers often use tone in a special and an exaggerated manner for lyrical effects, for emphasis and to stir up emotions in the singer and in the listeners.⁶⁹ Even when the singers do not make certain gestures or dramatizations, they can still create vivid effects by applying vocal variety and high pitches. These tonal features can be noticed easily when one listens to the songs during live oral performance or via audio-visual media. Tone is also very important for grammatical form and lexical meaning.⁷⁰

Onomatopoeia

Like the vocal and tonal devices, the onomatopoeia is a stylistic technique that relies on sound. Simply defined it means "idea-in-sound," in the sense that from the sound of the word one can get an idea of the nature of the event or the object referred to.⁷¹ Onomatopoeic words are not like normal words to which meanings are readily assigned. They are sounds or vocables used to convey vivid impressions. Onomatopoeic words feature in some of the Bura folksongs used for this study. For instance, in Song A19, the

word *b-o-o-m* is onomatopoeic. It describes or mimics the sound that is produced when somebody passes farts. In Song D18, the phrase *gwa gwa* is onomatopoeic. It is a description of loud laughter. In Song D11 there are onomatopoeic descriptions of the protagonist's elegance and beauty as she walks:

Tuhund hind nkwahind hind Jija ata tira
Tsuwulib tsuwulib nkwan ata tira.
Zule zule Jija ata tira apa dlu jilki ata kuta hyel.

(*Tuhund hind nkwahind hind* Jija was walking.
Tsuwulib tsuwulib the girl was walking.
Zule zule Jija was walking like a plane flying in the sky.)

The vocables *tuhund hind nkwahind hind* and *zule zule* describe how Jija walks.

Repetition

Repetition is a technique which is often employed by Bura songmakers. Like the African-American preaching tradition, the repetitions used by Bura folksingers are formulaic; some are "stalls."⁷² The repetition is either of words, phrases, sentences or choruses. Bura folksong makers use repetitions for various reasons. It is necessary to understand first the aesthetic value of repetition in a Bura song text. In a fundamental way, the repetition of a phrase, a line or a stanza does have a sing-song quality to it. Besides the aesthetic impact, repetition does have a stylistic value within the song text. One is in giving certain amount of emphasis to a point that needs to be stressed.⁷³ Also as Isidore Okpewho points out:

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.⁷⁴

According to Waziri, she repeats ideas which she mentions in her songs for emphasis, and to make her listeners feel that the ideas expressed in the songs are very important.⁷⁵ Furthermore, repetition enhances clarity, especially of words and ideas not well comprehended by her listeners. Other Bura singers use repetition to emphasize noteworthy ideas and feelings. Repetition is also used by singers when they are short of new words, phrases, sentences and new ideas as they spontaneously compose and sing songs. The idea of using repetition to mark time is seen by some observers as a weakness, but it also suggest that repetition can serve certain purposes within the structure of an oral performance. One such use is to help to maintain the rhythmic beat on which the lines of a song are based.⁷⁶ Repetition is used in the form of choruses or refrains as a way of giving the audience the opportunity to participate actively in the singing of the songs. In such situations, it is the audience-participants who sing the choruses or refrains. This helps to keep the lead singer and the audience on track.⁷⁷ It is also to ensure continuity in spontaneous composition and singing of songs by Bura songmakers. As the lead singer in the group or orchestra introduces a new idea in a line or portion of lines, the other singers sing the refrain before the lead singer comes in again with a fresh idea.⁷⁸ Furthermore, repetition in the form of a refrain is used to stir up emotion in the participants and the listeners. Again, repetition sometimes leads to variations of the topic or the ideas expressed in the song and the style. This can be created through the use of stylistic devices such as elaboration and improvisation.

Repetitions of words and phrases can be found in almost all the Bura folksongs used for this study. For instance, the word *mamshi* (blood) has been repeated many times as a refrain in Song H1. The vocables *aye*, *wha-ah* and *ah-ha* have been repeated many times in Songs B3, F4 and H5. Also the words: *mamshi* (blood) and *kumshi* (smile) have been repeated in Songs H1 and H6. The following are some other examples of repetition of phrases in Bura folksongs: *ki yuta alagiri su* (let me ask you something) in Song B10, *ah, ka mbru lalata!* (ah, let us dig it!) in Song E3, *wha Hyel Mthlaku* (oh, God Almighty) in Song F4 and *mamshi ka mamshi* (blood and blood) in Song H1.

The words, phrases or sentences which are repeated by the chorus singers are mostly fixed, although there are some songs in which the choruses include variations of words or phrases. Some examples of Bura folksongs with choruses that have fixed words, phrases or sentences are: the refrains *mamshi* (blood) in Song H1, *awa* (no) in Song H2, *sai ga!* (only you) in Song H3, *ah-ha* in Song H5 and *aya* in Song E4. An example of a Bura folksong which has refrains in which there are variations of words or phrases is Song F4. In the song, the chorus singers later replaced the phrase *Hyel Mthlaku* (God Almighty) with *Hyel Tidda* (God our Father). Another example is the alternating of the refrain *Aya wa!* (Oh yes!) with the refrain *Aya pazhirna!* (Oh yes my friend!) in Song H4.

One aspect of Saraya Mwarinkir Waziri's style of singing is to actively involve her audience in the singing of her songs. This she does by letting her audience repeat every statement she makes. Often, her audience repeats these statements verbatim. But sometimes the chorus is quite different from the lead song. An example of Waziri's songs

in which the wording in the chorus varies from the main song is Song D12, as can be seen in the following excerpt:

Saraya: This is a modern wedding.
 Chorus: Brethren, we are rejoicing brethren.
 Saraya: Mr. Malgwi.
 Chorus: Brethren, we are rejoicing brethren.

An example of Waziri's song in which the chorus singers repeat the lead singer's statements in verbatim is Song F1, as can be seen in the excerpt below:

Saraya: They said Father there is someone greater than you.
 There is no one greater than you.
 Chorus: They said Father there is someone greater than you.
 There is no one greater than you.
 Saraya: They said Jesus there is someone greater than you.
 There is no one greater than you.
 Chorus: They said Jesus there is someone greater than you.
 There is no one greater than you.

Many early collectors and editors of African folksongs had the unfortunate habit of cutting what they considered the "wearisome repetitions" of phrases and lines.⁷⁹ In so doing, they tampered with the songs' essential "oral" qualities. The device of repetition does not by any means make the oral song artist any less skilled or sophisticated than the song writer. Rather, as Okpewho remarked, it is simply a tool of pleasure and of convenience determined largely by the circumstances of performance before an audience that stares the singer in the face.⁸⁰

Rhymes

Rhymes can be found in Bura folksongs.⁸¹ Bura songmakers are neither aware nor are they particular about composing songs with rhyming schemes as traditional Western

poets are.⁸² However, there are many Bura folksongs that rhyme, especially dirges, work songs, religious songs and children's game songs. An example of a dirge which has rhyme is the Bura version of Song B2 where the first, second and third lines in the first stanza end with *na*, and the first and second lines in the second stanza ends with *wa*. Rhymes also occur at the end of some lines in other Bura folksongs. Some of the rhymes are monosyllabic rhymes and others are polysyllabic. For instance, the last words in lines one and two of Song B2 are polysyllabic rhymes. They end with the words *salirna* and *pazhirna* respectively. In the same song, lines nine and ten have monosyllabic rhyme because they end with the word *pazhirna* and *ya* respectively.

Sound Patterns

As with other traditional music in West Africa such as Yoruba music in Nigeria and Akan music in Ghana, Bura folk music has quite distinct sound patterns.⁸³ Various levels of sounds and tempo are created by the sound of the music produced by musical instruments such as the *ganga* (drum), *tsindza* (xylophone), *yakandi* (banjo) and *gulum* (guitar) which are often played to accompany the singing of many Bura folksongs.

The tempo increases the affective, aesthetic and entertainment significance of Bura folksong performance. This is usually achieved when heightened feelings of excitement and joy are evoked in the musicians and audience-participants, urging them to sing, dance, clap and ululate. To Bura singers and audiences who are insiders to Bura singing tradition, a change in tempo may indicate a change of song, style of dance and occasion for performance. For instance, the tempo of a dirge is usually slow, which indicates mourning

or sorrowful mood. But praise songs and wedding songs which are usually sung to mark joyous and festive occasions are characterized by fast tempos.

Anaphora

Anaphora is a verbal communicative device which involves deliberate repetition of a word or a phrase at the beginning of successive lines in a song.⁸⁴ This can be found in Bura folksongs. An example can be seen in the following excerpt in Song A10:

Good morning Dina.
 Good morning.
 You with big ears,
 You stole a goat ?

In the first and second lines of the song, the phrase *gir piya* (good morning) has been repeated. Also in song A19, lines one to four of the Bura version each begins with the vocable *ya*:

Ya, i ata hira jawa,
 Ya hir wa.
 Ya kila sal gajang wa.
 Ya, mi kila saljang ma tsa simbwa adza ra
 Ting B-o-o-m tsa pumta hidi.

In Song B2, the first two lines each start with the phrase *yamana ya* (oh, oh):

Yamana ya, ya salirna.
 Yamana ya, ya pazhirna.

(Oh, oh my husband.
 Oh, oh my dear friend.)

The anaphora reinforces the tone of despair or melancholy expressed in the song. Also, it harmonises the formal structure of the song.

FIGURES OF SPEECH

Bura folksongs contain various figures of speech.⁸⁵ The language of Bura folksong is highly figurative not only in terms of sound patterns but also in terms of figures of speech and other verbal communicative patterns. The figures of speech used by Bura folksong makers effectively create and transmit their songs about various issues and subjects. Figurative language or verbal communicative style used by Bura songmakers includes metaphor, simile, personification, imagery, proverb, oral formulas, descriptive epithet, personification, idiom, analogy, allusion, comparison, contrast and parallelism.⁸⁶ Others are hyperbole, irony, euphemism, dialogue, humour, rhetorical question, direct question and answer and the use of macronic or a mixture of Bura and non-Bura words, phrases and expressions.

Metaphor

Metaphor is "a figure of speech in which one thing is described in terms of another."⁸⁷ Metaphor compares things but, unlike simile, metaphor does not make use of the word 'like' or 'as' in its comparisons. This stylistic device is used quite extensively and with remarkable effects in Bura folksongs. Metaphors which are used in songs make the listeners interpret and examine the issues or subjects discussed in the songs more critically and from various perspectives.

Clear examples of metaphor in Bura folksongs can be found in Song B8 where the deceased, Bulama Bilami, is directly referred to as *tsingi* (lion). In Bura culture, *tsingi*

(lion) is a symbol of power, courage and honour. A lion is considered as a powerful and fearless animal and the king of all the animals in its domain in the forest. Therefore, when Bulama Bilami who is a community leader is directly called *tsingi* (lion). This means that Bilama Bilami is not only a powerful, fearless and courageous community leader but also that he commands respect and honour among his subjects. In the same song, Lawan Haruna who is Bulama Bilami's son is directly referred to as *tumwa* (tiger). This indicates that as the heir apparent to Bulama Bilami's position as a Bura community leader, Lawan Haruna will be a good community leader: powerful, fearless, honourable, respectable and wise like a tiger.

In Song C3, the speaker in the song calls herself Auta's *kila* (dog). This means that, just as dogs are neglected and not taken good care of in Bura society, the speaker in the song laments and complains that her husband, Auta Bukar, has neglected her so people can call her *kilar Auta* (Auta's dog).

In Song D8, Yarami, the lady whom the singer eulogizes is directly referred to as *suzuki mwala* (*suzuki* woman). *Suzuki* is a Japanese made motorcycle. It is considered to be beautiful. Yarami is also called *zhimnaku* (ostrich). From the perspective of Bura people, an ostrich is considered as a beautiful bird because of its long neck and its elegant appearance and graceful walk. Therefore, by describing Yarami, as *Suzuki* and *zhimnaku* (ostrich) means that from the perspective of a Bura man, she is very beautiful and elegant.

In Song G3, the defunct National Party of Nigeria (NPN) and Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP) are metaphorically described as *pinau* (maize) and *fugum* (rooster)

respectively. The emblem of the National Party of Nigeria has the picture of *pinau* on it, hence the party is directly referred to as *pinau*. The party emblem of the Great Nigeria People's Party has a picture of *fugum* on it so the party is referred to as *fugum*.

Simile

Simile is the comparison of one thing with another using the words "like" or "as."⁸⁸

Simile is another figure of speech which is used quite extensively by Bura folksong makers. Like a metaphor, a simile helps to make the images of things, persons or situations described in the song more vivid. An example of simile can be found Song B8 where Bulama's death is compared to the death of a king, *ndzi tsu apa mtir kuthli* (like the death of a king). Similes are used in Song D8 where the singer says Yarami's teeth are *apa mpur yeri* (like millet flour). This means that Yarami's teeth are white, hence beautiful. Furthermore, the singer likens Yarami's neck to *dlika* (corn stalk). This means that Yarami's neck is long, slender and smooth and therefore beautiful. In Song D14, the bride is *apa timatir* (like a tomato). This implies that the bride looks neat, is light in complexion, has smooth and soft skin and hence she is very beautiful. In Song F5, the singer, Waziri, says that she wishes that she is *apa dika* (like a bird), so that she could fly all over the world and preach to people about Jesus Christ.

Irony

"Irony is a technique of creating a situation in which an expressed attitude or idea turns out to be the opposite of the unexpressed one."⁸⁹ In Song A22 for instance, the attitude towards Bibalkwi people expressed by the singer, Avi Pwasi, is the opposite of

what he really means. Certainly the singer does not mean that residents of Bibalkwi eat delicious foods. What he really means but which he has not directly expressed is that, Bibalkwi people are dirty or repulsive because they use what most Bura people consider as inedibles as their soup ingredients. The singer uses irony for the purpose of evoking surprise and humour in the audience and to satirize the residents of Bibalkwi village for their habits. The singer appears to be admiring the Bibalkwi people's menu but in reality he is criticizing it and ridiculing them. He is being ironic.

Hyperbole

Hyperbole is a "bold overstatement or extravagant exaggeration of facts used either for serious or comic effect."⁹⁰ This figure of speech is used in Bura folksongs for both serious and comic effects. In Song A2 for instance, Haruna Bila's act of making love to a donkey is grossly exaggerated. He had sexual relations with only one donkey, but he is branded in the song as someone who makes love to every donkey he comes across. The singer warns his listeners who intend to buy donkeys to beware of Bila because he sleeps with them. First and foremost, this hyperbole is used seriously to abuse and criticise Bila for breaking a Bura taboo. Secondly, the hyperbole in this song is used for humour to ridicule Bila and to cause listeners to laugh at him because of his insatiable desire for sex or because he could not find a woman to make love with.

Avi Pwasi is well known for his use of hyperbole in his romantic love songs for his lovers and in his satirical songs. For instance, in Song D9, Avi Pwasi's love for Pindar Wasila is exaggerated. The singer states that Pindar should never be put in jail if she

commits any crime, instead, the singer should be put in jail in Pindar's place. This means that Avi Pwasi loves Pindar Wasila so much that he would prefer to suffer the punishment for any crime that Pindar commits rather than to see Pindar be sent to jail to suffer.

Furthermore, the singer says even if he has eight wives, if Pindar Wasila is not one of them he will feel as if he has never been married. Even Pindar Wasila's physical beauty is praised to the point of exaggeration. Pwasi says Pindar is too beautiful to be put in hell. He wishes that someone will tell God that it is an abomination for Pindar Wasila to burn in hell.

In like manner, in Song D11, Pwasi hyperbolises his feelings of love for Jija Kwanza and Jija Kwanza's beauty. In expressing his love for Jija Kwanza, the singer wishes for the impossible. He wishes that he can swallow her so that she can live in his stomach close to his heart and be happy. Because Avi Pwasi is very much in love with Jija, he claims that the door to his room faces the direction of Madlau, the village where Jija lives. At night when he goes to bed he puts his head to the direction of Madlau. Furthermore, Avi Pwasi fantasises in the song by saying that he will elope with Jija Kwandza and he will go and introduce her to his deceased parents in heaven so they will know that he has married his dream woman. Also he will take Jija away from their community and build for her a mansion in the sky/space, away from those who are opposing her desire to marry Avi Pwasi. In the same vein, the protagonist's physical beauty and her attributes are grossly exaggerated by the singer. The singer puts Jija Kwanza on the same pedestals with a Miss Universe and with an angel.

The use of hyperbole sometimes prompts a negative response, as in the scepticism expressed towards a tall tale or a fictional story.⁹¹ On the other hand, some people find songs containing exaggerated ideas and incidence to be more interesting and more entertaining.

Imagery

An image "is a mental picture created" either by a writer or a singer by means of the words which are used. As Romanus Egudu defines imagery, it "represents persons by objects that are normally associated with them: it represents an idea, a thought, or an emotion by an object, action, or situation without mentioning that idea, thought or emotion."⁹² The images used in Bura folksongs are not abstract but concrete and familiar to Bura folksong makers and their Bura audiences. This is mainly because the images are mostly taken from Bura local, natural and human environments which are familiar to the songmakers and their audiences. The images make the persons, ideas and emotions described in the songs more concrete and more vivid. They also reveal the songmakers' high sense of imagination and their artistic ingenuity. There is for instance an image of revulsion portrayed in Song A22 where what Bura people consider to be tabooed food items are used by residents of Bibalkwi village as soup ingredients. The items include *hela bulam* (baboon's intestines), *finara candim* (monkey's palate) and *bidlim* (shea butter). When a Bura person listens to this song, the person will instantly feel like vomiting and regard Bibalkwi people as repulsive.

There are some images used by Bura folksong makers which are taken from

modern technology. For instance in Song D8, Musa Gwoadzang praised Yarami Audu's beauty by metaphorically describing her as *suzuki mwala* (a beautiful Japanese made motor cycle). Also in Appendix I Song11, Avi Pwasi compares Jija Kwandza's beauty and elegance when she walks with an aeroplane flying in the air. Bura folksong makers also use images taken from the natural environment such as birds, animals, plants, the sky, the moon, the stars, rainbows, rain, clouds, water, trees, stones, dust and mountains. A case in point is Song D11 where Avi Pwasi used images taken from natural phenomena in his romantic love song about Jija Kwandza. For instance, in the song, Pwasi says if he elopes with Jija Kwandza he will build a house in the sky for her. He will put the moon in the door to Jija's room. Her windows will be covered with stars. The road that leads to her house will be carpeted with a rainbow. Bura songmakers make use of bird and animal images as well. An example can be found in Song B8, where Bata Lokoja metaphorically describes the deceased, Bulama Bilami, as *tsingi* (lion) and the deceased's son, Lawan Haruna, as *tunwa* (tiger).

Certain images which Bura songmakers use depict aspects of human nature, experiences, desires and aspirations. For instance most of the love songs contain images that reflect human feelings and desires for some sort of love relationship. The songs of abuse, satirical songs and protest songs contain images that depict and describe behaviours and attitudes which Bura people consider to be human follies, vices and taboos. These include sleeping with animals, stealing, laziness, pride, arrogance, ingratitude, greed and corruption. Some images are used to express aspects of Bura social and cultural values

such as honesty, hard work and wealth. Funeral songs and dirges contain images that reflect certain aspects of human nature such as mortality, the temporary feelings of bereavement, grief, loneliness and deprivation when loved ones die. For instance, images of death and the effects of death on the bereaved are portrayed in Songs B1, B2, B3 and B4. In religious songs can be found images that portray the attributes and characteristics of *Hyel Mthlaku* (the Christian God), *Allah* (the Muslim God) and *Hyel ar mjir nua haptu* (God of the indigenous Bura religion). For instance in Song G4, the image of the God of *Mjir nua haptu* (worshippers of indigenous Bura religion) is that of a supreme being who is omnipotent, omnipresent, the creator of heaven and earth, and *Hyel Tidda* (Almighty Father) and the provider of Bura people's needs such as rain water for drinking and for growing crops. Some of the images used in the religious songs also portray the relationship between the various deities and their worshippers. An example is Song F1. It is a Christian religious song in which Jesus Christ is depicted as the saviour from sin and eternal condemnation of all those who believe in Him. Jesus is also portrayed in the song as immortal, and the greatest among all prophets. The similarities of images used in the religious songs show that the three religions: Bura indigenous religion, Christianity and Islam, have syncretic ideas and beliefs about the existence of a supreme being called *Hyel* (God). And in all three religions, *Hyel* (God) is portrayed and described as *Hyel Mthlaku* (God Almighty), *Hyel Tidda* (God the Father), and as a male figure.

In songs about politics such as Songs G1, G4 and G6, there are images of corruption and oppression carried out by the agents of the colonialists in Bura society

during the British colonial era in Nigeria from 1914 to 1960.⁹³ The Pabir people who worked as agents of the British colonialists used to forcefully collect high taxes and domestic animals such as sheep and goats, and chickens from the Bura rural dwellers.

OTHER TECHNICAL FEATURES

There are other modes of communication used by Bura folksong makers for poetic effects. These communicative patterns include descriptive epithets, the use of oral formulas, praise names, stock phrases, proverbs, idiomatic expressions, paradox, irony, allusion, analogy, direct and rhetorical questions, cataloguing and dramatized dialogues. Also included are the use of comparison and contrast, variations, euphemism, topicality, humour and the use of macaronic or non-Bura words, phrases and expressions.

Narrative Style

Almost every Bura song used for this study tells a story. However, there are often not narratives in the form of classic ballads but are more like local legends, talking about a story known to all rather than telling the story itself. Thus the song about the man who made love to a donkey does not narrate that event. The singer assumes the audience knows the story or, if not, will ask about it from someone who does. In this sense, many of these songs are like what D. K. Wilgus describes as blues ballads.⁹⁴ Another example of a song consisting of local legends is Song A1. It tells in a satiric and indicting manner, a true story about a Bura young man who made love to a goat. Song D11 is a love song in which the singer (Avi Pwasi) tells a personal narrative about the romantic but

unconsummated love relationship which exists between himself and a Bura woman named Jija Kwandza. Song F4 tells a story about a drought that devastated a Bura community and how people in the community mobilized themselves and prayed to their God for rain water. Song C2 is about a motor accident. Song C3 is about a woman who has been neglected by her husband. Song A22 is about residents of Bibalkwi community who used repulsive and inedible items as soup ingredients. The narrative nature of the songs makes the contents of the songs explicit and easy to understand. The songs also become more interesting, emotive and more dramatic.

Dramatization

This is the use of body movement, facial expression and gesture to reinforce the words and voice. These may be elaborate with big gestures and wide movements over space. In a lullaby, for instance, the drama includes the swaying and rocking of the child to and fro. And in self praise song performance, there is a lot of head-shaking, hand gestures and bodily movements in the arena, the dramatization could be fairly limited to nodding the head, stamping the feet and clapping. However passive or elaborate the dramatization is, it enhances the mood and the theme of the song. It is inconceivable that Bura music would be performed without any form of drama. It is mostly realized through audience interjections, interpolations and dances. Examples can be found in children's game songs, such as Songs H1, H2, H3 and H5. There is also dramatization in work songs such as Songs E4 and E5. Some religious songs have dramatized dialogues. A good example can be found is Song F4. Many of the songs with dramatized dialogues are sung in the form of

call and response by the lead singer and the chorus. The lead singer throws a direct or an indirect question and the audience-participants reply by singing the chorus. The technique of dramatized dialogue and audience interpolation enables the audience to participate actively in the oral performance of the song. In addition, it is through these techniques that semantic elaboration is achieved.

Praise Names and Descriptive Epithets

Praise names and descriptive epithets either for Gods, human beings, animals, birds, and inanimate objects also occur in Bura folksongs. Often, praise names and descriptive epithets are used to describe physical appearances and attributes, qualities and achievements of individuals or groups. Sometimes the praise names and descriptive epithets are in the form of compound words.⁹⁵

Some examples of praise names and descriptive epithets occur in Song B15 where the deceased, Bulama, is described as *garma tsuwaha* (ploughing machine) and *Bulama Marya* (Bulama from Marya clan). This implies that the deceased, Bulama Bilami, when still alive, was a hardworking farmer, a peace loving community leader, and an honourable and a respected member of the Marya clan. Many of the love songs have praise names and descriptive epithets used by the songmakers to describe the subjects of their praise. Some examples can be found in Song D8 where Yarami is described as *suzuki mwala* (Suzuki woman), *zhimnaku* (ostrich), *mbikil mwala* (prime woman), *thira apa mpur yeri* (teeth like millet flour) and *wila apa dlika* (neck like corn-stalk) to portray Yarami's physical beauty and elegance. In the same song, the singer, Musa Gwoadzang, praises another

woman, Pindar, by describing her as *kwatam Pindar* (Princess Pindar). Similarly, in Song D11, the singer, Avi Pwasi, uses praise names and descriptive epithets to describe his love for Jija Kwandza. He describes Jija as *bangir na* (my beloved), *Jija na* (my Jija), *nkwar na* (my daughter), *Zule – zule Jija ata tira apa dlu jilki ni* (Jija walks gracefully like a plane flying), *nkwar Dikwa* (daughter of Dikwa clan) and *nkwar Lemba* (daughter of Lemba clan). In Song H6, the child who is being lulled to sleep with the lullaby is praised as *dimwar liya* (silver metal), *mayar mwa* (our mother) and *nkwar kuthli, nkwar Yamta* (daughter of a king, daughter of Yamta). The child is also described in the song as *nkwar diba* (fashionable daughter). In Song C1, the protagonist, Jampada, is described as *Jampada Shuwa*. This implies that Jampada is a handsome man: he is light in complexion, tall, slim, and has a pointed nose like a Shuwa Arab. Jampada is also described in the song as *Jampada yara pwawa* (Jampada cotton wool). This indicates that Jampada is neat and handsome.

Religious songs also have descriptive epithets used to eulogize and to describe the deities and other religious figures. A case in point is Song F1 where God is described as *Tidda* (Father) and Jesus is described as *Bzir Hyel* (Son of God), *Mdir mbanta* (Saviour) and *Anabi* (Prophet). Also in Song F4, *Hyel* (God), the supreme indigenous Bura deity is described as *Hyel Mthlaku* (God Almighty), *Hyel Tidda* (God the Father) and *Kaka* (Grandfather).

There are certain descriptive epithets used in songs of abuse and satirical songs. In Song A2 for instance, Haruna Bila is humorously described as "*bangir kwara*" (donkey's

lover). In Song A9, Ali who is the subject of abuse, is described as *Ali ka kir apa gwaba* (Ali with head like an unripe baobab fruit) and *bangir Bata Lema* (Bata Lema's boyfriend). In Song E2, Dalaci, the man who is the subject of abuse is described as *Dalaci msha gukuduk hili* (Dalaci with the hunch back).

Oral Formulas

In oral literary scholarship, a stock phrase or statement repeatedly used has been called an oral formula. This formulaic device — the technical use of repeated phrases and passages -- is the subject of Albert B. Lord's The Singer of Tales, which has influenced many studies especially of folksongs in various societies across the world, including Africa.⁹⁶ Formulaic phrases and assertions are commonly used in Bura folksongs especially in religious songs and satirical songs. Some formulaic phrases and assertions are in the form of wise sayings, beliefs and observed truths about life. There are examples of formulaic phrases in Songs B7, B9, B13, B14 and Song B15. These are songs in which the singer, Waziri, comforts the mourners by reminding them of human mortality, that a dead person cannot be brought back to normal life through cries. Also asserted is the belief that when a person dies, the person goes to live in another world. Followers of Bura indigenous religion believe that when a deceased person dies, the spirit of the dead goes to join the ancestors *akwa mambila* (in the world of the dead). This idea has been used in Song B4 where the singer addresses the deceased by wishing the deceased a safe journey to the world beyond, implying the world of the dead. Song B9 is a song that asserts the Bura commonplace belief in life after death.

Song H1 contains formulaic phrases such as "if you do evil you do it to yourself and not to somebody else." "If you do good you do it to yourself and not to somebody else." These formulas are equivalent to the proverb "you reap what you sow." Since the stock phrases and assertions which occur in Bura songs are based on incontrovertible observations of the world of nature and on traditionally or mythologically defined beliefs of the Bura people, they make the ideas described in the songs more poignant, serious and didactic.

Proverb

Proverb is a speech play "used by members of a cultural, ethnic, regional, professional group to communicate an interpretation of a behavioural interactional situation."⁹⁷ Proverbs are used by some Bura folksong makers. Some of the proverbs are in the form of stock phrases and oral formulas. The proverbs have underlying meanings. They are used in context to express ideas and create vivid mental pictures of persons, things and situations. The proverbs are memorable and they make possible the expression of ideas in short and condensed form. Also, as Olatunde Olatunji points out about the use of proverbs in traditional West African songs in general, the proverbs in Bura folksongs depict Bura worldviews and Bura social and cultural values, with certain actions condemned or commended.⁹⁸ An example of proverbs in Bura folksongs occurs in Appendix I Song B6 where the singer, in describing her feelings of loss, deprivation and helplessness caused by the death of her mother, summarises her plight.

In Song B11 the singer used a proverb which says, *guga ana tirkwa jiba ka*

sibilawa sai ka mda bara kura " (when a container used for drawing water from a well falls inside a well, the container cannot come out unless someone brings it out with a hook). This means that when a person gets into trouble he or she may remain in danger unless someone rescues the person. The singer, Boaja, explained the meaning of this proverb to me and the reason why he used it in the song. According to him, he was arrested by officials of the Biu local government because he composed and sang a song in which he encouraged Bura people living there to demand separation from the Biu local government so that the Bura can have their own local government and their own leader. During his detention at Biu town, he felt helpless until some influential and good hearted Bura individuals including Mr. Musa Dika Ndahi successfully lobbied for Boaja's release and his pardon by the Biu authority. The singer compares his detention by officials of the Biu authority to a *guga* which has fallen and becomes trapped inside a well. He was denied his freedom and was separated from his friends and family.

There is also the use of proverb in Song D11 about Jija Kwandza, the protagonist and the singer's girlfriend. When Jija's mother insists that Jija should reject Avi Pwasi because he is too old for her and that instead she should marry a man of her age, Jija tries to defend and justify her relationship with Avi Pwasi by reminding her mother that *buraku ani kila ka ya munya* (it is the young okra that grows to produce seeds). This proverb means it is a young person who grows to become a fruitful adult. The proverb also implies that adulthood is accompanied by experience and wisdom.

Many of the proverbs used in Bura folksongs provide additional knowledge, wisdom, understanding and age old truths about life and about Bura worldviews and Bura cultural and social values.⁹⁹

Idiomatic Expression

Idioms and idiomatic expressions are used in Bura folksongs in an interesting way. These technical devices are functional because, like proverbs, stock phrases and assertions, some idiomatic expressions are condensed sources of information.¹⁰⁰ Also they express knowledge, wisdom and truth about life. The saying in Appendix I Song B6, *kuli ku mbilimta dzi mudzha ku bili* (the hoe stick is broken, the hoe is broken), is an idiomatic expression intended to convey a message which is different from its surface or literal meaning. This idiom means that the singer's mother and provider is gone (dead). The singer expresses a sense of loss, deprivation and disorder caused by the death of her mother. Similarly, in Song B9 the idiom *saka ar nga ku hara akwa duniya* (your time is up in this world) is expressed. This means that the person addressed in the song is dead. Furthermore the phrase *tsa ku tira liha* (he has gone home) used in the funeral songs, especially Songs B2, B4, B7, B9, B13, B14 and B15, describe the destination of the deceased idiomatically. It implies that the deceased has gone to the world of the dead or to heaven.

Rhetorical and Persuasive Questions

A rhetorical question is a question which does not require an answer.¹⁰¹ The language of many of the songs in this study is rhetorical. The rhetorical questions help to

generate emotions and help to powerfully convey the message in the songs in which they occur. This technique occurs especially in the funeral songs, songs of abuse, satirical songs and religious songs.

Rhetorical questions are used in Song A8 where the singer questions the young man who wants to marry her as to whether she will be wearing the man's mother's and sister's clothes if she marries him, because he is poor.

In Song A20, the singer questions the rationale behind regarding and treating all single women in her community as prostitutes. Also in Song B3 the singer uses rhetorical questions to ask her deceased mother what she had left behind for her before she died.

Direct Questions

Direct questions and their answers also occur in Bura folksongs. This technical device makes the songs in which they are used more theatrical or dramatic and more entertaining. In addition, it provides a good opportunity for the audience to participate actively in the singing by providing the answers to the lead singer's direct questions in the form of choruses. Good examples of direct questions and their answers can be found in Song A1, where the lead singer humorously asks a male goat of its reaction when it learned that a man had made love to its wife (a female goat). Because a goat cannot talk, the audience answers the questions on behalf of the he-goat. Many children's game songs are in the form of questions and answers. A case in point is Song H1, where the leader singer asks a question and the other participants in the game give an answer.

Euphemism

Euphemism is "the substitution of mild and pleasant expression for a harsh and blunt one."¹⁰² This verbal communicative device is employed in Bura songs, especially in songs of abuse, satirical songs and political songs. Some Bura folksong makers prefer, for modesty and for security reasons to use euphemisms instead of harsh and vulgar or indecent expressions. An example of euphemism can be found in Song A2, where the singer, Usman Boaja, says the protagonist sleeps with donkey. This expression is a modest substitute for saying "has sex" with a donkey. There is also euphemism employed in Song A7 where the singer, Abori Kwala, criticises the sexual promiscuity of girls from Pakilama village especially at evening Bura folk music events. The euphemism used by the singer for this idea was: "each time we assemble to perform Bura traditional dances, once it is dark you Pakilama girls will start to sneak away with your boyfriends to go and make love in the farm yards." In Song A16, the singer, Bata Lokoja, uses the euphemism *alaro*. *Alaro* is a name given to someone who begs for alms, an accepted practice in Islam. In the song, the singer refers to his friend Dika as *alaro*, not for religious reasons this time, but because Dika is so lazy that he begs for alms in order to subsist.

Humour

Many Bura folksong makers have a good sense of humour. Humorous expressions are generously employed in Bura folksongs, especially in songs of abuse and in satirical songs where individuals or group of people are satirized through songs for saying or doing

things which are considered socially and culturally unacceptable in Bura society. For instance, Songs A1 and A2 contain humorous indictments and ridicule of men who made love to animals. Humour is one of the speech devices in Bura folksongs which can be translated into English relatively well.

Non-Bura Words and Expressions

As I mentioned in Chapter One, most Bura people including Bura musicians speak the Bura language and at least two other indigenous Nigerian languages. Although there are very few Hausa residents in Bura land, the Hausa language has become a regional language for people living in northern Nigeria. As a result, most Bura speak Hausa. There are also many Bura who speak the languages of the ethnic groups with whom the Bura are in close contact. These include Fulani, Kanuri, Marghi and Kilba. As characteristic of people who are bilingual, many Bura employ words or phrases from these other languages in their Bura conversations and songs. These macronic texts -- mixtures of Bura words, phrases and expressions with those that are non-Bura, are frequently used by Bura musicians. In Song G8, for example, *suna anfani* is a Hausa phrase, and the word *mutane* is also a Hausa word. *Su na anfani* means "they make use of" or "they value." And *mutane* is a Hausa word for "people." In the same song, the singer uses the English word "forestry" but in a Nigerian dialect: *forestri*. In Song D8, the word *mata* is a Hausa word for "woman." In the same vein, in Song A19, the singer includes the English expression "good morning" to mimic the way a young Bura man who is educated will greet her if she marries a young and educated Bura man, instead of marrying an old and uneducated Bura

man.

In Song D12, the phrase *aure na bilin* is a Hausa phrase adapted by Waziri. It means "modern wedding" or "new wedding." Also in Song D12, the singer uses the Hausa words *Mallim* and *Mallama*. *Mallim* is a Bura dialect for the Hausa word, *Mallam*, which means "Mr." *Mallama* is a Hausa word for "Ms." In Song D13, the singer, Waziri, uses the word *timatir*. *Timatir* is Bura dialect for the English word "tomato." In Hausa, it is referred to as *timatiri*. The word *saida* in Song D15 is Bura dialect for the Hausa word *sheda*, meaning "witness." In Song D16, Waziri incorporates some English words such as "pastor," "member" and "Babil." *Babil* is Bura version of the English word "Bible." The word *Babil* is also used many times by Waziri in Song F10. In Song D16, Waziri uses the word *Eklizha*, which is a Bura version of the Hausa word *Ekleziah*, which in turn is Hausa dialect for the word "Ecclesiastes" meaning body of believers in Christ. Also the singer uses the word *Afisawa* which is the Hausa word for "Ephesians."

In Songs F1, F5, F7, F8 and F9, Waziri makes use of the Hausa word *Yesu* means "Jesus." In Song F8, Waziri employs the English word *talentu* (talent) to admonish her Christian listeners to make good use of the various talents which God has given to them to do the work of God such as preaching the Gospel. In Song F2, she includes the Hausa word *shetan*, which is a version for the English word "satan."

The use of these macronic words and expressions shows the diversity, adaptability and the variability of the language and the style used for composing Bura folksongs.

Allusions To Historical Events and Figures

Another stylistic feature of Bura folksong is the allusion to historical events and historical figures. As Olatunde Olatunji observes of West African traditional songs in general, there are often oblique allusions to mythical or historical events relating to the subjects of traditional songs.¹⁰³ One area in which allusions are used is in Bura folksongs. This is partly because most of the songs are about real people, real events and experiences and partly because, as opposed to storytelling where there is ample room for elaborate description and expansion, songs concentrate on select ideas and sentiments in a very compact form.¹⁰⁴ As in Babalola's collection of Yoruba hunters' poetry (ijala) there are numerous uses of allusions in Bura folksongs.¹⁰⁵ A case in point is allusion to the British colonialists used in various ways in Songs G4, G5 and G7. As well, in Songs G1, G4, G5, G6 and G7, there are allusions to exploitation, corruption and oppression of the Bura natives by the Pabir people who worked as agents for the British colonialists during the colonial period in Nigeria. In most Christian Bura folksongs, there are allusions to religious figures in the Bible such as God, Jesus Christ and prophets. As well, there are allusions to Christian beliefs and doctrines such as sin, repentance, salvation, God's judgement, heaven, hell and evangelism. Some examples can be found in Songs F1, F2, F3, F5, F6, F7, F8 and F9. This technical device shows how Bura singers develop their songs by borrowing images and ideas from real experiences. Allusions are also employed in songs in many African societies; notable examples may be found in the praise songs of

Shaka the Zulu and Moshoeshoe in Southern Africa.¹⁰⁶

Chronicles

Some Bura folksongs contain lists or chronicles of family genealogy or the experience of an individual or group of people. Notable examples can be found in love songs, religious songs, wedding songs, funeral songs and political songs. For instance, in Song B1, which is a funeral song, the artist, Bata Lokoja tries to console the bereaved family. And in the course of consoling the bereaved family, he gives a catalogue of the names of the children and other close relatives of the deceased such as Yabata and Jampada. In Song I10, the singer, Uma Kida Yerima, catalogues the names of the deceased's wives: Miti, Mapindar, Inkwi, Mitu, Mali and Madawi. Also in Song D8, the singer lists the names of his girlfriends whom he eulogizes in the song: Yarami, Mwada and Pindar. In Song B11, the singer, Usman Boaja, lists his bad experiences which occurred in the same year including the death of his mother, the death of his friend and music fan, Dawi Safio, as well as his arrest and detention by officials of the Biu Local Government.

The listings of experiences and events in folksongs are not limited to Bura folksongs. For instance, in one of the folksongs of the Yungur tribe in Northern Nigeria there is a listing of the individuals who helped to bring about the creation of a Local Government for them such as "Lumel, Gayus, Paul Wampal and Yungurelites."¹⁰⁷

Antithesis

Antithesis is mainly the presentation and description of contrasting individuals, things, ideas or situations.¹⁰⁸ There are many instances of the use of antithesis in Bura folksongs. An example of antithesis can be found in Song D6 where the singer, Shetu Musamdia, contrasts her feelings for her husband with her feeling for her lover. She declares that she loves her lover more than she loves her husband. She says she wishes that the man who she dearly loves is brought to her so that they can elope. In contrast, she says she wants her husband taken away from her and thrown inside a bush.

When the singer makes a negative remark about her husband, she contrasts it with a positive or nice remark about her boyfriend. For instance, the statement which says *sai kuraka bangir na ani msira ali* (only my lover's voice is sweet to me) is antithetical to the statement which says *kura ka salirna ni msira ali wa* (my husband's voice is not sweet to me). Also, the statement *ka kibila ali bangir na ka yeru tira* (and my lover is brought to me so that we can elope) is in contrast to the statement which says *ka kita salirna ka psu kusar* (I wish my husband is taken and thrown into the bush). There is also the use of antithesis in Song A19 where the speaker in the song expresses her refusal to marry an old man and her preference for an educated young man. She portrays an old man as someone who is not only old fashioned but also as some one who is not decent, courteous and romantic. In contrast, she portrays an educated young man as decent, considerate, romantic and who has a lot of things in common with her.

Parallelism

Parallelism is a device used by the singer to bring together in a balanced relationship, ideas and images that may seem independent of one another.¹⁰⁹ In songs, parallelism occurs with words, sounds, moods and ideas. It could be used for the purpose of comparison and contrast. The singer selects ideas that may seem to be independent of one another but at certain level have a common affinity, and he or she bring these ideas together to present a convincing picture or image. Parallelism is used in Bura folksongs, either in the syntax, rhythm or ideas.¹¹⁰ This device enhances the songmaker's easy transition from one idea or one segment of the song to the other as he or she spontaneously composes and sings the song. An example of parallelism can be found in Song A21. The singer expresses her refusal to marry a man from Gigang, and she then gives her reasons for refusing to marry any man who is a resident of Gigang village. According to the lady, she does not want to marry any man from Gigang because Gigang is a small village; men from Gigang do not take good care of their wives, and that many men from Gigang are impotent. The type of parallelism, where the change is not in the positions of words within the structure but in the senses or meanings assigned to them, may be called semantic parallelism.¹¹¹

Semantic parallelism also occurs in Song H5, where the protagonist is described as someone who does not like to have his bath, and this is followed by a description of the consequences of his behaviour. Because he does not like to have his bath, his head, face, teeth, neck, legs and other parts of his body are described as being dirty. Semantic and

lexical parallelisms are also used by singers in other African societies. Some examples can be found in the praise songs about Shaka and Ndaba, the Zulu chiefs, in the portrait of the Yoruba god Ogun and in Sotho praise poetry.¹¹²

Variation

Another feature which can be seen in Bura folksongs is the use of variations either in words, phrases, sentences or ideas in a particular song. Since some words, phrases, sentences and ideas are repeated in many of the Bura folksongs, the songmakers sometimes try to break the monotony of repeating by using incremental repetitions as in ballads.¹¹³ An example of variation can be found in Song A2 where the noun 'Haruna' is replaced with the pronoun *tsa* (he) after the word 'Haruna' has been used many times. The singer also varies the name with which he calls the protagonist. In addition to calling the protagonist *Haruna bzir Bila* (Haruna the boy from Bila), the singer calls him other names including *bangir kwara* (donkey's lover.) The variety of names used in referring to Bila enhance the listener's understanding of Haruna's personality or identity. In Song B15, the protagonist is also described with a variety of names. He is described as *Bilama Bilami*, *Garma tsuwha* (ploughing-machine) and *a ndir ka palta wa* (lover of peace). The various descriptive epithets enable the songmaker to introduce a variety of images and ideas, and to avoid monotony in his poetic expressions.

In Song F4, the word *Hyel* (God) is later in the song replaced with varieties of descriptive epithet such as *Tida* (Father), *Kaka* (Grandfather) and *Hyel Mthlaku* (God Almighty). In Song F1, God who is the subject of praise and worship in the song is at first

referred to as *Tidda* (Father), but later the name *Tidda* is replaced with *Yesu* (Jesus), *Anabi* (Prophet) and *Bzir Hyel* (Son of God).

In Song D13, there are variations of words, phrases, expressions and ideas. What the singer says about the bridegroom and what she says about the bride undergoes many changes. For instance, in singing about the bridegroom, the singer varies the statement *Mallim ragai ga ata liwa kyir nga* (Mister, you are about to enter your matrimonial home) with the expression *Mallim wani ku luka kyir ni* (Mister has entered his matrimonial home). In making reference to the bride, the singer at first says *Mallama wani ata lukwa mbwar ni* (Ms. is about to enter her matrimonial home). Then later in the song, the singer says *Bzirnkwa mallama, ga ata lukwa kyirnga ya?* (Ms. are you going to your matrimonial home?) and *Mwala apa timatir ata lukwa mbwar ni* (the woman like a tomato is about to enter her matrimonial home). The variations in the statements used to describe the bride and the bridegroom's wedding helps to provide varieties of images and ideas about the new couple's wedding.

Direct Address

The use of direct address which is a common feature in African folksongs is particularly frequent in Bura folksongs.¹¹⁴ An example can be found in Song D3 where the singer, Yawulda Audu, directly addresses her boyfriend, Peter Virawa, by telling him not to worry that they are not together because she will go to court and seek a divorce from her current husband.

In Song D5, the singer, Shehu Wida, directly addresses the protagonist, Mr. Bwarama, by advising him to go and get his lover Nkatiya Gumbir so that they can get married. Similarly, in Song D14, the singer, Waziri, directly addresses the bride and the bridegroom.

Generally, the use of direct address by Bura singers helps to make the singing of the songs more theatrical or dramatic. Also, it makes songs more relevant and personal to the individuals who are directly addressed, and in some cases to the other listeners as well. Furthermore, the use of direct address in a song implies that the roles of the singers and the protagonists are united. That is, the singers are also among the protagonists.

Symbolism

In verbal lore, symbolism is often defined, interpreted and appreciated within its cultural context.¹¹⁵ Among the Bura people, certain plants, animals, birds and colours are recognized and associated with certain meanings. For instance, *tunvwa* (tiger) and *tsingi* (lion) are symbols of strength, authority and honour. Therefore, if a Bura person is described as a tiger or a lion, it implies that the person commands authority, is strong and honourable. In Song B8, The deceased is described as *tsingi* (lion) and the deceased's son is metaphorically referred to as *tunvwa* (tiger).

Furthermore, if a Bura person, especially a Bura woman is described as *kila* (a dog), it either means that she is a prostitute or she is neglected. An example of the latter occurs in Song C3 where the speaker in the song describes herself as *Kila* (a dog) because, as characteristic of the way many dogs are treated by their owners in Bura

society, she has been neglected by her husband. In Bura society, horse ownership symbolizes wealth and honour, just like having many children. In Song A16, the singer, Bata Lokoja, considers himself rich and honourable in contrast to his beggar friend Dika because he claims he has a horse. Also, a Bura boy accepts or gives *goro* (kola nuts) to a Bura girl and vice versa as a symbol of love. This idea is alluded to in Song A2 where the singer, satirically asks the protagonist whether the female donkey whom he slept with has received kola nuts from the protagonist. Also, if a Bura girl kneels down to greet a boy especially in public, it means that she is in love with the boy. This idea is expressed in Song P4 where the speaker in the song says that she is anxiously waiting for market day to come so that she can "kneel down and welcome her lover." The symbols used in Bura folksongs are powerful because they are better understood by insiders within Bura culture.

Simplicity and Accessibility

The language of Bura folksong is generally simple and communicative especially to Bura listeners. The accessibility of the songs is brought about by the use of familiar ideas and images taken from Bura social, cultural and natural environments. Also, although many of the songs contain non-Bura words, the songs are composed mainly in Bura language. Although the songs are simple and easy to understand, they utilize complex techniques including the use of various kinds of figurative language such as metaphor, simile, imagery, allusion, irony, proverb, analogy and symbolism. The various forms of figurative language used by Bura songmakers are mostly familiar to Bura listeners. As a result, Bura audiences typically find it relatively easy to understand the contents of Bura

folksongs. The use of varieties of figurative language makes some of the songs subject to multiple interpretations.

Conclusion

The survey and analysis of techniques of Bura folksongs in this chapter have shown that the techniques of Bura folksongs are of various but interrelated forms and dimensions. The technical features constitute and accord Bura folksongs their artistic qualities and merits. The range of techniques of Bura folksongs identified, outlined and analyzed include the style of composition, mode of performance and the figurative language used to compose and perform the songs. Regarding the style of composition, the songs are composed orally by making use of oral formulas which are frequently and widely used in Bura oral tradition. Various types of figurative language which literary critics find in written poems also abound in Bura songs in addition to the figurative language which is peculiar to oral poetry in general and Bura song in particular.

Certainly, the singing voice is the most common medium. Singing is often accompanied with either complex or simple instrumental music. The instrumental music is produced by various musical instruments such as *ganga* (drum) of various types, *tsindza* (xylophone), *tuhum* (pot) of various types, *kugwa* (gourd) of various types, *yakandi* (banjo) and *alkita* (flute) of various forms. Some of the songs are performed *a cappella*. That is, they are sung without being accompanied by instrumental music. This is mainly because the interest is more in the words than in the musicality or the melody of the songs. Even though Bura is a tonal language, spoken verse cannot be identified as one of the modes of Bura

folksong delivery.¹¹⁶

The transcribed texts of Bura folksongs inevitably exclude many of the technical elements which exist in the orally performed versions. These include the visual aspects of the oral performance such as the performer, the audience, the material culture of the musical performance such as the musical instruments used, and the space or venue. Other missing features are the theatrical aspects such as the dancing, clapping, gesturing, ululating, drama, mimicking and working. In fact it is almost impossible to get the full aesthetics of Bura folksongs if they are transcribed. It is doubtful if even the most skillful person could reproduce in translation, the sounds and sights, the liveliness, the humour and the affectiveness of the oral versions. I had problems in finding the English equivalents for some Bura technical terms. This suggests that Bura folksongs are better understood and better appreciated by listening, viewing and participating in their performance than in reading the transcribed texts. The transcribed texts of the songs are limited attempts to document the songs. But despite limitations, I have observed that the artistic qualities of Bura folksongs share common grounds with songs in very literate societies. From here I now move to the question of function to ask why songs are sung in Bura society and how the techniques used in composing and performing the songs help the singers to address and fulfill these functions.

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CHAPTER SIX

FUNCTIONS OF BURA FOLKSONGS

Throughout history people's songs within many cultures have been preserved and transmitted orally from generation to generation. This means of preserving at least some part of a group's heritage is still an integral part of many cultures throughout the world, especially Bura society. My study of Bura folksongs that have been transmitted provides insights into Bura cultural patterns. Thus, in this chapter I discuss the functions of Bura folksongs.

"Function" is the term used for what something does, what it accomplishes, the social purpose it serves.¹ With specific reference to song, it denotes its meaning and "the reason for its employment."² One of the ways to understand Bura folksong is to consider its function. for the performers, the audience, and the society as a whole. It is the contribution of Bura folksong to the social life of the Bura people that is the main focus of this chapter.³

My approach is in line with David Coplan's idea that the analysis of the function of music should illuminate the actual relationship of musical performance to its total environment.⁴ These multiple processes suggest that the production and reproduction of performances must be located within the political, social, and cultural relations between performers and the total context in which they perform.⁵ This concept is relevant to Bura folksong because music is an all-pervading and interdependent aspect of Bura culture. As discussed in Chapters One and Three, folksongs are integral parts of most aspects of Bura

culture, including rites of passage, festivals, religious activities, political events and physical labour.

Assessment of the entire Bura song corpus reveals that the songs are performed for various reasons or purposes. Many of the functions of Bura folksongs tend to be interrelated. This will be revealed in the following discussions. The functions are analyzed in the order of their prominence: sociocultural, educational, magico-religious, political, entertainment, aesthetic and economic.

SOCIOCULTURAL FUNCTIONS

The sense in which song is a socializer is seen in the way listeners derive pleasure from song as art, and from the way they obtain information intended to cultivate in them a sense of the social fabric from which the song is created. Merriam has discussed the sociocultural relevance of song for individuals and the society at large:

...song texts reveal a number of problems of a psychological nature, as they concern the individual and also the society at large. Texts reflect mechanisms of psychological release and the prevailing attitudes and values of a culture, thus providing an excellent means for analysis. Mythology, legend, and history are found in song texts, and is frequently used as an enculturative device.⁶

Merriam's idea that songs can provide insights into questions regarding human behaviour is applicable to the significance of Bura folksong. Many Bura song texts embody information about Bura patterns of behaviour, beliefs and sociocultural values.

Bura folk music performance is more than just an occasion for singing and

dancing. It is in a very real sense an embodiment of the social life of the performers and their audiences. In songs, individuals or groups express their feelings, experiences and ideas about life, ranging from the extremes of exuberance to dejection, resistance and melancholy. Generally, Bura songs encompass social issues and concerns such as relationships and life experiences. As with folksongs of the Hausa ethnic group in northern Nigeria, Bura songs also serve as convenient means of mirroring, reifying, validating, reinforcing and safe-guarding Bura values and beliefs.⁷ Furthermore, Bura folk music events are often used as occasions at which victories, achievements and experiences of daily life are dramatized in a blend of music, movement, dance, song, and rhythm.⁸ The performers and the audience-participants find ways to express their suppressed feelings and desires. Examples are declarations of love, praise of virtues, and criticism of socially unacceptable behaviours and attitudes.

Furthermore, as Finnegan notes, songs can be used as means for applying social control and for exerting social pressure on others, whether equals or superiors, who attempt to deviate from social and cultural conventions with which they are fully familiar.⁹ When this happens, songs of abuse, satire and protest are composed and performed as means of expressing disapproval, applying social pressure and exerting social control against individuals or groups. For example songs of praise and love songs are composed to praise individuals or groups for exhibiting patterns of behaviours which are socially and culturally valued in the society.¹⁰ Edwin G. Burrow's 1940 description of the sociocultural function of music in Polynesian society parallels the place of song performance in Bura

society:

An important function of gatherings for community singing was to emphasize the values stressed by the culture. Songs in praise of chiefs fostered political loyalty. Songs in praise of places expressed the sentiment for the homeland. In a negative way, songs of ridicule and scandal were at once a punishment to culprits and a warning to others. Such songs constituted something very like a legal sanction through public opinion.¹¹

In this case, the patterns of behaviours which are valued include hard work, honesty, marital fidelity, kindness, generosity and good leadership. The unacceptable behaviours and attitudes include laziness, stealing, spouse abuse, child abuse, pride, incest and bad leadership. Because the ethics and morals of the society are expressed during folk music performance, it serves as a convenient avenue for appraising behaviours and attitudes in terms of the socially and culturally approved behaviours and attitudes.

Homogeneity and Counter Homogeneity

I am using these terms 'homogeneity' and 'counter homogeneity' the same way someone else might use the terms 'conformity' and 'conflict,' especially when discussing the relationships between people in authority and the individuals they control.

It is important to point out that there is no absolute social homogeneity either in the form of consensus or integration within Bura society. As Jeremy Boissevain points out:

The structural-functional view of society as a system of enduring groups composed of statuses and roles supported by a set of values and related sanctions which maintain the system in equilibrium flows logically from the questions social anthropologists and sociologists ask about the world around them. The central question is still, in most cases, the same one asked by Hobbes: considering that man is basically out for himself, "what

makes social order possible?" This central problem of sociological theory has been answered in ways that have given rise to two basic models of society: the "consensus" or "integration" model, and the "coercion" or "conflict" model. Briefly the first model attributes to social systems the characteristics of solidarity, cohesion, consensus, cooperation, reciprocity, stability; the other attributes to it the characteristics of division, coercion, dissensus, conflict and change.¹²

The study of Bura folksongs has revealed evidence of these two basic models of society, the "consensus" or "integration" model and the "coercion" or "conflict" model.¹³ That is, there is homogeneity as well as counter homogeneity in Bura society. Certain individuals and groups in Bura society may have shared values and beliefs but there are others who may have contrary beliefs and interests. These similarities and differences are often expressed through songs.

Homogeneity

There are Bura songs which express the notion of consensus or integration. These are songs through which the singers try to encourage their listeners to conform to established Bura norms and sociocultural values. Individuals or groups who engage in "unlawful" acts or break Bura taboos are either abused or ridiculed and embarrassed through songs of abuse and satirical songs. A case in point is Usman Boaja's song in which he indicts and ridicules the protagonist, Haruna Bila, for violating a Bura taboo by making love to an animal. Another example is Bata Lokoja's accusation of his friend Dika for begging for alms so as to subsist instead of working hard to support himself and his family. Songs that enhance a sense of belonging and provide "a solidarity point around which members of society can congregate" contribute to the integration of society.¹⁴

Counter Homogeneity

As well, there are songs that depict conflict and resistance, either by individuals or groups, to the views and social values established by mainstream society. There are protest songs and songs of abuse which were sung to express resistance, oppression and discrimination by individuals or groups. One example is Song D6, where a married woman publicly declared her love to a man other than her husband. As among the Tiv, some Bura songmakers will advance their music careers by attacking in a series of songs, individuals or groups who they feel have done them wrong.¹⁵ One such song is Song D8, where the singer, Musa Gwoadzang makes damaging allegations against his rival suitor. Some Bura individuals or groups use songs to fight for freedom to make their own choices and achieve their goals. A case in point is Song A19, the song in which a young woman resists an arranged marriage. Patterns of social behaviour which emerge from Bura folksongs seem to reflect what Boissevian points out about the behaviours of people within an established sociocultural and ecological framework:

Within the social, cultural and ecological framework so established, people decide their course of action on the basis of what is best for themselves, and not only, as structural-functionalists would have us believe, on the basis of the accepted and sanctioned norms of behaviour.... Instead of looking at man as a member of groups and institutional complexes passively obedient to their norms and pressures, it is important to try to see him as an entrepreneur who tries to manipulate norms and relationships for his own social and psychological benefit.¹⁶

Songs through which individuals or groups express their resistance to societal norms such as forced marriage and polygamy reflect counter homogeneity.

Bura folksong performance is a good occasion for meeting old friends and making new ones. In addition, the performance enhances feelings of communality, commonality, and kinship among the performers and the audience-participants in particular and among members of the community in general. On the other hand, some individuals use songs as media for expressing their individuality and personal goals.

Emotional Response to Music

As Merriam explains, there is "considerable evidence to indicate that music functions widely and on a number of levels as a means of emotional expression."¹⁷ The emotion may be grief as in dirges and funeral songs, religious exaltation as in religious songs and ritual chants, longing for passion as in love songs the exaltation of the ego as in praise songs. The function of music as a mechanism of emotional release for individuals or groups described by Merriam is applicable to Bura folksong:

An important function of music, then, is the opportunity it gives for a variety of emotional expressions -- the release of otherwise unexpressible thoughts and ideas, the correlation of a wide variety of emotions and music, the opportunity to "let off steam" and perhaps to resolve social conflicts, the explosion of creativity itself, and the group expression of hostilities.¹⁸

In Bura society social protest songs often emerge when individuals or groups are deprived of other mechanisms of protest.¹⁹ For example, social conventions make it difficult for Bura women to directly and freely express their complaints or grievances, especially to their husbands and in public. Through songs, women can express their feelings and views to anyone, either in private or in public. The convention by which things can be said in a

poetic medium but which cannot be said in a more direct form -- "poetic licence"-- enables people, especially women, to "blow off steam" or to call general attention to some matters of personal concern to the singers.²⁰ Like other Africans, Bura people recognize "neuroses as induced by repression," and of the therapeutic value of releasing repressed thoughts and feelings, especially through songs.²¹ For instance individuals or groups who are hurting express and release their feelings of tension, anger, frustration, abuse and oppression in songs of protest, abuse and in satirical songs.²² Women who are victims of spousal abuse or domestic violence complain and protest about their plight in songs. As Finnegan rightly says, it is as if expression in songs "takes the sting out of the communication and removes it from the real social arena."²³ In the context of Bura folk music performance therefore, women's presence is felt because they can compose and perform folksongs, and can be audience- participants at folk music events without restrictions. Currently there are many Bura women folk musicians and many women folk music performing groups. In other social activities such as politics, education and occupation, Bura women are not treated equally with their male counterparts. Furthermore, during Bura folk music performance, like Yoruba *efe* performance and Ibo song performance in southern Nigeria, singers can take up the cause of any member of the community with a view to influencing any decision that might be pending on an issue affecting the individual.²⁴ Thus, Bura singers play the role of a "judiciary."²⁵ This function is usually carried out when the singers and the audience participants use the contexts of the folksong performances as forums for revealing and discussing sensitive social problems and to suggest their solutions. The

singers often reveal, confront and condemn social problems, and suggest solutions to them with the wisdom of a sage, the tactfulness of a preacher and the didacticism of a teacher.²⁶

Finally, Bura folksongs, especially children's game songs and rhymes give the children moral themes which teach them patterns of behaviours and attitudes that are socially and culturally acceptable in Bura society. These acceptable behaviours and attitudes include obedience to parents, respect for elders, honesty, kindness and neatness of appearance.

Physical Response to Music

The functions of Bura folksongs are not limited to social behaviours. It also includes physical response to music by musicians and their audiences. The production of physical response seems clearly to be an important function of music.²⁷ John Blacking's description of the audience's physical response to music among the Venda people of South Africa fits the description of the audience's behaviour at most Bura folk music events:

Reactions to the music of initiation, therefore, differ considerably according to the age, sex, and social status of the listener...., for instance, there is much singing, dancing, and playacting: some of the little girls who sit with their mothers may be interested enough to imitate some dance steps, or even to play the drum when there is an interval in the proceedings. The older women and especially those in charge, dance and sing loudly and enjoy every moment ...²⁸

It seems it is the music that evokes physical responses such as dancing, clapping and playacting at music events. Music also spurs workers who are involved in physical labour such as grinding, weeding, hoeing, harvesting, threshing or pounding to work harder. Bura musicians also physically respond to music. Musicians' body attitudes in connection with

music performance include sitting, kneeling, standing, walking, dancing, jumping and staring upwards or at the audience.²⁹

Alan Lomax's description of a Black American folksinger's physical response to his singing also tallies with the physical responses of most Bura folksingers:

The body of the singer moves sinuously or in a relaxed easy response to the beat. He dances to his song. The singer's expression changes with the mood of the song, line by line. There is a great deal of smiling and even laughing in many performances.³⁰

The fact that music elicits physical response is clearly counted upon in its use in almost every society. However, the responses may be shaped by cultural conventions.³¹ In Bura society, the physical responses to music are influenced by the occasion, the social context, the kind of music, the social composition of the audience and the audience's roles in performances.³²

EDUCATIONAL FUNCTION

Another function of Bura folksong is that which it plays in education. In Bura society, the information embodied in folksong is highly regarded in its own right.³³ Most Bura folksongs are based on true life stories and events, hence they are regarded as historically true and educational. Because the songs deal with topical issues, they contain valuable educational tips for listeners. To the extent that Bura song mirrors and validates Bura sociocultural values and beliefs, it contains practical rules for harmonious living for the guidance of listeners.³⁴ Funeral songs reinforce truths about life and human nature,

especially the inevitability of death. Children's rhymes and game songs inform and prepare children for a successful adult life. Political party campaign songs inform and educate voters on party manifestos and programs. Satirical songs and songs of abuse often deal with ethical and unethical conduct. Like myths, Bura songs, especially religious songs, express, enhance and codify beliefs, and safeguard and enforce morality.³⁵ In addition, songs serve as "a warrant, a charter, and often even a practical guide to magic, ceremony, ritual and social structure."³⁶ As with the function of folktales among the Chaga of East Africa, songs incorporating morals are sung in Bura society to "inculcate general attitudes and principles, such as diligence and filial piety,³⁷ and to ridicule laziness, rebelliousness, and snobbishness."³⁸

The educational function of Bura folksongs is not limited to the songs but extends to the dance, drama and rituals that accompany Bura folksong performance, and the material culture of Bura folk music such as the musical instruments and dance costumes used during these performances. These elements of Bura folksong performance embody information about Bura sociocultural values, beliefs, worldviews, aesthetics and material culture. The education that is received through songs is in keeping with the principle that in Bura society no individual is allowed to grow up discovering everything by trial and error.³⁹

MAGICO-RELIGIOUS FUNCTION

Malinowski said that myth functions as a charter for belief. This function also applies to songs, particularly religious songs.⁴⁰ Religious beliefs are expressed through musical prayer, myth and legend set to music, divination songs and songs of religious functionaries.⁴¹ Merriam's description of the religious function of songs enhancing the performers' control of power, especially supernatural power, tallies with the function of Bura religious songs.

The control of power is often achieved through songs of supplication; magic songs for curing, hunting and many other activities which require supernatural assistance; songs of spirits, witches, and other supernatural phenomena; melodic invocations; and so forth.⁴²

The expression of belief systems and the achievement of control of supernatural power are key functions of religious songs.

When Bura folksongs, especially religious songs, are sung at religious occasions, the songs often excite and enhance the listeners' morality and spirituality as well as their understanding of life, human nature and 'age old' truths about human nature and destiny. This is equivalent to what Bade Ajuwon says about Yoruba *Ijala* poems -- that they "excite man's understanding of life."⁴³ As one of the Bura folksong makers, Waziri, points out, the songs she sings at religious occasions and at funerals express Bura religious beliefs such as the inevitability of death, the transience of life, the existence of life after death.⁴⁴ When singing songs at funeral occasions, the musicians sing songs that will

remind the mourners and other members of their audience of the inevitability of death in the human life cycle, the transience of life, the continuity of life after death, and the fact that the living and their deceased loved ones will meet again someday at the feet of God. This religious belief and philosophy reflect the beliefs of the so called "institutionalized" or "official" religions, particularly Christianity and Islam, which have been adopted and embraced by most Bura. But the truth is that some of these beliefs were shared by the Bura even before they embraced Christianity and Islam. Ancestor worshipers believe that when they die they will continue to live their lives in the world of the ancestors where they will acquire supernatural powers and become the guiding spirits, protectors and divine providers for their relatives who are still living.⁴⁵

POLITICAL FUNCTION

Music often plays a strong part in politics in Africa, especially in Bura society. Political structures are constantly involved with songs.⁴⁶ Politicians and traditional rulers use the occasions of folk music performance to employ musicians for their own purposes to demonstrate their power and control over their subjects and to propagate their political interests and political agendas.⁴⁷ For instance, during political campaigns, many Bura politicians organize folk music performances and use the music occasions to campaign for elections. When politicians win elections, they organize Bura folk music performances to celebrate their victory, inviting Bura folk musicians to perform music for them and their supporters. Furthermore, Bura musicians are often hired by government officials to

compose and perform songs that will inform and educate the general public about government policies and programs.

Citizens also request Bura musicians to compose and perform politically-related songs on behalf of the populace. These kinds of songs usually convey the feelings of individuals or groups towards government officials and government policies. They may be songs of protest or satirical songs in which the citizens show their resistance and contempt for bad government policies, corruption and power and control perpetrated by government officials. Politicians, government officials and traditional rulers who are good are praised and commended, as in praise songs for political dignitaries sung at the occasion of the investiture of office, and praise of desired government policies and programs.⁴⁸ These political processes signal the issue of power. Power in this sense refers to the capacity of folksong performance to either increase or decrease group support for premises on which strategies for changing society might be based.⁴⁹ Furthermore, it entails the ability of Bura folk musicians to use songs to comment critically on the power relations within which they are obliged to live and work.⁵⁰

As pointed out by Finnegan about African political songs in general, Bura political songs are now used by political parties "as a vehicle for communication, propaganda, political pressure, and political education."⁵¹ During Nigeria's second republic (from 1979-1983) the performances of political songs during political rallies and campaigns made a great impact. Well composed and performed songs of abuse and satirical songs for political opponents made such opponents lose their support and consequently lose in the

elections. Singers described a particular party's manifestos and programs so as to inform and educate voters. Some political parties would take up popular public opinion and grievances and articulate them into definite aims in their party manifestos and programs. They then hired or encouraged recognized Bura songmakers to compose and sing songs that propagated those aims and objectives thus carrying the audience with them. Enthusiastic supporters of a particular political party could therefore make it their business to see that their party's plans and objectives were well represented and publicized through songs. Apart from its propagandist role, the performance of political songs at political rallies and campaigns had the tendency to attract a large number of people. Non-supporters attended political rallies and campaigns and in the process of listening to songs sung at the campaign rallies became attracted to the party. Songs therefore influenced the success and failure of political parties and politicians during the transition to the second republic.

Furthermore, Bura political or propagandist songs are sometimes sung primarily as an open declaration of solidarity by minority or oppressed groups and to criticize and to put pressure on their oppressors to stop oppressing them. In these revolutionary kinds of political songs, one can easily detect the teasing, condemnation, protest, verbal confrontation, conscious persuasion, passionate plea, deception and group solidarity by identifying the primary and the secondary audiences, and the likely effects the songs will have on them. These type of political songs are equivalent to the revolutionary songs of the *Mau Mau* supporters in Kenya.⁵² The singers changed some Christian songs to Kikuyu

folksongs. Unknown to the British colonialists, new subversive words and ideas in Kikuyu were set in the tune of the Christian songs to encourage the listeners to join the *Mau Mau* movement and fight for Kenya's independence. However, in the case of the Bura revolutionary songs, the primary targets were not the colonialists but the members of the ruling class who ruled the Bura Emirate council. The Bura people were oppressed and exploited by the ruling class so they composed songs in which they criticized, abused and ridiculed their oppressors. These protest songs helped to bring the oppressed together to fight for a common cause. Therefore, as Tanure Ojaide says about the functions of traditional songs in north-eastern Nigeria, Bura folksongs help to encourage and maintain internal cohesion, structural stability, unity and patriotism.⁵³

The political and social functions of some Bura propaganda oriented folksongs can be compared to some Tiv folksongs described by Iyorwuese Hagber, in the sense that these songs are used as media to inform and educate the populace about the government's new policies and programs such as "Family Planning," "Rural Development," "War Against Indiscipline," "Better Life for Rural Women" and "Afforestation Program."⁵⁴

Like the Zulu people in South Africa and the Ashante people in Ghana where every king has his own praise singers, Bura traditional rulers, particularly the emir of Bura, has court bards or a band of musicians and minstrels whose duties include praising the good leadership, achievement, generosity, charisma and wisdom of the emir through songs and drumming on a regular basis.⁵⁵ The emir of Bura's musicians also chronicle, recite and praise the emir's family genealogy and the great deeds of his ancestors which have been

handed down orally to the current court musicians by the previous court musicians. This tradition helps to maintain and uphold the authority, position and family history of the emir. In addition, the songs stir up and consolidate the admiration of the listeners in their rulers which, if communicated to them through everyday conversation is less likely to be appealing or acceptable. Therefore, apart from being one media through which subjects can protest and express their grievances against their oppressive, dictatorial and corrupt rulers, politically inclined protest songs can help to undermine or even topple an unpopular government, exert sanctions against an incompetent ruler or check the ruler's excessiveness and abuse of office. Usman Boaja's description of the role he plays during party campaigns portrays the role which Bura singers play in influencing the political process in Nigeria:

I also sing songs about politics. For instance during the time of the defunct NPN [National Party of Nigeria] and the GNPP [Great Nigeria People's Party] in the 70s and in the 80s, and during the time of political campaigns by the SDP [Social Democratic Party] and the NRC [National Republican Convention] in the 1990s, I composed and sang political songs about politicians and about political parties. Sometimes I would be hired or paid by party officials to compose and sing songs that will describe their party's programs so that those who listen to the songs I compose will vote for the contestants in that political party. There were times when I was hired by some politicians to compose and sing songs that would portray negative images of their opponents so that their opponents would lose during the election and they could win. There had been times when I praised the parties or the politicians I supported so that my listeners will vote for them during election. At the time when Bura people were demanding for autonomy or independence from Pabir authority in Biu, I composed and sang a song in which I advocated for Bura people's independence from the Biu authority. As a result, some officials from Biu came and arrested me and I was detained for three months in Biu. They said I was detained because I advocated for Bura people's succession from the Biu authority.⁵⁶

[Appendix II]

The singers influenced the success or failure of politicians to be elected into office.

Musa Gwoadzang also made insightful comments about his political role as a Bura musician, especially during party campaigns:

With regard to the political songs which I compose and sing, usually, any politician who comes to me and tells me that he is campaigning for election on the platform of a particular political party, I will make sure that I compose and sing songs that will persuade the listeners to vote for him. Yes, I have to portray his party as the best party. If another politician also comes to me and asks me to sing a song that will contribute to his winning the election I will not refuse his request. Rather, as I did to the other politician, I will do the best I can and compose song that will convince anyone who listens to the song to vote for him during the election. If I do not do the same thing to all the politicians who come to me, people will say that I am being partisan by supporting one of the two political parties.⁵⁷

[Appendix II]

Bura musicians inform and educate their listeners on the political programs and manifestos of politicians who hire them to compose songs about their parties.

ENTERTAINMENT

Another function of folk music is simply that of entertainment. The entertainment function of folk music in Ghana described by Nketia is comparable to the function of folk music in Bura society:

Considerations of enjoyment are always at the forefront, for music and dancing constitute a dominant avenue of dramatic expression. The music of worship is not cultivated merely out of a dread of God or the gods and ancestors but because it is emotionally satisfying. Aesthetic pleasure is looked for even in the dirge.⁵⁸

Songs are meant not only for emotional expression, enforcing conformity to social norms, validation of social institutions and religious rituals and symbolic representation.⁵⁹ As in Ghana, entertainment and amusement also form part of the purposes for performing folk music in Bura society. For many Bura folk music fans, what interests them most during Bura folk music performance is the aspect of entertainment.

As entertainment art, folksong performances provide a cathartic release and serve as a defense against dehumanization through the expressive sharing of experience.⁶⁰

AESTHETICS

The aesthetic aspect of Bura folk music need not be categorized in reductive terms. It embraces for instance, the delight of the audience in the beauty of the diction, the delineation of characters, humorous ridicule of people's follies and the evocation of people's virtues and achievements. It also includes the music produced by the drumming and other Bura musical instruments, the lyrics, the singers "good" vocal quality, the dancing, the clapping, the drama and the ululating. Even the didactic, simple and communicative nature of the songs, their sense of humour, and the use of beautiful imagery taken from Bura environments contribute in making Bura folksong performances pleasurable, satisfying, entertaining, and affective.

To qualify to be performed, there must be something beautiful and appealing in Bura songs. The beauty lies in the language and the melody. The aspect of play on sounds comes out in the uses of onomatopoeia, and in alliteration, assonance, rhyme and rhythm.

As well, there are songs in which the words are not expressly meant for semantic communication but more as artistic expressions. In songs which involve the coding and decoding of messages, the contest is a very beautiful and challenging exercise where participants test their wits and mastery of the resources of Bura language through spontaneous delivery. Usually, it is an occasion for bringing to the fore the aesthetic qualities of the language. The poetic aesthetics are derived especially in the imagery. Powerful imagery is considered to be the source of a good song because it provides better communication than prosaic language.

ECONOMIC FUNCTION

Bura folksongs are economically significant. Bura folk musicians who are invited to perform music at social occasions such as weddings, festivals and political conventions are often rewarded for their performances. However, it is important to note that the economic function of folksongs, especially Bura folksongs, is not restricted to direct monetary values. The most visible economic benefit is the monetary payments or rewards given to musicians for their performances. The monetary benefits include invitation fees which they are paid to perform their music at particular occasions and the money given to musicians as *pila* (rewards) by members of the audience who are impressed by the performance. Another tangible function of Bura folk music is the material gains which the musicians receive for their performances. These include food and clothing.

If being a professional folk musician means the musician makes a full-time living

with such music, especially as perceived in North America, then none of my four Bura informants nor the other Bura musicians I know of can be considered to be a professional musician.⁶¹ As revealed by my informants, Bura musicians do not earn their living entirely from their folk music performances. This means that no Bura musicians, despite his or her skill and interest in composing and performing songs, has taken up musical performances as a full time job. Instead, they combine the job of performing music with farming because the money and the materials they get from performing music is usually not enough to support them and their families. Boaja indicated that the money he earns from performing music is not enough to support himself and his family. As a result, he works on his farm during farming season.

I charge invitation fees when I am invited to perform *tsindza* music at social occasions especially at weddings, but I do not charge people high invitation fees as some people have alleged. Also when I go to a wedding to perform music at a wedding the people who invited me to perform music often feed me and my music group with foods and drinks, but I do not demand for many cartons of beer as some people have alleged...Also when I am performing *tsindza* music and the audience is pleased with the *tsindza* music, some members of the audience will come forward and reward me with money and or clothes. This encourages me to perform well too... My favourite occupation is performing *tsindza* music but performing music is not my only means of livelihood. I cannot adequately support myself and my family if I only depend on performing *tsindza* music. I also do farming during the rainy season.⁶² [Appendix II]

Gwoadzang said he would prefer to be a full time musician but he is forced to combine performing with farming so as to adequately support himself and his family.

The work that I love to do most is performing *yakandi* (lyre) music, but I also do farming during the rainy season especially when I am not invited to go and perform music at social occasions such as weddings, festivals and

funerals. When people come to invite me to go and perform music for them I sometimes fix invitation fees. But I do not make it a policy to fix invitation fee to everyone who invites me to perform music. If someone invites me but the person can not afford to pay the invitation fee I will still go and perform music. There are times when I am paid the invitation fees, but during the musical performance, I do not get a lot of money or material rewards from the audience. I feel this is not good enough. That is why I usually agree to perform music at an occasion if I am invited, with the hope that even if the people concerned did not pay me the invitation fees members of the audience will reward me with a lot of money. In the past, my invitation fee used to be five pounds, and it was a lot of money at that time. But today because our money does not have much value, even if somebody gives me one thousand Naira the value of the one thousand naira is not up to the value of the five pounds I received in the past. I use the money which I earn from performing music to meet the needs of my family. I want my children to say, when they grow up, that their father was a good musician. These are some of the things about my music career which if I neglect them my music career will not be a good career.⁶³ [Appendix II]

It is clear that Gwoadzang earns some money from his music career even though the money he earns is not enough to support himself and his family.

In the same manner, Audu said he would like to make music performance his full-time job but he is forced to combine it with farming so as to subsist.

I do farming and I perform *tsindza* (xylophone) music. I prefer performing *tsindza* music more than the farming. I prefer performing music because of the money which I get from it.... At one time, I was hired by Mr. Dawutiya, the Chairman of Hawul Local Government and Mr. Abba Madu to compose and sing songs that will promote their political party. At that time my horse had just died so they gave me eight thousand Naira to buy another horse. [Eight thousand Naira is about one hundred and sixty dollars (Canadian)].⁶⁴ [Appendix II]

Waziri also reveals that she earns money from performing music but farming is her main source of livelihood because the money she earns belongs to the Christian Women's Fellowship.

I get money from performing music but the money does not belong to me it is for doing the work of God. I earn my living by farming. My family and friends also support me by giving me monetary and material gifts. I earn my living mainly through the farming that I do. To me, farming is my profession. Singing is a talent given to me by God to preach to people through songs.⁶⁵ [Appendix II]

The inability of Bura musicians to earn a full-time living from their music can partly be attributed to lack of good marketing. The popularity and the demand for their music are very high, both at the local and national levels, but they do not have good marketing strategies for their music when compared to musicians in North America. For instance, their audiences do not have to pay certain fees in order to attend the musicians' live performances. Most Bura musicians' song repertoires are not mass produced on cassettes/CDs by record companies and promoted or merchandised as done for Nigerian musicians who perform popular music such as the late Fela A. Ransom Kuti, Bongus Ikwe, Sunny Ade, Sunny Okosu and Onyeka Onyelu. Also, Bura audiences who choose to reward Bura musicians with money when impressed with their music often give the musicians a small amount of money. In some cases the musicians receive little reward from their Bura audiences because of the audiences' low economic status. But in most cases, Bura musicians receive less reward from their Bura audiences because, like Akan musicians in Ghana, their role is considered to be a social responsibility to society.⁶⁶

The few Bura musicians who earn their living solely from folk music performance are the emir of Biu's court musicians. As they entertain and praise the emir through instrumental music and songs daily or weekly, in return the emir acknowledges their

praises and entertainments by paying them with money. In addition, the emir rewards them with materials in the form of clothes and food stuffs.

The other economic function of Bura folksong which cannot be measured in direct monetary terms is the role which music plays in the enhancement of labour which in turn increases productivity. This is particularly the case with songs which are sung to accompany physical labour such as grinding, planting food crops, weeding, harvesting, threshing and pounding. Music during working hours tends to improve production, especially where repetitive work is involved. Music accomplishes this role by delaying fatigue and boredom in the worker. As a result, the worker becomes more energized, more focused and more productive. The function of rhythmic worksongs in encouraging workers to work harder, faster, and the enjoyment derived is aptly described by Finnegan:

Work songs stand out from other songs in their direct functional relationship to the activity they accompany. Occasionally they appear as a separate art form for sophisticated audiences, but normally they are inextricably involved with the work itself. This is particularly true of songs accompanying collective work. The joint singing co-ordinates the action and leads the workers to feel and work as part of a co-operative group, not as separate individuals.... The rhythm of the song encourages collaboration and control within the group, a pressure on to all to take part equally within the given rhythmic, framework.⁶⁷

For instance, a group of Bura men working harvesting corn on their *lawan's* (village head's) farm will harvest more corn if their work is accompanied with drumming and work song than without musical accompaniment. Similarly, a Bura housewife will pound more millet if she accompanies her pounding with singing because the singing has the capacity to cheer her up, increase her muscular endurance, speed up her work hence, increase her

productivity.⁶⁸

Thus, Bura folk music performance, as Finnegan points out about the economic significance of African oral poetry performance, provides "an economically profitable activity for many of those who engage in it."⁶⁹ The economic function of music is not limited to the monetary and material benefits obtained from performances by musicians. In addition, music while at work provides pleasure, delays fatigue and consequently increases production.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion of the functions of Bura folksongs reveals that songs can be used to establish and consolidate or maintain a political authority or institution, or they can be used to undermine or topple it. Furthermore, songs can be used as an outlet for releasing sentiments and resolving tensions and conflicts. Songs are also used to inform and educate the audience on issues that matter to the singer and to the audience. In addition, individuals are eulogized and commended for conforming to patterns of behaviours and attitudes that are culturally and socially acceptable in Bura society. Those who do not conform to Bura norms are usually criticized or ridiculed through songs of abuse, satirical songs or protest songs, so that they will feel guilty or embarrassed and change for the better. Songs are used to stir or mold public opinion against an individual or group. Songs are also used to document, preserve and promote Bura social and cultural values, beliefs and worldviews. Bura folksong performances provide entertainment for the performers and to the audience-participants. As well, the occasions for performing Bura

folk music provide a conducive atmosphere for people to meet old friends and to make new friends. Bura folk music performance can further be seen as an effective display of Bura material culture (the musical instruments and folk costumes). The art of composing and performing the songs show the artistic skill and creative ingenuity of the musicians.

Thus, as Finnegan points out about African oral poetry in general, Bura folksongs "do the jobs of newspapers, radios, judiciaries and schools as means of bringing pressure to bear on the individuals or groups as well as outlets for releasing people's tensions, frustrations and anger."⁷⁰ As Merriam opines:

...not many elements of culture afford the opportunity for emotional expression, entertain, communicate, and so forth, to the extent allowed in music. Further, music is in a sense a summatory activity for the expression of values, a means whereby the heart of the psychology of a culture is exposed without many of the protective mechanisms which surround other cultural activities As a vehicle of history, myth, and legend it points up the continuity of the culture; through its transmission of education, control of erring members of the society, and stress upon what is right, it contributes to the stability of culture. And its own existence provides a normal and solid activity which assures the members of society that the world continues in its proper path.⁷¹

Bura folksong then helps in making the society healthy and vibrant both socially and culturally by moulding public opinion against individuals or groups, and by encouraging and educating the Bura people to conform to social and cultural values. The can songs be used to maintain and uphold a popular established authority or to undermine and destabilize an unpopular government. Furthermore, Bura folksongs entertain the performers as well as the audience. In addition, the songs show the workings of the minds and the artistic and creative ingenuity of Bura folksong makers and performers. Although

formal education has been in Bura society for almost a century now, today Bura folksong performance still has its place as a valuable and indispensable tool for performing the aforementioned functions.

Notes

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2. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 210.
3. A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, Structure and Function in Primitive Society (Glencoe: Free Press, 1952), 181.
4. Coplan, In Township Tonight! South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre, 230.
5. Coplan, 242.
6. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music, 208
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13. Boissevain, Friends of Friends, 10.
14. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music, 226.

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15. Keil, Tiv Song, 99.
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 18. Merriam, 222-23.
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 23. Finnegan, Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 224.
 24. Afolabi Olabimtan, "The Efe/Gelede Poet of Egbado Ketu Yoruba," in Oral Poetry in Nigeria, Uchegbulam N. Abalogu, et al., eds. (Lagos: Nigeria Magazine, 1981), 158.
 25. Donatus Nwoga, "The Igbo Poet and Satire," in Oral Poetry in Nigeria, 231.
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 28. John Blacking, The Role of Music Amongst the Venda of the Northern Transvaal (Johannesburg: International Library of African Music, 1957), 44-45.
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 34. Malinowski, Myth in Primitive Psychology, 19.
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 40. Malinowski, Myth in Primitive Psychology, 90.
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 44. Waziri, 22 January 1995.
 45. Mavi Dzarma, personal interview, 26 December 1988.
 46. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music, 217.
 47. Merriam, African Music in Perspective (New York & London: Garland, 1982), 141.
 48. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music, 217.
 49. Coplan, In Township Tonight! South African Black City Music and Theatre, 243.
 50. Coplan, 243.
 51. Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa, 284.
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53. Ojaide, "Poetry As Group Unifier: Traditional Songs of North-Eastern Nigeria," in Annals of Borno, Vol. IV, Maiduguri (1987), 70.
54. Iyorwuese Hagher, "Performance in Tiv Oral Poetry," in Oral Poetry in Nigeria, 46.
55. Finnegan, Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance and Social Context, 188.
56. Boaja, 25 January 1995.
57. Gwoadzung, 31 December 1994.
58. Nketia, African Music in Ghana, 9.
59. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music, 219-225.
60. Coplan, In Township Tonight! South Africa's Black City Music and Theatre, 243.
61. Neil V. Rosenberg, "Big Fish, Small Pond: Country Musicians and Their Markets," in Media Sense: The Folklore-Popular Culture Continuum. Eds., Peter Narváez and Martin Laba. (Bowling Green, Ohio: State University Popular Press, 1986), 151.
62. Boaja, 25 January 1995.
63. Gwoadzung, 31 December 1994.
64. Audu, 22 January 1995.
65. Waziri, 22 January 1995.
66. Nketia, "The Role of Drummers in Akan Society," African Music, 1 (1954) 35.
67. Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa, 240.
68. Charles M. Diserens, The Influence of Music on Behavior (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1926), 112-113.
69. Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa, 122.
70. Finnegan, Oral Literature in Africa, 272.
71. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music, 225.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The primary objective of this study was to analyze a selection of Bura folksongs with a view to explicating and describing the types, occasions, themes, techniques and functions of the songs. As a result, in Chapter One, I outlined and described aspects of Bura culture. The description of Bura culture began with a discussion of the historical origin of the Bura people the area in which they are predominantly found; their social organization; language; political institutions; customs and occupations. The aforementioned dimensions of Bura culture were discussed because they are interrelated with Bura songs and because describing aspects of Bura culture to the reader, especially a non-Bura person, is necessary for an understanding of the types, occasions, themes, technique and function of Bura folksongs.

The objectives of the study have also been discussed in Chapter One. I point out that the study is based mainly on an insiders' perspective. The analytical approach and theoretical framework used for the study cut across disciplines, including folklore, anthropology, ethnomusicology, literature and sociology.

Pertinent literature on Bura has indicated that the least studied aspect of Bura tradition is folk music, hence the need for this scholarly study. I used various methods of data collection including field research methods which involved tape-recorded interviews on a one-on-one basis with four prominent Bura folksong makers in Biu Emirate in Borno, State of Nigeria. Like Okpewho, I feel that one way to explore the convergence of oral

literary criticism and literary analysis is to ask a number of searching questions of the artists.¹ Whatever the case may be, when people make judgements about their own art and culture, we may be certain that some amount of thought has gone into their formulations, and we can at least try to probe the basis of such formulations.

My interviews with the four Bura musicians were conducted in Bura because they do not speak English. I also obtained tape and video recordings from individuals, institutions and organizations. In addition, I solicited songs from singers other than my four informants. All songs used in the study were sung in Bura. I recorded songs in two main categories of performance context: those performances which occurred during the normal course of events and those which were arranged for the purpose of recording.

I noticed that the division between these two categories was not always clear. My mere presence as a researcher at "natural" events such as wedding ceremonies resulted in certain changes in the performance. An arranged musical performance on the other hand did not differ greatly from one which occurred without the researcher's direct influence. I applied the techniques of field observation, participant observation in recording Bura folksong performances on video and audio tapes. Video and audio tape recordings of Bura folksongs which were previously recorded at various Bura folk music events were collected from individuals and organizations. I took photographs of representative Bura folksingers and Bura musical instruments. My fieldwork experiences were described in detail. Some experiences were expected but others were not anticipated. Some were pleasant and others were not.

Methods which I used for transcribing, translating and documenting the song texts and the interviews texts were described. All Bura songs analysed in the study have been transcribed, translated into English and documented in both the Bura and the English versions in Appendix I, grouped according to types. Texts of interviews I conducted with the four Bura folk musicians have been transcribed, translated into English and documented in the English version in Appendix II. I provided names, gender, age and religion, date and place of interview for each of the four informants. Names of others who provided me with primary data have also been provided.

Transcribing Bura song texts alters many of the technical elements found during live performance, especially the visual performance, the participation of the audience and the sound of the instrumental music. The songs are further removed from their original context when they are translated and written down in English. Bura folksongs are intended more for a listening audience than for a reading audience.

Also described are the biographies and musical careers of the four Bura musicians whom I interviewed (Musa Gwoadzang, Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri, Anthony Audu and Usman Boaja). Bura singers' social roles, intentions and experiences have also been discussed.

Various scholarly definitions of folksongs have been reviewed. As well, definitions of Bura folksongs from the perspectives of the Bura have been described.

Although the primary interest was folkloristic, literary, anthropological and sociological methods of analysis were also applied.

Types of Bura folksongs have been described in Chapter Two. I indicated that Bura songs cannot easily be classified into watertight categories as some may fall under more than one group. In the vast field of Bura folksongs, Bura informants and the researcher have identified and classified Bura folksongs into twelve main categories: *har ngila* (song), *har kyertukur* (satirical song), *har ngurmya* (protest song), *har shimwi* (dirge), *har tuwa* (funeral song), *har kildzi* (wedding song), *har fuwala* (praise song), *har hirdzi* (love song), *har kithlir* (work song), *har mua Hyel* (religious song), *har siyasa* (political song) and *har gyelir mandankyer* (children's game song).

In Chapter Three, the various occasions for performing Bura songs have been described. It is revealed that Bura songs are performed on occasions such as festivals; naming, wedding and funeral ceremonies; political campaigns and rallies; the installation of traditional rulers; *hirdi* (informal dance events); work and children's games. This shows that Bura song performance is tied to specific occasions in that each song is created for and arises from one or more of the aforementioned events. I also pointed out that some of the occasions for performing Bura songs are formal while others are informal. Furthermore, a particular type of Bura song can be performed on more than one occasion. For instance, praise songs can be performed during naming, wedding and funeral ceremonies. Although the chapter focuses on the occasions for performing Bura songs, I briefly described the contexts in which I obtained the songs.

In Chapter Four, I identified and examined the various themes of Bura songs. The study reveals that Bura songs seem to be all-encompassing in their thematic

preoccupations. The songs may be praising or ridiculing individuals or groups of people. They may be dealing with social issues such as love, marriage, kinship, religion, politics, poverty, survival strategies and wealth. The diverse issues treated in Bura songs show that Bura songmakers are artistically imaginative and sensitive in understanding and expressing Bura people's feelings, views and experiences.

The various technical devices employed by Bura folksingers to compose and perform songs have been discussed in Chapter Five. These include the various forms of figurative language such as figures of sound and figures of speech and other verbal patterns as well as various modes of performing Bura songs. The technical devices portray Bura folksongs as being complex and dynamic in terms of their artistic quality. There is evidence of recontextualization and decontextualization of songs by Bura singers. Songs persist beyond their original performances as they are widely disseminated due to the relevance of their contents.

Evidence of the influence of multi-lingualism is seen in the way Bura singers employ non-Bura words, especially from the Hausa language in their songs. On multi-culturalism and its influence on Bura folk music, this is seen more in the area of religion than in borrowing of musical characteristics, musical instruments and dance types. Bura musicians try to maintain and reinforce their own ethnic cultural identities by performing music that they think is traditionally associated with the Bura, or at least considered to be music that has its roots in Bura music-culture. In terms of the influence of non-indigenous religions on folk music, Christianity, in particular, has had a strong influence on the

contexts and themes of Bura religious songs. A case in point is the music performed by the Christian Women's Fellowship at Christian weddings, funerals and Sunday church services.

Various functions of Bura songs have been explored and discussed in Chapter Six. Assessment of the entire Bura song corpus revealed that the songs are performed for various purposes. The functions identified and analyzed in the order of their prominence are sociocultural, educational, magico-religious, political, entertainment and economic.

I should point out that while the application, perception and interpretation of music in African societies, especially in Bura society, might be different from how music is applied, perceived and interpreted in North America, the notion that music is more functional and more frequently used in Africa than in North America is an incorrect assumption.² While in most African societies musical performance is determined by the occurrence of an event such as a birth, wedding, installation of a new chief or death, in Canada and the United States musical performance is almost an everyday event, especially through the electronic media. For instance, unlike in most African countries, in North America there are television music networks such as TNN (The Nashville Network), CMT (Country Music Television) and Much Music. Live music is also performed in bars and clubs almost on a daily basis, especially in urban areas.

On the whole, the study has answered some questions: who are the Bura people and where are they from? What is Bura folksong? Who are the Bura folksingers and how do they compose and perform their songs? What is idiosyncratic about Bura songmakers

and their songs and what is universal about them? I hope I have provided additional reference materials for African music scholars. I tried to be as objective as possible, although as an insider this was hard for me. It was not my intention to romanticize Bura culture as it is expressed through Bura folk music. In this sense, I examined and presented the evidence in my primary data more as a folklorist than as an insider.

Suggestions for Further Research and Work

This study has shown that African folksongs, particularly the Bura song corpus is not a collection of simple and meaningless chants performed by people who are “primitive” and have no capacity for imaginative or sophisticated forms of expression. Judged by any standard, it includes various types of songs. It is a reflection of those customs, ideals, and outlooks whereby the Bura have traditionally identified themselves and constantly sought reassurance in the face of cultural and other challenges. Above all this, it provides evidence of a fundamental creative spirit whereby, in the culture, cherished traditions are subjected to continual reconstruction and recreation and thus are influenced by new materials. Thus, I have tried to explore Bura folksongs far less from the vintage point of a “romantic nationalist” than as a subject of serious scholarly interest. To ensure that the subject continues to generate interest and receive more attention than it has received, it seems necessary that research be pursued along many more lines.

Although this study enabled me to discover that the performance of Bura folksongs is still widespread, especially in Bura communities, recordings and ethnographic studies of the songs are still relatively inadequate. The recorded live performances of the

songs on video and audio tapes are available only in a few media houses such as Nigerian Television Authority Maiduguri and Borno Radio Television, and through a few privileged individuals who recorded them during social occasions such as wedding ceremonies.

Therefore, I recommend that there should be further documentation and scholarly study of Bura folksongs. Scholars who intend to collect and study Bura folksongs need to stay for a long time in Bura communities so as to encounter live performances of Bura folk music at all the social occasions identified by the researcher. Furthermore, a long period of fieldwork would enable the scholar to more adequately interact with local musicians and active bearers of Bura song tradition. Study of other forms of Bura folklore are needed as well. For instance, more studies need to be done in the area of the material culture of Bura folk music. Other forms of folklore that are associated with Bura folk music performances such as rites of passage, narratives, proverbs and jokes need to be collected and studied as well. More work should be done along the lines of fieldwork and documentation in order to collect the songs of numerous communities across Bura land, to keep pace with the changes that have occurred and to correct the impressions conveyed by past publications that have improperly represented this culture. Although not easy to carry out, individuals who are interested in studying Bura folksongs should try to be more discriminating in their interests by focussing on specific communities. It might even help, for in-depth analysis, to concentrate on one group of performers or one musician. The objective of a plea for such types of study is not an attempt to only recapture the past but also to endeavour to understand the present and try to contribute to the formation of a possible desirable future.

Folksongs can play a substantive role in these undertakings.

At the moment, there is no clear indication yet that the tradition of performing Bura folksongs is declining. But there is no guarantee that it will continue forever. My informants who are representatives of Bura musicians said their main interest is in composing and performing songs, but they are poorly paid by their audiences. As a result, most of them spend more time farming than performing music. Conscientious efforts should be made to encourage them as well as all budding Bura folk musicians to continue to compose and perform songs. Bura people should ensure that their song tradition continues into the future by patronizing and rewarding generously these Bura musicians. Perhaps it is as a result of their low social and economic status that the subject of majority cultures versus minority cultures seems to pervade their songs. It will be nice if Bura musicians' social and economic status in the society is elevated, so that they can express in their songs the interests of people of all social levels in Bura society, without fear or favour. This concern leads to the following discussion on the issue of human rights in Nigeria which is currently being abused by many of those in the corridors of power.

Artists, especially singers show us through songs, aspects of humanity. Human rights, in their many forms, is a common theme through Bura songs. Some songs hold up to us the results of war, discrimination and violence.³ Others celebrate good relationships, peace and love and the privileges of basic human rights. Often through music and dance, musicians bring alive the essence of being human. They speak to us across time and space. They help us understand today's events and those that happened before we were

born. They create them to ensure that we remember and that we ask questions about our own lives and about our own society. This also leads me to talk about the need for the Nigerian government to encourage and support the study of music in schools.

Through good music education programs, many youths will learn how to compose and perform music. They will examine great pieces of music that raise questions and, in turn raise questions about their own music. Students in our schools will learn why certain songs were composed and sung and how some of them changed the course of history. Actively learning about something is important, but actually doing something about human rights through music is even better. Young people in our schools should have many opportunities to create meaning, including composing music and performing their music to an audience. Like adults, young people have opinions and solutions to social problems. Involvement in music programs provides opportunities for students to express their views without fear of recrimination. Therefore, I recommend that the classroom teaching of folklore, especially folk music from the primary up to the university level, be encouraged and supported by the Nigerian government as well as by individuals. The teaching methods should incorporate field research and performances by students and their teachers in collaboration with local musicians. Audio-visual recordings of performances by government media such as Nigerian Television Authority and Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria should be distributed to schools as teaching aids. Also recording machines such as video cameras and tape recorders as well as tapes should be supplied to schools by the government to be used by students for fieldwork.

As a Bura, I am hoping that this study will be valuable to Bura readers in helping them gain a better understanding of and respect for their culture than anything else previously published may have done. My advice to other Africans wishing to do dissertation or thesis fieldwork in African Folklore is to go to their hometowns or at least to communities whose customs they understand, and whose language they understand and can speak so that they won't have much trouble communicating with their informants. But do not assume that you are going out there to teach anybody anything; on the contrary, you are going there to learn. Many informants (but by no means all) treat you nicely, listen to you intently and are intrigued by your intellectual interrogations and technical equipment, the likes of which they may not have seen. But they hardly lose their bearings, for after all they are the tradition bearers and you are the researcher. Also, from what I have experienced, there is no guarantee that even though you are an insider, you will get all the information that you need, even if you ask the right questions, partly because your informants may assume that you already know the answers and partly because they do not want to "wash their dirty linen in public." All the same, if you know that your folklore is still understudied as mine is, as our people will say, "charity begins at home." There is no greater feeling than that of knowing that you are helping to study and document the traditions of your people. You cannot help feeling a great deal of respect rather than condescension when you realize the level of skill and sophistication of the folk.

Much still needs to be done in the area of Bura folksongs. I hope this research will inspire future scholars to look further into the rich Bura cultural heritage.

Notes

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1. Okpewho, African Oral Literature, 366. Ojo R. Arewa and Alan Dundes also stress the need for folklorists to seek for native interpretation and valuations of items of folklore from the informants. See Arewa and Dundes, "Proverbs and the Ethnography of Speaking Folklore," American Anthropologist, 66.6 (1964): 73.
 2. Merriam, The Anthropology of Music, 212.
 3. Alex Hickey, "The Arts and Human Rights," The Express, March 4, 1998, 17.

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APPENDIX ONE

BURA FOLKSONG TEXTS

For song texts which I know the makers and the dates on which they sang the songs, I indicated the names of the songmakers and the dates they sang the songs. For songs recited for me not by the authors but by active bearers of Bura folksongs and by Bura folk music fans, I indicated the names of the reciters. Generally, I have dates for authors and dates for songs which I collected in my 1994 to 1995 fieldwork. But I do not have dates and authors for many of the songs which I collected in the 1980s, especially the songs recited to me by the active bearers and music fans. The songs are grouped into types. Some groups consist of two or more interrelated types. The groups are identified by numbers ranging from A to H. Each song in every group is given a serial number. Thus the letters refer to the song types and the numbers refer to the sequence of the songs in each of the groups, in the following order, group A: Songs of Abuse, Satire and Protest; group B: Funeral songs; group C: Lamentations; group D: Love Songs and Wedding Songs; group E: Work Songs; group F: Religious Songs; group G: Political Songs; and group H: Children's Game Songs and Rhymes. Each song text in the Appendix is documented in the Bura language followed by its English translation in brackets. There are a total of 87 song texts in the Appendix.

A. Songs of Abuse, satire and Protest

A 1.

Ka nciwa ga pila miri?
Tsa namta mwalankiya ka arni ngwari.
Ar mwalar msha marni ya?

Ka ga bara kwaba ka ga timta
Sur kila mwala nciwa.
Ka kwaba adi wa, ki nta ka miri?

Sal Whana Angili,
Ngwa kwaba adi wa.
Hyel bila ladzi ya amarta wa.

Kum ka mal ka mal mda adiya bara jawa,
Bzir ni ata thlikul mda akwa.

Ka kwang bzira gaina ga coklu ya
Ti mda apa ga ata kujamta mpwara kwi?

(Male goat what do you say?
He has already made my wife his own.
His bloody mother, his wife?

You should look for money and refund
The male the dowry he paid for his wife.
But I do not have money, with what should I pay?

Mr. Whana Angili,
He said he has no money.
By God, I will not agree.

One should not buy any meat that has fats
Because the young man has put poison in it.

And you young man, are so foolish
That you could actually make love to a goat?
(Song recited by Naomi Audu)

A 2.

Haruna ya bangir kwara!
Haruna ya bzir Bila.
Ma giri ata masa mwala kwara,
Ka giri ngga ngga Haruna Bila mi,
Diya tsa ana pi ka kwara.

Ka mwala kwara ana nta gazal ya,
Haruna, bzir Bila?
Ka mwala kwara ana bda goro ya,
Haruna, bzir Bila?

Ma giri ata masa mwala kwara
Ka giri ngga ngga Haruna mi,
Diya tsa ana pi ka kwara.

(Haruna, donkey's boyfriend!
Haruna, the boy from Bila.
When you want to buy a female donkey,
Beware of Haruna Bila because
He sleeps with donkey.)

Does a female donkey put on eye pencil,
Haruna, the boy from Bila?
Does a female donkey eat Kola nut,
Haruna, the boy from Bila?

When you want to buy a female donkey
You should beware of Haruna Bila
Because he sleeps with donkey.)
(Usman Boaja)

A 3.

Pwara, pwara bangir na ragai,
I pila pwara anti ga ngil ya?
Pwara, pwara bangir na ragai,
Pwara anti ga ngila?

Zamanir ngil mda,
Asir kara wula ali bzirnkwa ata kumshi
Apa mshi kwara!

(Escort me, escort me my so-called lover,
I said escort me but you refused?
Escort me, escort me my so-called lover,
Escort me but you refused.

It is now time for me to abuse someone,
Come and see a lady laughing
Like a dead donkey!)
(Song Recited by Zainabu Kubili Lawan)

A 4.

Ya ki ngil ni ya Haruna?
Ngil ni raka, yamana.
Ya ki ngil ni ya Baktaku?
Ngil ni raka, yamana.

U'uwa bzirnkwani ata shiwuri
Apa dlimbil kwara.
Dakwi adi ata hir ni wa, yamana.

Nkwargi ya ka mya ga na

Apa njoku ni.
Ya, ka ngini ga hara mi ali ri?

(Should I abuse her Haruna?
Oh yes, abuse her a little.
Should I abuse her Baktaku?
Oh yes, abuse her a little.

The lady's breast smells
Like a donkey's stable.
Oh yes, young men do not like her.

Lady, your mouth
Is like a dagger.
Now, there is nothing you can do to me.)
(Song recited by Hanatu Gwangndi)

A 5.

Akilahyel kara zhar lika.
Akilahyel kara zhar lika.

Ma ga ata bara mwal ar mda
Kara ngita kuli,
Kara ngita indla,
Kara ngita affa,
Kara nggita gagim.

(Akilahyel you better stop womanizing.
Akilahyel you better stop womanizing.
If you want to chase somebody's wife
You should be prepared for a rode,
You should be prepared for a knife.
You should be prepared for an arrow,
You should be prepared for wrestling.)
(Saidu Mhita).

A 6.

Zaman na kulin ni
Zaman ndzi avi kira wa.
Sai Kano sai Jasu.

Madarnkwi na kulin

Da hira ndzi avi kirawa,
Sai Kano sai Jasu.

Mwaja, mwaja ti ga ata tira,
Mwaja ka ga ra sivi ka adudu.
Mwaja, mwaja bzirnkwara mwala
Mwaja ka ga ra sivi ka gina.

Mwaja, mwaja karwa mingila,
Mwaja ka ga ra sivi
Kula adudu.

(This generation is not a generation
Of people who stay at home.
They immigrate to cities like Kano and Jos.

Girls of today
Do not want to stay at home.
Instead they immigrate to cities like Kano and Jos.

Farewell farewell, young lady.
Go and return back home with dishes.
Farewell young lady
Go and return home with riches.

Farewell, farewell prostitute
Go and return back home
Without dishes.)

(Abori Pakilama).

A 7.

Ya, madankwi Pakilama,
Simi anti giri ana hara apani ja?
Ma mbru ku tsapta dzi abir mbru ata vi bathla,
Ma pci ku tiri ting giri lukwa viyir tiksha.

Ya, madankwi Pakilama
Simi anti giri ana hara apani ja?
Ma mbur tsapta dzi ka mbru batha
Ma pci ku tiri giri wuyi lukwa viyir tiksha.

(Oh, ladies from Pakilama,
 Why do you behave this way?
 Each time we assemble to dance
 When the sun sets you will sneak to the farmyard.

Oh, girls from Pakilama,
 Why do you behave this way?
 Each time we assemble to dance
 When the sun sets you will run to the farmyard.)
 (Abori Pakilama)

A 8.

Iya zhara bzira gai
 ya hira mdir boni a kila ra wa
 Ga ata kila ra ni
 Ki ra mbwa zhabir mayer nga ya?
 Su adi ti i wuta ahah giriwa.

Ga ata kila ra ni kir ra
 Ha kari ar nkwar mayer nga ya?
 Su adi ti i wuta ahah giri wa.

Ga ata kila rani ki ra
 Mbwa zhabir nkwar da ar ngaya?
 Su adi ti i wuta ahah giri wa.

(Oh you this boy leave me alone
 I do not want to marry a poor man.
 If you marry me
 Will I be tying your mother's wrapper?
 I do not see anything in your house.

If you marry me
 Will I be wearing your sisters clothes?
 I do not see anything in your house.

If you marry me
 Will I be tying your half sister's wrapper?
 I do not see anything in your house.)
 (Awa Audu)

A 9.

Ngini bangir wa ja?
Bangir Bata Lema.
Ali, ka kir apa goba.

Ali si azi ni
Tsa si bara miri, mara?
Su akila ri wa.

Ali si ahar mbur ni
Tsa si bara wari, mara?
Su akila mai.

(Whose boyfriend is this?
He is Bata Lema's boyfriend.
It is Ali, with his head like an unripe boabab fruit.

Ali has been here.
What is he looking for, my people?
He is very poor.

Ali came to our place
Who is he looking for, my people?
He is very poor.)

(Song recited by Zainabu Kubili Lawan)

A 10.

Ga ku piya Dina, ga ku piya.
Msha dzi dzing thlim
Ga ata hila kwi?

Dina Kwarkwar ga ku piya.
Dzingdzing thlim,
Azha ga ana hila kwi?

Dina Kwarkwar ga ku piya,
Wala ba ata pci
Ga ata hila kwi?

(Good morning Dina, good morning.
You with big ears.

You stole a goat?

Dina Kwarkwar good morning.
With your big ears,
So you steal goat?

Dina Kwarkwar good morning.
Even in broad daylight
You steal goat?)
(Ya Thlama Malgwi)

A 11.

Aya-ah, mwa ndika salirna
Kamyar suni ku mula alaga.
Aya-ah, mwa ndika salirna
Kamyar ndzi ni msira aliwa.

Suna wuta ra ni ku wuta nuwa ra laga
Anti mda ku ngilar ni ja.

Mwa giri madar na ka mbru lihar
Mjir yeru mi twa
Ndsi ka dikal iya tsokta wa.

(Oh, my husband, let us get divorced
Because you are hopeless.
Oh, my husband, let us get divorced
Because I am not enjoying living with you.

I know that what is happening to me now
Has happened to a fellow woman
And she sought for divorce.

Come my children, and let us all
Move to my parents' house
Because I cannot continue to live
With an armed robber.)
(Yankirda Zoaka)

A 12.

Bathla kulum kulum

Ama fili ni adi ata dlu nga wa,
Malim Saidu ga coku ya?

Koba ku sha,
Mara hila akwa nca mbru
Sai mbru liar Kwajaffa.

Ajiya Ayuba,
Bara Dan Doka
Ka tsa tsar ta
Dyir Pelambirni.

(You frequent dance occasions
To sell your wares but you always suffer loss.
Mr. Saidu, are you a fool?

Some amount of money is missing,
My people, there is a thief among us.
We must go and report the matter in Kwajaffa.

Ajiya Ayuba,
Look for ask a police person
To go and arrest
All the residents of Pelambirni.)
(Song Recited by Naomi Audu)

A 13.

Mji ngilar nkwa ni
Kamyar sur hara arni pdaku wa.
Tsa ana hila!
Shili ngilar nkwa ni
Kamyar sur har ar ni pdaku wa.
Tsa ana hila mtika!

Tata ri ya nkwar gai?
Awa, ta tarwa tsa mdimya
Hadlu dlu Kila!

(People have neglected the lady
Because she has a bad habit.
She is a thief!

Men have neglected the lady
 Because she has a bad habit.
 She steals chickens!

Was it cooked lady?
 Oh no, not cooked.
 She eats them raw like a dog!
 (Song recited by Hanatu Gwangndi)

A 14.

Mwanki na mwavir mwavir ni
 Soja pila ka mda tsapta nda
 Ka mda lahar Kaduna ka da.

Soja pila ka mda lahar Kaduna ka da
 Anda an pirsinar mwanki.
 Ka mda pakta nda
 Ka mda lahar Kaduna ka da.

(All quarrelsome women
 The soldier said someone should assemble
 And take them to Kaduna.)

The soldier said someone should take them to Kaduna.
 It there that women's prison is located.
 Someone should gather them
 And take them to Kaduna.)
 (Gunda Malala)

A 15.

Gwara ya,
 Saka ata si kara lata kyir nga nda.
 Wagiri ka kyir nga?

Gwara ya,
 Saka ata si kara mbata mbwar nga nda.
 Wagiri ka mbwar nga?

Gwara nzi abwa nda ting ngunguni ni,
 Ma ani hara ala ri?
 Tuhum arni ngila ta mbu ya?

(Oh bachelor,
Time has come for you to build your own house.
How are you and your house?

Oh bachelor,
Time has come for you to make your own roof.
How are you and your roof?

The bachelor is there sitting in his room grumbling.
What is wrong with him?
Did the water in his cooking pot refused to boil?)
(Shebu Pindar)

A 16.

Twuwha giri diya salki
Ma Dika ata kida ama
Yeru pazhi ni diya
Ata hara sili ali.
Ama sur duni ya sal kadzang
Ya ka taku ama yeru pazhi
Ka alaro miri.

Ama sur duniya sal kadzang
Ya ka taku ama yeru pazhi
Ka alaro miri.

Ama sur duniya sal kadzang
ya ka kwaba ama yeru pazhi
Ka alar miri.

Ama sur duniya sal kadzang
Mda apa iya Bata
Anti yeru ata ndzi ka alaro miri.

(Salki you better farm
Because when I see my friend Dika begging
I feel very ashamed.
This world is full of wonders
If not, how can a horse owner
Like myself be a beggar's friend.

This world is full of wonders
 If not, how can a horse owner
 Like myself be a beggar's friend.

This world is full of wonders.
 If not, how can a rich person
 Like myself be a beggar's friend.

This world is full of wonders
 If not, how can a person of my calibre - Bata
 Be a friend to a lazy man and a beggar.)

(Bata Lokoja)

A 17.

Iya adi ya mdaku wa,
 Ma i ani ya mdaku
 Da hara kari maya ragai?

Ka mda bara kuzuku
 Ka mda mbwa kiri ni mi
 Maya mya mji ata tsi ra.

Kuji bara kuzuku
 Ki mbwa kiri ni mi
 Mi diya mya mji ata tsi ra.

(I was not born beautiful
 If I were born beautiful
 What would they have done my mother?)

Please look for protective medicine
 And tie it on my head mother,
 Or else people's gossip will kill me.

I better look for protective medicine
 And tie on my head,
 Or else people's gossip will kill me.)

(Awa Audu)

A 18.

Ya lukwa mda wa.
 Tagi mayarna ka yarna wa
 Ya lukwa ndir ala ga wa.

Ya lukwa mda wa
 Tagi mayarna ka yarna wa
 Ya lukwa ndir ala ga wa.

Gilam kofa ya
 Zoli gana kakawa.
 Mwa ata kira mima ka ga ya?

(I will never obey anyone.
 I will only obey my mother and father.
 I will not take instructions from you.

I will not obey you.
 I will only obey my mother and father.
 I will not take instructions from you.

You are worthless
 And a stupid baffon.
 Are we of the same mother?)
 (Awa Audu)

A 19.

Ya i ata hira ni jawa.
 Ya hira wa si ata kil sal gajang wa.
 Ya, mai kil sal gajang,
 Ma tsa simbwa adza ra
 Ting b-o-o-m tsa pumta hidi.

Ya, mua nati i kila sal gajang ni,
 Kuji kil kila mallim.
 Ya mi kil mallim
 Ma tsa simbwa adza ra ata pila "good morning."

(I do not want him.
 I do not want to marry an old man.

If I marry an old man,
 When he comes to my bedroom
 He will only pass farts b-o-o-m!

Instead of marrying an old man,
 I will prefer to marry a young man.
 If I marry a young teacher
 When he comes to my bed room
 He will at least say to me "good morning."
 (Awa Audu)

A 20.

Adi sur sili wa ya,
 Shili nati giri ata thlawardzi
 Purum bangir nga ya?

Adi sur sili wa ya
 Ma da nati giri ata thlawardzi
 Ting tsa bangir nga ya?

Ama su akwa duniya ku ndata ra,
 Ma salir nga adi wa
 Ting ga karwa.

Ama su akwa duniya ku ndata ra.
 Ma salir nga adi wa
 Ting ga karwa ka sha ya?

Karwa kur akwa dyini msira aliwa.
 Kuji ki lukwa birni ka yeru pakta.
 Karwa dyni msira jawa.
 Ka kuji kyi mwari akwa birni ka yeru pakta.

(Is it not a shameful thing
 To have all the men you exchange greetings with
 As your lovers?)

Is it not a shameful thing
 If any man you exchange greetings with
 Must be your lover?

There is something very surprising to me in this world.
If you do not have a husband
You are branded as a prostitute.

There is something very surprising to me in this world.
If you do not have a husband
Does it follow that you are a prostitute?

I wouldn't want to prostitute in this village.
I rather go to the city and join those who are doing it.
Prostitution in this village wouldn't be nice.
I rather go to the city and join those who are doing it.)
(Elizabeth Kalabar)

A 21.

Ya kila sal ahar Gigang wa.
Dyir Gigang ni kauye!
Ya kila sal ahar Gigang wa.
Bwa wala shilir Gigang ni shili wa!

Ya kila sal ahar Gigang mai.
Lakur Gigang ni mdaku wa!
Ya kila sal ahar Gigang wa.
Shilir Gigang ni harwa!

Su dai nata mwantara ahar Gigang mai.
Dyir Gigang ni Kauye!
Shilir Gigang ni Kauye.
Dyir Gigang ni Kauye!

(I will never marry a man from Gigang.
Gigang is a village!
I will never marry a man for Gigang.
Most of the men from Gigang are impotent!

I will never marry a man in Gigang.
The roads which lead to Gigang are undeveloped!
I will never marry a man from Gigang.
Men from Gigang are lazy!

Nothing can make me go to Gigang.

Gigang is a village!
 Men from Gigang are uncivilized.
 Gigang is a Village!
 (Awa Audu)

A 22.

Mji na ata sima msira
 Akwa dyir kasar Pabir ladir Biu
 Ting mjir Bibalkwi.

Da bwata kilang ka tabwa
 Ka punkir dana,
 Kara thinkir bidlim.

Sukwar mi ti giri ti smira apaniri?
 Sigwi ka dlang
 Hela bulam ka manda mizha
 Finara chandim ka baka.

(The only people who eat delicious foods
 In *Pabir* land in Biu area
 Are the people from Bibalkwi.

They cook mice with *tabwa*
 And add *dana* fruits
 And then add shea-butter.

What kind of delicious soup did you cook like this?
Sigwi and *dlalang*
 With baboon's intestines, ground okra
 Monkey's palate and *baka* fish.)
 (Avi Pwasi)

A 23.

Giri ani pirni ya Hamidu?
 Yeru ani pirni ngwa.
 Kuga tipa kuga sima timbil.

Azha nzdi akwa kule ni msira wa.
 Kule wa kula lala
 Anti mda vura akwa.

(Are you among those who got converted Hamidu?
 Yes we are the ones who got converted.
 But you still engage in borrowing and embezzling money.

Living in pudher is not as comfortable as I thought.
 This is not pudher.
 This is hell that have been thrown into.)
 (Hauwa Hamidu)

A 24.

Ar Umuoru tsa hir ndenau ni wa
 Ana ndol kuta ya pashir na.
 Ar Umuoru tsa hir ndenau ni wa
 Ana ndol kuta ya pashir na.

Kukul wada ka ga sauta mwala
 Bilku mda ana silkir zawarya.
 Kukul wada ka ga sauta mwala
 Zoli ragai sala ana silkir zawarya.

Umuoru jomthlam mya.
 Umuoru Ah-aah!
 Umuoru jomthlam mya
 Umuoru ga adiya silkir zawar wa

Kukul wada ka ga sauta mwalaya
 Zoli ragai mda ana sillair zawar wa.

(Umuoru does not like to handle a hoe.
 Does it cause stomach pain, my friend?
 Umuoru does not like to handle a hoe.
 Does it cause stomach pain, my friend?)

You better farm groundnuts and marry a woman.
 Foolish man, you should not be jealous over a woman
 who is not married.

You better farm groundnuts and marry a woman.
 Foolish man, do not be jealous over a woman who is not married.

Umuoru, with your big mouth.

Umuoru, you should not be jealous over a woman
who is not married.

You better farm groundnuts and marry a woman.
Foolish man, do not be jealous over a woman who is not married.)
(Musa Gwoadzang)

B. Funeral Songs

B 1.

Yamana bzirna.
Bzirna pila ali ngwa
Tsa ata lihar Kaduna, Laku.

Yamana bzirna,
Laku pila ali ngwa
Tsa ata lihar Kaduna ngu.

Laku bzir sauri na.
Laku ga ngilar kyir nga ya?
Laku bzir sauri na ya?
Laku ga pila jiri aling?

Tsa fila motar mjir Biu,
Laku pila ali ngwa
Tsa ata lihar Kaduna.
Laku bzir sauri na.
Laku ga ngilar kyir nya ya?

(Oh, my son.
My son told me that
He was going to Kaduna, Laku.

Oh my son.
Laku told me that
He was going to Kaduna.

Laku my son with whom I used to discuss.
Laku why couldn't you tell me the truth?
Laku my son with whom I used to discuss.

Have you rejected your family?

He entered Biu people's motor.

Laku told me that

He was going to Kaduna.

Laku my son with whom I used to discuss.

Laku have you rejected your family?)

(Ashetu Bauda)

B 2.

Yamana ya salir na.

Yamana ya pazhir na.

Iya-ah, pazhir na,

Ga ngilar kyir nga ka liha ya?

I adi si ka hur wa salir na.

I adi si ka bzir ja arna wa.

Iya-ah ya pazhir na,

Ga wuta Kulahyer ar mwa ku si ya

Iya-ah ya pazhir na,

Ga wuta baba ar nga ku si ya?

Yamana ya salir na.

Yamana ya pazhirna

Iya-ah ya pazhir na,

Ga zhar kyir nga ka liha ya?

(Oh my husband.

Oh my friend.

Oh my dear friend,

You rejected your family here and went home?

I did not come with pregnancy my husband.

I did not come with a child.

Oh my dear friend,

See, our daughter Kulahyer has not come.

Oh my beloved,

See, your father has not come.

Oh my husband.
 Oh my friend.
 Oh my dear friend,
 You rejected your family and went home?)
 (Kayanga Haman)

B 3.

I kula muma.
 Aye!
 I kula muma kula bzir da.
 Aye-ye!

Ga vi ma ali ri?
 Aye!
 Ga vi ma ali ti ga ata mta?
 Aye-ye!

Ga vi mi aliri?
 Aye!
 Ga vi mi aliri saka ti ga ata tira?
 Aye-ye!

(I am without mother.
 Oh!
 I am without mother, without brother.
 Oh! Oh!

What did you leave behind for me?
 Oh!
 What did you leave behind for me
 When you were dying?
 Oh! Oh!

What did you leave behind for me?
 Oh!
 What did you leave behind for me.
 When you were going?
 Oh! Oh!)
 (Song recited by Awa Audu)

B 4.

Ya ga adiya dza wa, Lawan Haruna
 Shanga duniya tsu apani.
 Ka Hyel mwanta nga ali
 Yana Bilami
 Kara mwari akwa dyir giri lafia.

Didu kur yer nga ni Lawan Haruna,
 Tsa barta kira ga
 Anti tsa liha
 Ka Hyel Mwanta ni ali.
 Yana Bilami,
 Kara nzi akwa dyir giri lafia.

(Do not worry, Lawan Haruna,
 Such is life.
 May God take you home safely
 My father Bilami.
 May you reach your world beyond safely.)

Your father is wise Lawan Haruna.
 He made you his successor
 Before he went home.
 May God take him home safely.
 My father Bilami,
 May you live well in your world beyond.)
 (Bata Lokoja)

B 5.

Ya ga adiya dzawa Yabata,
 Mbwidiffa ga.
 Saka ar ni ku hara.
 Ya ga adiya dzawa Jampada,
 Mbwidiffa ga.
 Saka ar ni ani ku hara.

Iya Bilama yeru,
 Mda ana ngilar dyi aka madankyar ya.
 Iya Bilama Marya,
 Kuthli ana ngilar dyi aka madankyar ya.

Iya garma tsuwha,
Ga ngilar dyi aka madankyar ya.

(Do not worry Yabata,
Be patient.
His time was up.
Do not worry Jampada,
Be patient.
His time was up.

Oh our Bilama,
One should not abandon his village to children.
Oh Bilama Marya,
A king does not abandon his village to children.

Oh ploughing machine,
One does not abandon his village to children.)
(Bata Lokoja)

B 6.

Mayar na masa ali gandaliwa.
Aye maya ya!
Maya na masa ali gandaliwa.
Aye maya ya!

Wuta, kuli ku bilimta,
Mundzaha ku bili.
Maya na wa ana dethta?

Kulin kuli ku bilimta dzi,
Mundzaha ku bili.
Maya na wana dethta?

(My mother bought some bangles for me.
Oh my mother!
My mother bought some bangles for me.
Oh my mother!

See, the hoe stick is broken,
The hoe is broken.
Mother who will mend them for me?

Now the hoe stick is broken,
 The hoe is broken.
 Mother who will mend them for me?)
 (Song recited by Awa Audu)

B 7.

Ka giri si zhari tuwa ni
 Madar maya, saka arni
 Ku hara anti tsa tira liha.
 Kuji ka mbru zhari tuwa ni
 Madar maya, ka mbru kida
 Ka Hyel kila alari laku.

Wala mbru ani tuwa ka tuwa
 Tuwa a sinta ni mai,
 Ma mbru dzama dima
 Ata vir vira.
 Giri adiya sivi ka tuwa ni kira jawa
 Ting kara ndzi ndzi
 Kara kida Hyel mthlaku.

(Let us all stop crying,
 My brethren, his time was up
 So he went home.
 It is better for us to stop crying
 My people, let us just ask God
 To open the way for him.

Even if we cry and cry
 Our cries will not bring him back
 And if we brood we will feel worse.
 Do not weep as you come in,
 Just sit down
 And give praise to God.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

B 8.

Mta ar Bulama ni giri adiya dzawa
 Ndzi tsu apa ar Kuthli.
 Aiya-ah!

A-a-yi mtir Bulama ni mbru adiya dzawa
Tsa dzi tsu apa Kuthi.
Aiya-ah!

Tsingi ku mtimtadzi
Ama tunuwa ku mbili mbru diya.
Aiya-ah!
Tsingi Ku zhari mbru
Ama tunuwa ku mbili
Tsa ata wula mbru diya.
Aiya-ah!

(Do not worry over Bulama's death
His death is like that of a king.
Aiya-ah!
Oh, let us not worry over Bulama's death
He was like a king.
Aiya-ah!

The lion is dead
But the tiger is still alive
He will look after us.
Aiya-ah!
The lion has left us
But the tiger is still alive
He will look after us.
Aiya-ah!)
(Bata Lokoja)

B 9.

Saka ar nga ku hara akwa duniya,
Ga ata liha ya, mzirmar yeru?
Saka ar nga ku hara akwa duniya,
Ga ata liha ya, ka Hyel mwanta nga.

Saka nga ku hara akwa duniya,
Ga ata liha ya, ka Hyel vi nga.
Saka arni ku hara akwa duniya,
Tsa ata liha ja, ka Hyel mwanta ni.
Saka da mwa Hyel ata jakta pakta mbru,
Anta mbru adiya dzawa

Ka Hyel mwanta ni.

Mamarni ma Hyel ata shikta ni,
 Anti mbru adiya dza wa
 Ting ka Hyel vi ni.
 Babar ni ma Hyel ata shikta ni,
 Diya mbru adiya dzawa
 Ka Hyel mwanta ni.

(Your time is up in this world,
 So you are now going home, our brother?
 Your time is up in this world,
 You are going home may God take you home safely.

Your time is up in this world,
 You are going home, may God lead you.
 His time is up in this world,
 So he is going home, may God take him home safely.

Another time God will reunite us,
 So we should not worry
 May God take him home safely.

God will comfort his mother,
 So let us not worry
 May God lead him home safely.
 God will comfort his father,
 So let us not worry,
 May God take him home safely.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

B 10.

Ki yuta ala ga su nkware Mitu,
 Bilama a mbwa nda ya?
 Ki yuta ala ga su nkware Miti,
 Bilama a mbwa nda ya?

Ki yuta ala ga su nkware Mapindar,
 Bilama a mbwa nda ya?
 Ki yuta ala ga su nkware Inkwi,
 Bilama a mbwa nda ya?

Tsa a mbwa Madawi
 Na wala ni.
 Tsa ata hir sibila kirawa.

(Let me ask you something Mitu,
 Is Bilama in your room?
 Let me ask you something Miti,
 Is Bilama in your room?)

Let me ask you something Mapindar,
 Is Bilama in your room?
 Let me ask you something Inkwi,
 Is Bilama in your room?)

He is in Madawai's room,
 The senior wife.
 He does not want to come out again.)
 (Uma Kida Yerma)

- B 11.** I ata yuwa msikir na ama tsa adi ali wa,
 Sakan tsa mwara ti bwa madi?
 I ata yuwa msikir na ama tsa adi ali wa,
 Sakan tsa mwara ti bwa madi?

Ka giri zhawara ali Pasto Mai Sule,
 Sakan tsa mwari ahar Biu ya?
 Ka giri zhawar ali Pasto Mai Sule,
 Sakan tsa mwari ahar Biu ya?
 Ka giri zhawar ali Pasto Mai Sule,
 Sakan tsa mwari ahar Biu ya?

Aiyee pasto, pasto Mai Sule
 Sakan tsa mwari ahar giri ya?
 Aiyee pasto, Pasto Mai Sule,
 Sakan tsa mwari ahar giri ya?

Tsa si azi ama tsa ku tira,
 Sakan tsa lihi ahar Garkida.
 Tsa si azi ama tsa ku tira,
 Sakan tsa lihi ahar Garkida.

Tsa si azi ama tsa ku tira,
 Tsa mwara Mubi akwa tsabtadzi.
 Tsa si azi ama tsa ku tira,
 Tsa lihar Mubi akwa tsabtadzi.

Tsa mwara Lassa, tsa ku livi ahar Uba
 Tsa ku lihar Shuwa.
 Tsa Mwara Lassa, Tsa ku livi ahar Uba
 Tsa ku Lihar Shuwa.

Aiyee msikir na,
 Ka sakan tsa ahar Jasu akwa tasha.
 Aiyee msikir na,
 Ka sakan tsa ahar Kaduna akwa tasha.
 Tsa giri waya ali ja mara aka Nigeria
 Ka da ngata ka da si purum.
 Tsa giri wa ali ja mara aka Nigeria
 Ka da ngata ka da si purum.

Aiyee msikir na,
 Ka sakan tsa ahar Jasu akwa tasha.
 Aiyee msikir na,
 Ka sakan tsa ahar Kaduna akwa tasha.

I ata yuwa msikir na ama tsa adi ali wa,
 Sakan tsa mwara ti bwa madi?
 I ata yuwa msikir na ama tsa adi ali wa,
 Sakan tsa mwara ti bwa madi?
 I ata yuwa msikir na ama tsa adi ali wa,
 Sakan tsa mwara ti bwa madi?

Ka giri zhawara ali Pasto Mai Sule,
 Sakan tsa mwara ahar Biu ya?
 Ka giri zhawara ali Pasto Mai Sule,
 Sakan tsa mwara ahar Biu ya?
 Ka giri zhawara ali Pasto Mai Sule,
 Sakan tsa mwara ahar Biu ya?

Aiyee pasto, Pasto Mai Sule,
 Sakan tsa mwara ahar giri ya?
 Aiyee pasto, Pasto Mai Sule,

Sakan tsa mwara ahar giri ya?
 Aiyee pasto, pasto Mai Sule,
 Sakan tsa mwara giri ya?

Tsa si azi ama tsa ku tira,
 Sakan tsa lihi ahar Garkida.
 Tsa si azi ama tsa ku tira,
 Sakan tsa lihi ahar garkida.
 Tsa si azi ama tsa ku tira,
 Sakan tsa lihi ahar Garkida.
 Tsa si azi ama tsa ku tira,
 Tsa mwara ahar Mubi akwa tsabtadzi.
 Tsa si azi ama tsa ku tira,
 Tsa mwara ahar Mubi akwa tsabtadzi.

Tsa Mwara ahar Lassa, tsa livi ahar Uba
 Ka mwara ahar Shuwa.
 Tsa mwara Lassa, tsa livi ahar Uba
 Ka mwara ahar Shuwa.

Aiyee msikir na,
 Ka sakan tsa ahar Jasu akwa tasha.
 Aiyee msikir na,
 Ka saka tsa ahar Kaduna akwa tasha.

Tsa giri waya ali ja mara aka Nigeria
 Ka da ngata ka da si purum.
 Tsa giri waya ali ja mara aka Nigeria
 Ka da ngata ka da si purum.
 Tsa giri waya ali bu mara aka Nigeria
 Ka da ngata ka da si purum.

Aiyee msikir na,
 Ka sakan tsa ahar Jasu, akwa tasha.
 Aiyee msikir na,
 Ka sakan tsa ahar Kaduna, akwa tasha.

Tsa giri waya ali ja mara aka Nigeria
 Kada ngata ka da si purum.
 Tsa giri waya ali ja mara aka Nigeria
 Ka da ngata ka da si purum.

(I have been asking for my uncle but he is not around,
Where has he gone to?

I have been asking for my uncle but he is not around,
Where has he gone to?

Please find me Pastor Mai Sule,
Or has he gone to Biu?

Please find me Pastor Mai Sule,
Or has he gone to Biu?

Please find me Pastor Mai Sule,
Or has he gone to Biu.

Oh pastor, Pastor Mai Sule,
Has he gone to your area?

Oh pastor, Pastor Mai Sule,
Has he gone to your area?

He was to come here but he has gone,
May be he went down to Garkida.

He was to come here but he has gone,
May be he went down to Garkida.

He was to come here but he has gone,
Ma be he went to Mubi for a meeting.

He was to come here but he has gone,
May be he went to Mubi for a meeting.

He went to Lassa, he went to Uba,
And he went to Shuwa.

He went to Lassa, he went to Uba,
And he went to Shuwa.

Oh my uncle,
He might be in Jos, in the motor park.

Oh my uncle,
He might be in Kaduna, in the motor park.

Please phone the people in Nigeria
So that they can all hear about it and come.

Please phone all the people in Nigeria
So that they can all hear about it and come.

Oh my uncle,
 He might be in Jos, in the motor park.
 Oh my uncle,
 He might be in Jos, in the motor.

I have been asking for my uncle but he is not around,
 Where has he gone to?
 I have asking for my uncle but he is not around,
 Where has he gone to?
 I have been asking for my uncle but he is not around,
 Where has he gone to?
 Please find me Pastor Mai Sule,
 Has he gone to Biu?
 Please find me Pastor Mai Sule,
 Or has he gone to Biu?

Please find me Pastor Mai Sule,
 Or has he gone to Biu?

Oh pastor, Pastor Mai Sule,
 Has he gone to your area?
 Oh pastor, Pastor Mai Sule,
 Has he gone to your area?
 Oh pastor, Pastor Mai Sule,
 Has he gone to your area?

He was to come here but he has gone,
 May he went down to Garkida.
 He was to come here but he has gone,
 May be went down to Garkida.
 He was to come here but he has gone,
 May be he went to Mubi for a meeting.
 He was to come here but he has gone,
 May be he went to Mubi for a meeting.

He went to Lassa, he went to Uba,
 And he went to Shuwa.
 He went to Lassa, he went to Uba,
 And he went to Shuwa.

Oh my uncle,

He might be in Jos, in the motor park.
 Oh my uncle,
 He might be in Kaduna, in the motor park.

Please phone the people in Nigeria
 So that they can all hear about it and come.
 Please phone the people in Nigeria
 So that they can hear about it and come.
 Please phone the people in Nigeria
 So that they can all hear about it and come.
 Oh my uncle,
 He might be in Jos, in the motor park.
 Oh my uncle,
 He might be in Kaduna, in the motor park.
 Please phone the people in Nigeria
 So that they can all hear about it and come.
 Please phone the people in Nigeria
 So that they can all hear about it and come.)
 (Shetu Alasa)

B 12.

Mayar na timta dzi tsu avana.
 Dawi Safiyo mta tsu avana.
 Da ku ra mbwanta ra muva kuma.
 Dawi ku timta dzi da ka mdir kyirni.

Millim Musa Dika
 Yamana Guga sal kadzang,
 Diya ka mda bara kura.
 Mallim Musa Dika
 Yamana guga sal kadzang,
 Yamana kuga.

Guga ana tir kwa jiba ka sibila ya?
 Sai ka mda bara kura.
 Guga ana tir kwa jiba ka sibila mai,
 Sai ka mda bara kura.
 Guga ya, aiya aiya-a,
 Yamana guga.
 Guga ya, aiya aiya-a
 Diya ka mda bara kura.

Ka maya aiya, aiya-ya,
 Maya ku lukwa mbw arni.
 Dawi Safiyo, daw na.
 Dawi safiyo, daw na.

(My mother died this year.
 Dawi Safiyo also died this year.
 They have jailed me for ten years.
 Dawi and his master have died.)

Mr. Musa Dika
 Oh, oh *guga* is really great,
 One should look for *kura*.

Mr. Musa Dika
 Oh, *guga* is really great.
 Oh *guga*.
 Can *guga* that has fallen inside a well come out?
 Unless one finds *kura*.
Guga does not fall inside a well and come out,
 Unless one finds *kura*.

Guga, aiya, aiya-a.
 Oh, *kuga*.
Guga ya, aiya, aiya-a.
 One should try to find *kura*

Oh my mother, aiya, aiya-a,
 My mother has gone to her home.
 Dawi Safiya, oh my Dawi.
 Dawi Safiya, oh my Dawi.)
 (Usman Boaja)

B 13.

Iya mwankir Kidang,
 Arna ajaja na ku tiri.
 Iya shilir Kidang,
 Diya ajaja na ku tiri.

I ata tuwa salirnga Migawa Bwala,

Giri piya dlu miri Yerwa?
 I ata tuwa salirna Migawa Bwala,
 Giri piya dlu miri Miti?
 I ata bara salirnga Migiwa Bwala,
 Giri piya dlu miri Ya'uma?

(Oh Kidang women,
 My cap has fallen down.
 Oh Kidang men,
 My cap has fallen down.)

I am mourning for your husband Migawa Bwala,
 How did you spend the night Yerwa?
 I am mourning for your husband Migawa Bwala,
 How did you spend the night Miti?
 I am looking for your husband Migawa Bwala,
 How did you spend the night Ya'uma.)
 (Yankirda Zoaka).

B 14.

Ka giri ndzi diya ka mbwi diffu,
 Sakar ni ani hara,
 Bonir duniya tsa ku msiri.
 Ka giri ndzi diya ka mbwi diffu,
 Sakar ni ani hara,
 Bonir duniya tsa ku msiri.

Wala mbru ani tuwa ka tuwa,
 Ka pci ni ra tiri,
 Mbru na tuwa ka wuta wa.
 Wala mbru ani dzama ka dzama,
 Viri ata kura diya,
 Mbru na hyeni ka dzata wa.

Wala mbru ani tuwa ka tuwa,
 Ka pci ni ra tiri,
 Mbru na tuwa ka wuta wa.

Ka giri ndzi diya ka mbwi diffu,
 Sakarni na hara,
 Bonir duniya tsa ku msiri.

Ka giri ndzi diya ka mbwi diffu,
 Sakar ni ani hara,
 Bonir duniya tsa ku msiri.

Wala mbru ani tuwa ka tuwa,
 Ka pci ni ra tiri,
 Mbru na tuwa ka wuta wa.
 Wala mbru ani dzama ka dzama,
 Viri ata kura diya,
 Mbru na hyeni ka dzata wa.

(Be comforted,
 His time was up,
 He is now free from all the sufferings
 In this world.
 Be comforted,
 His time was up
 He is now free from all the sufferings
 In this world.

Even if we cry and cry
 Until the sun goes down
 Our cry cannot bring him back.
 Even if we think and think,
 Until day break
 Our sleepless nights of thinking
 Cannot help us to understand why.

Even if we cry and cry
 Until the sun goes down,
 Our cry cannot bring him back.
 Be comforted
 His time was up
 He is now free from all the sufferings
 In this world.

Even if we cry and cry
 Until the sun goes down
 Our cry cannot bring him back.

Even if we think and think

Until day break
 Our sleepless nights of thinking
 Cannot bring him back.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

B 15.

Shanga mbru akwa duniya
 Diya mbru akwa sima kasuku
 Madar maya diya ka mbru sinda.
 Shanga mbru akwa duniya
 Diya mbru akwa sima kasuku
 Madar maya diya ka mbru dzama.

Usa alaga Hyel tida
 Yeru adi ka duna wa
 Ama ka ga shikta nda.
 Usa alaga Hyel tida
 Yeru adi ka duna wa
 Ama ka ga shikta nda.

Shanga mbru akwa duniya
 Diya mbru akwa sima kasuku
 Madar maya diya ka mbru dzama.
 Shanga mbru akwa duniya
 Diya mbru akwa sima kasuku
 Madar maya diya ka mbru sinda.

Usa alaga Hyel tida
 Yeru adi ka duna wa
 Ama ka ga shikta nda.
 Usa alaga Hyel tida
 Yeru adi ka duna wa
 Ama ka ga shikta nda.

(All of us living in this world
 We are only passing time
 Brethren let us think about it.
 All of us living in this world
 We are as shoppers shopping in the market
 Brethren let us think about this.)

Thank you God, our Father.
 We do not have the power
 But You can comfort them.
 Thank you God, our Father.
 We do not have the power
 But You can comfort them.

All of us living in this world
 We are as shoppers shopping in the market
 Brethren let us be aware of this.
 All of us living in this world
 We are as shoppers shopping in the market
 Brethren let us think about it.

Thank you God, our Father.
 We do not have the power
 But You can comfort them.
 Thank you God, our Father.
 We do not have the power
 But You can comfort them.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

C. Lamentations

C 1.

Ya antsa liha arna ja nkwara.
 Dipa Aisa i ata liha.
 Ya antsa liha arna ja nkwara.
 Ma dipa arna i ata liha.

Ya aiya, Jampada na,
 Ga ngilar ra ya?
 Ya aiya, Jampada powa,
 Ga ngilar ra ya?

(Oh I am going home.
 Tomorrow Aisa I am going back home.
 Oh I am going home.
 By tomorrow I will be going back home.)

Oh my Jampada,
 Have you rejected me?
 Oh Jampada cotton wool,
 Have you rejected me?)
 (Yankirda Zoaka)

C 2.

Ra! ra! ra! mjir Buma,
 Siba giri yeru ka yimi.
 Aya-yee!

Siba giri yeru mjir Buma,
 Siba giri yeru ka yimi.
 Aya-yee!

Dreba Sale dimi ni,
 Tsa asinda ngur wa.
 Aya-yee!

Tsa ku pumta yeru mjir Buma,
 Tsa ku pumta yeru akwa mular.
 Aya-yee!

Tsa ku pumta yeru mjir Buma,
 Tsa ku pumta yeru akwa kusar.
 Aya-yee!

Dreba Sale dimi ni,
 Tsa asinda suwa.
 Aya-yee!

(Ra! ra! ra! residents of Buma,
 Come with water and rescue us.
 Aya-ee!

Come and rescue us residents of Buma,
 Come with water and rescue us.
 Aya-ee!

This driver Sale he is bad,
 He does not know how rto drive.

Aya-ee!

He has dumped us,
Residents of Buma he has dumped us in a valley.
Aya-ee!

He has dumped us,
Residents of Buma he has dumped us inside grass.
Aya-ee!

Driver Sale is bad,
He does not know anything.
Aya-ee!
(Audu Ndajara)

D. Love Songs and Wedding Songs

D 1.

Samson Kidang anti i bara ka kila
Salirna damwa adiwa.
Iya kundra na ya,
Mwa ata haya mota diya.

Ti mwa bang ni
Wala mwa ana adi kildzi wa,
Ama mwa bang ni ku ndzi msira ali.

(It is Samson Kidang that I want to marry
There is no other man that I want to marry.
Oh my *kundra*,
We will hire a car

Since we are in love
Even if we do not eventually get married
I am still happy that we are in love.)
(Awa Audu)

D 2.

Ki thla wasika kira na aka Madu Ngwasa
Ka tsa na aka Hyelavi.

I ata thla wasika kira na aka madu Ngwasa
 Ka tsa na aka Hyelavi.
 Hyelavi ya,
 Langtang dzi bangir na
 Mwa ata fila mwata diya.

Ti mwa bang ni
 Wala mwa ana di kildzi wa
 Ama mwa bang ata ndzi msira ali.

(I will write a letter and give Madu Ngwasa
 To help me give to Hyelavi.
 I am going to write a letter and give Madu Ngwasa
 To give to Hyelavi.)

Oh Hyelavi,
 My slender lover
 We shall ride away in a car.

Since we are in love,
 If we do not eventually get married
 But remain in love,
 I will be happy.)
 (Shangadzira Mthigina)

D 3.

Iya, baba malim Peter zhar tuwa.
 Iya, bangir na Peter Virawa
 Ndzi ki lihar yeru.

Kiri ka lukwa sheriya
 Ka i ata wuta malim dyir madi
 Ka yeru mwari ali?

Oh, my dear Mr. Peter stop crying.
 Oh, my beloved Peter Virawa
 Wait for me to go back to my parents' house.

I want to go and seek for divorce in court
 Where can find a learned man
 So that we can go for me? (Yawulda Audu)

D 4.

Ya, ma vir Laraba ni mwa ata kiba,
 Anti wala ga adi si ahah yeru wa.
 Ya, gari Laraba ni ku mzhira
 Wala ga adi mwari ahah yeru wa.

Laraba si nawa kira zurta,
 Kira ali aka bangirna,
 Apa ti diffi hira.
 Laraba si nawa mada giri,
 Ki ra gari ka bangirna apa ti hira.

Wala mda ata hira wa,
 I ata hara ri.
 I ata hara dzak dzaku.
 Laraba si nawa ki ndzindzi
 Ka gari ka bangir na apa ti hira.

(Oh, we shall meet in Wednesday market,
 So you do not need to come to our house.
 Oh, our Wednesday market conversations
 Are enough for me
 Since you are not allowed to come to our house.

When will Wednesday market come
 So that I can kneel down
 And greet my beloved as I want.
 When will Wednesday come my fellows
 So that I can talk with my beloved as I want.

Even if no one accepts it I will do it,
 I will do it purposely.
 When will Wednesday market come
 So that I can sit down
 And talk with my beloved as I want.)
 (Awa Audu)

D 5.

Malim Bwarama,
 Kuji kara dlu Nkatiya
 Ka giri kilzdi.

Malim Bwarama,
Dipa kara dlu Nkatiya
Ka giri kildzi.

Da ku ra mwata nyikar Nkatiya,
Ama kira tsu adza Bwarama kada kildzi.
Daku mwata nyikar Nkatiya,
Ama kirari tsu adza Bwarama ni
Da kildzing?

Nkatiya Gumbur ya,
Ar Nkatiya tsa adi si akwa gyelining?
Nkatiya Gumbur ya,
Wuta Nkatiya tsa adi si akwa gyelni wa.

Da ku ra mwata nyika Nkatiya
Ama kira ri adza Bwarama ni
Kuji da kildzi.

(Mr. Bwarama,
You should go and bring Nkatiya
So that you can get married.
Mr. Bwarama,
Tomorrow you should go and bring Nkatiya
So that you can get married.

Nkatiya is now engaged,
But she is still thinking of marrying Bwarama.
Nkatiya is now engaged,
But since she is still thinking of Bwarama
Why can't they get married?

Oh Nkatiya from Gumbur,
Hasn't Nkatiya come to the music event?
Oh Nkatiya Gumbur,
See, Nkatiya has not come to the music event.
Nkatiya is now engaged,
But she is still thinking of marrying Bwarama.)
(Shehu Wida)

D 6.

Kura ka salirna ni msira ali wa,

Sai kura bangir na ani msira ali.
 Kura ka Musamdia ni msira aliwa
 Sai kura ka Markusu ani msira ali.

Ka kita salirna ka psu kusar
 Ka kibila ali bangir na
 Ka yeru tira.
 Ka kita Musamdia ka psu ni akwa kusar,
 Ka kibila ali Markusu
 Ka yeru tira.

Ka kita Musamdia jomthlam mya
 Ka psu kusar
 Ka sinta ali Mwarkusi na tandra
 Ka yeru tira.

Motar Herwa ni tsu azi ya?
 Da hau tsi ka Useni ni
 Da kir miri.

Ka kita salirna ka psu kusar,
 Ka sinta ali bangirna
 Ka yeru tira.

(My husband's voice is not sweet to me,
 Only my lover's voice is sweet to me.
 Musamdia's voice is not sweet to me,
 Only Markusu's voice is sweet to me.

I wish my husband is taken and dumped inside a bush,
 And my lover is brought to me
 So that we can elope.

I wish Musamdia with his big mouth
 Is taken and dumped inside a bush,
 And Markusi who is handsome is brought to me
 So that we can elope.

Is the lorry travelling to Herwa still here?
 They shook hands with Useni.
 I wonder what they discussed.

I wish my husband is taken and dumped inside a bush
 And Markusu is brought to me
 So that we can elope.)
 (Shetu Musamdia)

D 7.

Ga adiya si adza ra bangirna ragi wa,
 Thliya tsa tsak ku ni
 Tsa si tsinga ali.

Aya, salamwala coku,
 Tsa si tsi ali bangirna mara.

(Do not come and see me my beloved,
 The moonlight is so bright
 That he might see you and kill you.

Oh, foolish husband
 He might attempt to kill my beloved.)
 (Awa Audu)

D 8.

Yarami nkwar Kidang
 Suzuki mata.
 Yarami nkwar Kidang
 suzuki mwala.
 Ding-ding-ki-di-ding.

Thira apa mpur yeri
 wila na apa klika ni.
 Yarami pazhi.
 Tif heli tif shanguri,
 Yarami tsa adi si akwa gwelni wa.
 Ki-ding, kiri-di-ding.

Hirdzi, ai hirdzi.
 Ngini Kiga Zaman.
 Zhimnaku, mbikil mwala,
 Yarami, kara ndzi akwa hira.

Nta bell ya Yarami?
 Awa nta rizza pazhi.
 Masir Bally ni yidau ri mara,
 Ki masta aka bangir na?
 Masir tirgal ni yidauri mara,
 Ki masta aka bangir na?

Mwada Bilatum, mada kuga mallama ni
 Mda cerbila wa pazhi wa.
 Kwatam Pindar, mamza hir pira.
 Tsa ku kitcimta dzi tsu apa Nasara.

(Yarami the girl from Kidang,
 Suzuki woman.
 Yarami the girl from Kidang,
 Suzuki woman.
 Ding-ding-ki-di-ding.)

Her teeth are like millet flour.
 Her neck is like a cornstalk.
 Yarami my friend.
 I am afraid Yarami has not come
 to the musical occasion.
 Ki-ding, kiri-di-ding.
 Love, love.
 This is the modern way of calling it.
 Ostrich, prime woman.
 Yarami, thank you.
 Are your face marks made with a straight razor?
 No my friend, with a razor blade.

How much does a pair of Bally shoes cost
 So that I can buy a pair for my beloved?
 How much does a silk cloth cost
 So that I can buy some for my beloved?

Mwada the girl from Bilatum,
 when she is among educated ladies
 one cannot differentiate her.
 Princess Pindar, she is light in complexion.
 She has become light-skinned like a European lady.)

(Musa Gwoadzang)

D 9.

Ma ndzi msira alaga wa
 Nkwargi na ga lukwa shieriang,
 Ka giri ndikimta dzi?

Zamanir ndzi boni kira wa,
 Ma mji akwa msira ga mta
 Akwa boni kira ya nkwar mwala.

Ma bangirna ku mti akwa boni,
 U'uar ata kira ga, Alkali.

Wala i ani mwanki ncisu
 Ma i adi kila nga wa
 I ku kila mwala kadaku ya.
 Pindar, aiye Pindar Wasila.

Ma bikur Pindar ka mda zharni
 Ka mda bwom tara
 Ma Pindar mwari akwa sheria.

Ma bikur Pindar
 Ka Hyel zharni ka tsa bamta ra,
 Ka pindar mwari akwa lahira.
 Aiye Pindar sur gyeli wa.
 Pindar wa pila aka hyel
 Abir sur mahala ti ga mba.

Aiye Pindar bangirna,
 Pindar Wasila.
 Pindar mzirnkwa mwala.

Nangnang sheria mjiir Biu msiramisira
 Ti da kita ka nar aka Nvwa
 Anti da hilanta.

Alkali tsi nyika
 Aka bangirna Pindar bu,
 Ka tsa msira.

(If you are not enjoying your marriage, lady,
 Why can't you go to court
 And seek for divorce?)

This is no longer a period of suffering,
 If People are enjoying
 You should not die as a result of suffering, lady.

If my beloved die as a result of suffering,
 You will be held responsible, Magistrate.

Even if I have eight wives,
 If I do not marry you
 I will feel as if I have never been married.
 Pindar, oh Pindar Wasila.

If Pindar is at fault
 She should be set free
 And let me go to jail instead of her
 If she goes to court.

If Pindar is at fault
 She should be set free
 And let me go to hell
 So that Pindar can go to heaven.

Pindar is a person to be honoured.
 Pindar, I wish someone can tell God
 That it is a taboo for you to go to hell.
 Oh Pindar, my beloved Pindar Wasila.
 Pindar, ideal lady.

Previously cases were properly treated
 In the court in Biu
 But when they handed over to the Kanuri
 There is no more dispensation of justice.

Magistrate please give a divorce verdict
 To my beloved
 So that she could be set free.)

(Avi Pwasi)

D 10.

Iya, mzir dakwi langtanga,
Ma i adi kila nga wa
Sai i mbika.

Mjir dyini da wuyim,
Da nkira atani, da nkira atani.
Wuta da ku nkata ali bangirna.

(Oh, my handsome young man,
If I do not marry you
I will die and my body will swell up.

People in this village are treacherous.
They gossip here and there.
See they have deprived me of my beloved.)
(Mwajim Musa)

D 11.

Labar Avi Pwasi.
Labar ayi Gwomna,
Da ata bara taki Jija Madlau
Ka mda mwanta nga akwa TV ya.
Ka mda mwanta nga akwa TV ya.
Ka giri simnya kadi kadi
Ka shanga lardu ngata thlima Jija Madlau ni,
Nkwar Badawi.
Ka giri simnya kadi ka di
Ka shanga lardu ngata thlima Jija Madlau ni,
Nkwar Badawi.
Kuthi na ar mjir Biu tsa pila mi
Ata kira bangir na ri?
Kuthli-kuthli yeri ni na aina lahar Kaduna ni
Da pilami ata kira bangir na ni ja
Madara, nkwar Madlau ni?
Gwomna pila aka solda kada ndzi ata
Kira Jija mi waci da ahar mbru.
Labar, ya pila mi aka bangir na ni ri?
Aiye Jija nkwar,
Da ana ha kir abir kara ngila ra

Kamyar i ka gina wa
 Aiyee Jija nkwar.a
 Da ana ha kir abir kara ngila ra
 Ama ga ngating
 Aiyee Jija nkwar.a.
 Shanga lardir ni ha kir kara ngilar ra
 Ama ga ngating
 Aiye Jija mkawara.
 Mda pila abir kara ngilar ra ngwa
 Ka ga bara dakwi ti giri kima.
 Mda pila, "sal hal hala ka shishi mwapu
 Anta kila nga ya Jija nkwar gai
 Ga ngilar wa?"
 Ngata giri suti tsa pila alada.
 Tsa pila abir, "dakwi ani halni.
 I ata kila ni mi wa ya ngilar ya.
 I ku sinda abir buraku ani kila kaya munya.
 Ngini bzir dakwai ani halning?
 Ka maya ki ngilar ni kamyar halni ya?
 Iya ata kilni ka yeru nkirta.
 Maya ma adi hara wa, yeru tsu asi ndika."
 "Arnga miri Jija miri nkwarna?
 Avi thli kumir mda alaga ya,
 Nkwa dikwa?"
 "Yagwi maya, alkawal ti yeru kila
 Akwa dapwa yeru ka bangir na ni,
 Ka i ata kilni mi ya ngilar ni wa.
 Alkawali Kaya.
 Suti Hyel ta vi wa mi i ata
 Ndasimnga ni ka tsa ndzi akwa
 Kuti kilaktahu.
 Suti Hyel a ta vi wa mi i ata
 Ndasimnya nga Jija ka ga ndzi-ndzi
 Akwa kuti.
 Shanga lardir ni akwa hakir alaga
 Abir kara ngilar ra ama ga ngating
 Aiye Jija nkwar.a.
 Lemsuwa ti i lahar Madlau is wuta
 Bwahila bangir na ata lukwa mbwarni.
 Tuh und hund nkwa hindhind Jija ata tira,
 Tuh und hund nkwa hindhind Jija ata tira.

Tsu wulib tsuwulib nkwanı ata tira.
 Zule zule Jina ata tira
 Apa dlu jilki ni.
 Ga ata lukwa mbwar nga ya Jija nkwaya?
 Ama mwa nkira apani wa
 Nkwa Dikwa nkwa lema wa.
 Lakur Mirnga Madlau
 ni ata bwa madi ri
 Ki ra nuwa kur sila bangirna ata lukwa mbwarni
 Wala kur sila gangirna ni ki punnya
 Ka ta ndzi msira aka diffi.
 Mda na lahar nkiya ka wuta mbwar pyirna,
 I vi nyarbwari abwar Madlau.
 Ma mda na ku lumbwa ka wuta
 Vi pi arna i an vi kiri ti bwar Madlau.
 Ma i ata kil ntsukwa ana wala apa ki dla
 Akwa lakur Madlau, ti bwar Kwandza.
 Ki sauta ni ki mwanta ni aka
 Mana ka yana akwa lihira ka da wulhani.
 "Ani nkwa na ti i ana Pila ala giri ni maya ka yiya.
 I si kita ni ahila giri ni anti i
 Sinta ni ka giri wuta akwa lahira.
 Mambilir mana ka yana antsa saka
 Na ti i ku lukwa kyi.
 Antsa saka ti diffi msira ali.
 Ti da ku wutani ni, ku ndzi msira ali ka duna.
 Ki sauta nga kira lata mbwar nga
 Ata kuta Hyel kara ndzi akwa bu Jija Kwandza.
 Tapira mbwar nga Jija i ata vuwa alag a thliya.
 Wundir mbwar nga mda ata vuwa sasilka alaga
 Akila Hyel ni hara ka ga.
 Lakur lukwa mbwar nga ni nkwar gi
 Hyel ata vi alaga Kigau.
 Ya diffi aiyeec ka ni bangir na ni Kwang.
 Aiye Jija Madlau, ya mana bangirna ni.
 Mi sauta nga kira lata kyir nga
 Ata kuta Hyel kara ndzi akwa Jija Madlau.
 Tapira mbwar nga Jija i ata vuwa alaga tliya.
 Windur mbwar nga ata vuwa sasilka alaga akila
 Hyel ani hara ka ga wa ya.
 Kuthlir dyi ni, alhaji mustapha

Kuthlir Biu, ga pila mi ata kira bangir na ni?
 Giri ana lumbwa ka giri mya.
 Wala giri ana shinuwa mi
 Ata nkira bangir na ni nda ja,
 Nkwar Madlau ni?
 Gwomna ku pila aka solda ka da si nzdi
 Ata kira Jija wa mi waci tsa ahar mbru ni.

(Speak Avi Pwasi.
 Speak the Governor,
 They want to hear the praise of Jija Madlau.
 You will be taken to the television.
 You will be taken to the television.
 You should announce to every town
 So that the entire region can hear about
 The name of Jija Madlau
 The daughter of Badawi.
 What did the Emir of Biu say about my beloved?
 All the Kings who go to Kaduna for meetings
 What do they say about my beloved
 The daughter of Madlau?
 The Governor told soldiers to guard Jija
 Because in the past they were in our community.
 If I should speak, what do I say to my beloved?
 Oh, my Jija.
 They try to convince you to reject me
 Because I am poor.
 Oh my Jija.
 They try to convince you to reject me
 But you refuse to listen to them.
 Oh my Jija.
 The entire community tries to convince you
 To reject me but you refuse to listen.
 Oh my Jija.
 Someone said you should reject me
 And look for a young man of your age.
 Someone said, "This is an old man with
 Grey hair who is marrying you Jija,
 Can't you refuse?"
 Listen to what she said to them,
 "He is a young man who grew old.

I will marry him, I will not reject him.
 I know that it is the young Okra that
 Grows to produce seeds.
 Is this not a young man who grew old?
 Mother should I reject him just
 Because of his old age?
 I will marry him and we will try
 And live together.
 Mother if it does not work out
 We will then separate."
 "What has happened to you Jija?
 What has happened to you my daughter?
 Did Avi cut for you a piece of human flesh
 Daughter of Dikwa clan?"
 "Oh mother, it is a promise made between
 My beloved and I.
 I will marry him, I will not reject him.
 Keeping promise surpasses everything.
 A promise is a load."
 God has not created us that way
 Or else I would have swallowed her.
 She will live peacefully in my stomach.
 God has not created us that way
 Or else I would have swallowed you
 So that you can live peacefully in my stomach.
 The entire region is trying to
 Convince you to reject me
 But you do not listen to them.
 Oh my Jija.
 On Thursday I went to Madlau,
 I saw my beloved going to her husband's house.
 Very beautiful was Jija as she walked.
 Very beautiful was Jija as she walked.
 Very charming was the girl as she walked.
 Very elegant was Jija.
 Beautiful like a plane flying.
 Are you actually going to
 Your husband's house my Jija?
 But we did not plan it this way,
 Daughter of Dikwa clan.
 Daughter of Lemba clan.

Where is the road to Mirnga Madlau?
 I will follow the footprints of my beloved
 To her husband's house.
 Even the dust from the footprints of my beloved
 I will put some in my mouth to make me feel happy.
 Anyone who goes to my house
 Will see that my bedroom door is facing Madlau.
 Anyone who goes inside and looks at my bed
 Will see that I put my head
 In the direction of Madlau.
 If I trip I will fall on Madlau road,
 In the direction of Kwandza.
 I will elope with her and I will take her
 To my mother and my father in heaven
 For them to see her.
 "This is the girl I used to tell you about
 Mother and father.
 I married her after you died.
 I bring her to you in heaven
 So that you can see her.
 Spirits of my mother and my father,
 It is now that I truly feel I am married.
 It is now that I am happy.
 Since they have seen her, I am very happy.
 Please let me elope with you and build for you
 A house in the sky/space
 For you to live inside, Jija Kwandza.
 The door to your room Jija
 I will put for you the moon.
 For the window of your room I will put a star
 Because this is God's will for you.
 For the road that leads to your house lady,
 God will spread the rainbow.
 Oh my heart, Oh I wish my beloved is given to me.
 Oh Jija Madlau, oh my beloved.
 If I elope with you I will build for you
 A house in the sky/space
 For you to live inside, Jija Madlau.
 For your door Jija, I will put the moon.
 For your window I will put a star
 Because it is God's will for you.

The Emir of Biu town,
 Alhaji Mustapha the Emir of Biu,
 What do you say about my beloved?
 You usually go inside a room and discuss issues.
 What have you been saying about my beloved?
 The Governor told soldiers to come and guard Jija
 Because in the past he had lived in our community.)
 (Avi Pwasi)

D 12.

Aure na bilin.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara Kuceli madar maya
 Aure na bilin.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara Kuceli madar maya.

Mallim Malgwi.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.
 Da ku ndzi msira.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.
 Da ku ndzi bdaku.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Kildzir mjir ilimi.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.
 Kildzir mjir hirdzi.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Da ku mbwata nyika.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.
 Mbru ku godita.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Aure na bilin.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.
 Mbru ku godita.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Mallim Inusa.
 Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.
 I pila mallama ya.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Kildzir Malgwi.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Mbwa nyikar Malgwi.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Kildzir mallama.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Malgwi ntilang ntilang.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Mbru ku mbwata nyika.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Mbru ku mbwata nyika

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Kildzir mjir ilimi.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Kildzir mjir ilimi.

Madar maya, mbru ata kuceli madar maya.

Aure na bilin.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Mallama ya Dika.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Mbru ku mbwata nyika.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

Kildzir mjir Malgwi.

Madar maya, mbru ata hara kuceli madar maya.

(Modern wedding,

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Modern wedding.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Mr. Malgwi.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

He is happy.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

They are happy.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Wedding of educated people.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Wedding of people who are in love.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

They are engaged.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

We are grateful.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

We are thankful.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Modern Wedding.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

We are thankful.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Mr. Inusa.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

She is now Mrs. Inusa.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Malgwi's wedding.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Malgwi's engagement.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

This is *mallama's* wedding.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

The very neat Malgwi.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

We have performed their engagement.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

We have performed their engagement.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Wedding of educated people.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Wedding of educated people.

Brethren, we are rejoicing.

Modern wedding.
 Brethren, we are rejoicing.
 Mallama Dika.
 Brethren, we are rejoicing.
 We have performed their engagement.
 Brethren, we are rejoicing.
 Wedding of people of the Malgwui clan.
 Brethren, we are rejoicing.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

D 13.

Mallim Inusa diffa ga msira alaga
 Daku sinta alaga mwala.
 Ma mbru ku mbwata nyika ni
 Diffa ga msira ala ga,
 Ga ata ndzi ka mwalar nga.
 Ma mbru ku mbwata nyika ni
 Diffa ga msira ala ga,
 Ga ata ndzi ka salirnga.

Alkwalir hirdzi ka giri thlawardzi
 Ka giri bdli kumshi ka yeru wula.
 Alkawalir hirdzi ka giri tsarardzi,
 Ka giri bdli kumshi ka yeru wula.

Ma ga ngila kuta ri ka ga pila alari,
 "Zanuwa i ku tiffimta."
 Ma ga ngila kuta ka ga pila alari,
 "Mallama i ku tiffamta."

Ya madar mima diffa mbru msira ala mbru,
 Bzir mbru ata lukwa kyir ni.
 Malgwi ntilang ntilang,
 Diffa yeru msira ala yeru,
 Bzir yeru ata lukwa kyir ni.
 Ya mallim Bata diffa ga msira alaga,
 Bzir nga ata lukwa kyir ni.

(Mr. Inusa you must be very happy,
 They have brought you a wife.)

When we finish performing the wedding,
 You will be happy, you will live your wife.
 When we finish performing the engagement,
 You will be happy,
 You will live with your husband.

You have promised to love each other,
 Therefore salute each other and laugh
 So that we can see you.
 You have promised to love each other,
 Therefore touch each other and laugh
 So that we can see you.

If he provokes your anger you should tell him,
 "*Zanawa* I have forgiven you."
 If she provokes your anger
 You should tell her,
 "*Mallama* I have forgiven you."

Oh brethren we are happy,
 Our son is getting married.
Malgwi ntilang ntilang, we are happy,
 Our son is getting married.
 Oh Mr. Bata you are happy,
 Your son is getting married.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

D 14.

Akwa zaman ngini, ti giri ngita
 Ka hara alkwai ni
 Ama giri ka mbwi diffu.
 Akwa zaman nginit, ti giri gita
 Ka hara alkwai ni,
 Ama giri ka mbwi diffu.

Mallim ragai ga ata lukwa kyir nga.
 Mallama wani ata lukwa mbwar ni.
 Mallin ragai ga ata lukwa kyir nga.
 Mallama wani ata lukwa mbwar ni.
 Mallim ragai ga ata lukwa kyir nga
 Mallama wani ata lukwa mbwar ni.

Mallim ragai ga ata lukwa kyir nga.
Mallim wani ata lukwa kyir ni.

Akwa zaman ngini ti giri ngita
Ka hara alkwal ni,
Ama giri ka mbwi diffu.
Akwa zaman ngini ti ngita
Ka hara alkwal ni,
Ama giri ka mbwi diffu.
Mallim ragai ga ata lukwa kyir nga.
Mallama wani ata lukwa mbwar ni.
Mallim ragai ga ata lukwa
Kyir nga.

Mallama wani ata lukwa mbwar ni.
Bzir nkwa mallama ga ta lukwa
Mbwar nga ya?
Mwala apa timatir ta lukwa mbwar ni.
Bzir nkwa mallama ga ata lukwa
Mbwar nga ya?
Mwala apa timatir ata lukwa mbwar ni.
Akwa zaman ngini ti giri
Ngita ka hara alkwal ni
Ama giri ka gina.
Akwa zaman ngini ti giri
Ngita ka hara alkwal ni
Ama giri ka gina.

Mallim ragai ga ata lukwa kyir nga.
Mallim wani ku lukwa kyir ni.
Mallim ragai ga ata lukwa kyir nga.
Mallim wani ku lukwa kyir ni.
Mallim ragai ga ta lukwa kyir nga.
Mzir nkwa mallama ta lukwa mbwar ni.
Mallim ragai ga ta lukwa kyir nga.
Mallim Ayuba ta lukwa kyir ni.
Mallim ragai ga ta lukwa kyir nga.
Bzirnkwa na ngini ata lukwa mbwar ni.
Mallim ragai ga ta lukwa kyir nga,
Ka nkwar Zoaka ata lukwa mbwar ni.
Mallim ragai ga ata lukwa kyir nga,

Mallama wani ata lukwa mbwar ni.

Akwa zaman ngini ti giri
 Ngita ka hara alkwai ni,
 Ama giri ka mbwi diffu.
 Akwa zaman ngini ti giri
 Ngita ka hara alkwai ni,
 Ama giri ka mbwi diffu.

Mallim ragai ga ata lukwa kyir nga.
 Zoaka Kamada ata lukwa mbwar ni.
 Mallim ragai ga ta lukwa kyir nga,
 Zoaka Kamada ta lukwa mbwar ni.
 Mallim ragai ga ta lukwa kyir nga.
 Gwangndi Kujara ata lukwa mbwar ni.
 Mallim ragai ga ta lukwa kyir nga.
 Mda pila mallam ta lukwa mbwar ni.

Bzir nkwa mallama, ga ata lukwa
 Mbwar nga ya?
 Mwala apa timatir ata lukwa mbwar ni.
 Bzir nkwa mallama ga ata lukwa
 Mbwar nga ya?
 Mwala apa timatir ta lukwa mbwar ni.

(In this generation for you to pledge
 Your love and commitment to each other
 You must be blessed with patience.
 In this generation for you to pledge
 Your love and commitment to each other
 You must be blessed with patience.

Mrs. are you about to enter your
 Matrimonial home?
 Mrs. is about to enter her
 Matrimonial home.
 Mr. you are about to enter
 Your matrimonial home.
 Mrs. is about to begin
 Her matrimonial home.
 Mr. you are about to enter

Your matrimonial home.

Mrs. is about to enter her married life.

Mr. you are about to enter

Your matrimonial home.

Mr. is about to enter

His matrimonial home.

In this generation for you to pledge

Your love and commitment to each other,

You must be blessed with patience.

In this generation for you to pledge

Your love and commitment for each other,

You must be blessed with patience.

Mr. you are about to enter

Your matrimonial home.

Mrs. is about to enter

Her matrimonial home.

Lady are you about to enter

Your matrimonial home?

The woman like tomato is about to enter

Her matrimonial home.

Lady are you about to enter

Your matrimonial home?

The woman like tomato is about to enter

Her matrimonial home.

In this generation for you to pledge

Your love and commitment to each other,

You must be rich.

In this generation for you to pledge

Your love and commitment to each other,

You must be rich.

Mr. you about to enter

Your matrimonial home.

Mr. has entered his matrimonial home.

Mr. you are about to enter

Your matrimonial home.

Mr. has entered his matrimonial home.

Mr. you are about to enter
Your matrimonial home.

The lady is about to enter
Her matrimonial home.
Mr. you are about to enter
Your matrimonial home.
Mr. Ayuba is about to enter
His matrimonial home.

Mr. you are about to enter
Your matrimonial home.
And this lady is about to enter
Her matrimonial home.

Mr. you are about to enter
Your matrimonial home.
The daughter of Zoaka clan is about to enter
Her matrimonial home.
Mr. you are about to enter
Your matrimonial home.
Mrs. is about to enter
Her matrimonial home.

In this generation for you to pledge
Your love and commitment to each other,
You must be blessed with patience.
In this generation for you to pledge
Your love and commitment to each other
You must be blessed with patience.

Mr. you are about to enter
Your matrimonial home.
Zoaka Kamnda is about to enter
Her matrimonial home.
Mr. you are about to enter
Your matrimonial home.
Zoaka Kamnda is about to enter
Her matrimonial home.
Mr. you are about to enter
Your matrimonial home.

Gwangdi Kujara is about to enter
 Her matrimonial home.
 Mr. you are about to enter
 Your matrimonial home.
 Someone said Miss is about to enter
 Her matrimonial home.

Lady are you about to enter
 Your matrimonial home?
 The lady like tomato is about to enter
 Her matrimonial home.
 Lady are you about to enter
 Your matrimonial home?
 The lady like tomato is about to enter
 Her matrimonial home.)

(Saraya M.D. Waziri)

D 15.

Ya ga ata lukwa kyir nga ashina?
 Kai mallima ka Hyel dlara.
 Ya, ga ata lukwa mbwar nga ashina?
 Ya mallama ka Hyel dlara.

Yeru mjir saida alagiri, wala boni.
 Ata si ja ka giri ngi ngita.
 Yeru mjir saida ala giri wala boni
 Ata si ja ka giri ngi-ngita.

Kyir giri kyir yesu diya,
 AdiKyir duniya wa ka giri sinda.
 Yeru mjir saida ala giri wala
 Boni ata sija ka giri ngi-ngita.

Ya ga ata lukwa kyir nga ashina ya
 Kai mallam ka Hyel dlara.
 Ya ga ata lukwa mbwar nga
 Ashina ya mallama ka Hyel dlara.

Yeru mjir saida ala giri, wala boni
 Ata si ja ka giri ngi-ngita.
 Yeru mjir saida ala giri, wala goni

Ata si ja ka giri ngi-ngita.

Ya, ga ata lukwa kyir nga ashina
 Ya kai mallam, ka Hyel dlara.
 Ya, ga ata lukwa mbwar nga
 Ashina ya mallama, ka Hyel dlara.

Kyir giri kyi Yesu diya, adi
 Kyir duniya wa, ka giri sinda.
 Kyir giri kyi Yesu diya, adi
 Kyri duniya wa ka giri sinda.

Yeru mjiir saida ala giri, wala boni
 Ata si ja ka giri ngi-ngita.
 Yeru mjiir saida ala giri, wala boni
 Ata si ja ka giri ngi-ngita.
 Ya, ga ata lukwa kyir nga ashina
 Ya kai mallam, ka Hyel dlara.
 Ya, ga ata lukwa mbwar nga ashina
 Ya, mallama, ka Hyel dlara.

Yeru mjiir saida ala giri, wala boni
 Ata si ja ka giri ngi-ngita.
 Kyir giri kyi Yesu diya, adi
 Kyir duniya wa, ka giri sinda.

(You are going to enter your
 Matrimonial home today Mrs.
 May God help you.
 You are going to enter your
 Matrimonial home today Mr.
 May God help you.)

We bear your witness
 Even if hardship comes you should endure.
 We bear you witness
 Even if hardship comes you should endure.

Your home belongs to Christ.
 You should know that it is not a worldly home.
 We bear you witness,

Even if hardship comes you should endure.

You are going to enter your
Matrimonial home today Mr.
May God help you.

You are going to enter your
Matrimonial home today Mrs.
May God help you.

We bear you witness
Even if hardship comes you should endure.
We bear you witness
Even if hardship comes you should endure.

You are going to enter your
Matrimonial home today Mr.
May God help you.
You are going to enter your
Matrimonial home today Mrs.
May God help you.

Your home belongs to Christ.
You should know that it is not a worldly home.
Your home belongs to Christ
You should know that it is not a worldly home.

We bear you witness
Even if hardship comes you should endure.
We bear you witness,
Even if hardship comes you should endure.

You are going to enter your
Matrimonial home today Mr.
May God help you.
You are going to enter your
Matrimonial home today Mrs.
May God help you.

We bear you witness,
Even if hardship comes you should endure.
Your home belongs to Christ

You should know that it is not a worldly home.

You are going to enter your
Matrimonial home today Mr.
May God help you.
You are going to enter your
Matrimonial home today Mrs.
May God help you.)
(Saraya M.D. Waziri)

D 16.

Afisawa pila ka mda mbwi diffu.
Pastor karata ali kyi ngata.
Afisawa pila ka mda mbwi diffu
Pastor karata ali kyi ngata.

Ya mada mima diffa mbru msira ala mbru,
Kildzir Babil ni.
Ya madar mima diffa mbru msira ala mbru,
Kildzir Babil ni.

Bzir nkwa ka dakwi diffa da msira ala da,
Kildzir Babil ni.
Bzir nkwa ka dakwi diffa da msira ala da,
Kildzir Babil ni.

Pastor ata nkir gari ka da ngata
Ka hara kithlir ni ka da ndzi akwa kyir nda.
Pastor ata nkir gari ka da ngata
Ka hara kithlir ni ka da ndzi akwa kyir nda.
Pastor ata nkir gari wala mbru
Ata hara kithliu ni, wala mbru na mitipi.
Pastor ata nkir gari wala mbru
Ata hara kithlir ni wala mbru na mitipi.
Ndzi-ndzi giri akwa kujara ni anta
Hara nguka ali, apa kyi ndzi ndzi akwa.
Ndzi-ndzi akwa kujara nda anta
Hara nguka ali apa layi ndzi-ndzi akwa.
Afisawa pila ka mda mbwi diffu
Pastor karata ali kyi ngata.
Afisawa pila ka mda mbwi diffu

Pastor karata ala kyi ngata.
 Shanga mbru na eklisha diffa
 Mbru msira ala mbru, aduaka Hyel dlara.

Pastor ata nkir gari ka da ngata
 Ka hara kithlir ni, kada ndzi akwa kyir nda.

Pastor ata nkir gari ka da ngata
 Ka hara kithlir ni ka da ndzi akwa kyir nda.
 Pastor ata nkir gari ka mbru ngata
 Ka hara kithlir ni wala mbru na fifi.

Ndzi-ndzi akwa kujara nda,
 Ata hara nguka ali apa kyi ndzi-ndzi akwa.
 Ndzi-ndzi akwa kujara ni,
 ata hara nguka ali apa kui ndzi-ndzi akwa.
 Ndzi-ndzi akwa kujara ni ata hara
 Nguka ali kiri ka ndzi-ndzi akwa.

Shanga mbru na Eklisha,
 Diffa mbru msira ala mbru,
 Adua ka Hyel dlara.
 Shanga mbru na member
 Diffa mbru msira ala mbru
 Adua ka Hyel dlara.

(Ephesians says one should have patience.
 Pastor, read it to my hearing.
 Ephesians says one should have patience
 Pastor, read it to my hearing.

Brethren we are happy
 Because this is a wedding based on the Bible.
 Brethren we are happy
 Because this is a wedding based on the Bible.
 The bride and the bridegroom are happy
 Because this is a wedding based on the Bible.

Pastor will preach the Word for them to hear
 And make use of it, so that their marriage can last.

Pastor will preach the Word for them to hear
And make use of it, so that their marriage can last.

Pastor will preach the Word of God
And we too can hear it
And make use of it,
Even though we are here as wedding guests.

I admire you sitting in the bridal chair
I wish I can sit in it.
I admire you sitting on your chair
I wish I can sit inside it.
Ephesians says one should have patience
Pastor, read it to my hearing.
Ephesians says one should have patience
Pastor, read it to my hearing.

All of us Christians we are happy,
Let us pray that God should help them.

Pastor will preach the Word of God for them to hear
And make use of it
So that their marriage can last.
Pastor will preach the Word for them to hear
And make use of it
So that their marriage can last.

Pastor will preach the Word of God
And we too can hear it
And make use of it
Even though we are not newlyweds.

I admire you sitting in the chair
I wish I can sit in it.
I admire you sitting in the chair
I wish I can sit in it.
All of us Church members are happy.

Let us pray that God should help them.
All of us members we are happy
Let us pray that God should help them.)

(Saraya M.D. Waziri)

D 17.

Kildzir nga mallama ka ga ngata,
 Kumshir nga diya aka bzir ni.
 Pastor ni pila ka giri ngata,
 Kyir giri ni ja diya mda ata huni mai.
 Wala kwaba duku ti giri wata
 Ka giri pakta kir ni diya nda ata huri mai.
 Wala kwaba duka ti giri wuta
 Ka giri pakta kir mi diya mda ata wuni mai.
 Wala auna duku ti giri wuta
 Ka giri pakta kir mi diya mda huni mai.

Wuta nkwani ku kitchim ta dzi ka
 Ndsi mamza yelan kumshir nga ku ndzi ndzi
 Aka bzir ni.
 Nkwani ku kitchimta dzi ka ndzi nti hul
 Kumshir nga ka ga ndzi ndzi ndzi aka bzirni.
 Kuceli ku kitchimta dzi ka ndzi mpwahal
 Kumshir ni ku ndzi ndzi aka bzir ni.

Kyir nga ni mallam ti ga wuta,
 Kumshi kara ndzi ndzi ka nkwani.
 Mbwar nga ni mallama ti ga wuta
 Kumshi kara ndzi-ndzi ka bzir ni.

Pastor ni pila ka giri ngata kyir
 Giri ni ja diya mda huni mai.
 Wala kwaba duka ti giri wuta ka
 Giri paktakir mi diya mda huni mai.
 Wala auna duku ti giri wuta ka giri
 Pakta kir mi diya mda huni mai.
 Wala kwaba duku ti giri wuta
 Ka giri pakta kirmi diya mda huni.

Nkwani ku kitchimta dzi ka ndzi
 Yadar ni kumshir nda ku ndzi-ndzi ka bzir ni.
 Bzirni ku kitchimta dzi mamza ntiwal
 Kumshir ni ka da ndzi-ndzi ka nkwani.

(This is your wedding Mrs.

You should be smiling to the young man.
 Pastor has said it to your hearing,
 In your home there should be no selfishness.
 Even if you have only one *kobo*
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.
 Even if you have only one *kobo*
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.
 Even if you have only one measure of grain
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.

See the girl has become clean,
 She has become light in complexion,
 Her smile has attracted the young man.
 The girl has become clean,
 She has become light in complexion.
 Her smile has attracted the young man.
 Kuceli has become clean,
 She has become soft and beautiful.
 Her smile has attracted the young man.

You have now got your own home Mr.
 Rejoice and live together with your wife.
 You have now got your own home Mrs.
 Rejoice and live together with your husband.
 Pastor has said it to your hearing,
 In your home there should be no selfishness.
 Even if you have only one *kobo*
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.
 Even if you have only one measure of grain
 You should both share it,
 Do not be selfish to each other.

The girl has become clean,
 She has become light in complexion.
 Her smile has attracted the young man.
 The boy has become clean
 He has become light in complexion.

His smile has attracted the girl.)
(Saraya M.D. Waziri)

D 18.

Mbru ku tsaptadzi akwa viyir kildzi nda
Mbru ata ra thlipa ala da ndzi-ndzi akwa kyi.
Mbru ku tsaptadzi akwa viyir kildzi ni
Ka mbru ra thlipa ala da ndzi-ndzi akwa kyi.
Mbru ku tsaptadzi akwa viyir kildzi ni ja
Mbru ata ra kumshi ala da gwa-gwa.
Mbru ku tsaptadzi akwa viyir kildzi nda
ka mbru ata ra thlipa alada ndzi-ndzi akwa kyi.

Su adi na msira apa viyir kildzi wa
Hyel ku ndzi adza mbru madar maya.
Su adi na msira apa viyir kildzi mai
Hyel ata ndzi adza mbru madar maya.

Mbru ka tsaptadzi akwa viyir kildzi ni
Mbru ata ra thlipa ala da ndzi-ndzi akwa kyi.
Mbru ka tsaptadzi akwa viyir kildzi ni ja
Mbru ata ra thlipa ala da ndzi-ndzi akwa kyi.

Mbru ku tsaptadzi akwa viyin kildzi ni ja
Ka mbru ata ra kumshi ala da gwa! gwa!
Mbru ku tsaptadzi akwa viyir kildzi ni
Mbru ata ra kumshi alada gwa! gwa!

(We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
We will teach them how to live married life.
We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
We will teach them how to live married life.

They have assembled at the wedding occasion,
We will laugh for them *gwa! gwa!*
We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
We will teach them how to live married life.

Nothing is nicer than a wedding occasion,
God is with us brethren.
Nothing is nicer than a wedding occasion,

God will be with us brethren.

We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will teach them how to live married life.
 We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will teach them how to live married life.
 We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will laugh for them *gwa! gwa!*
 We have assembled at the wedding occasion,
 We will laugh for them *gwa! gwa!*).

(Saraya M.D. Waziri).

D 19.

Mallama kuceli gir msiri, ga adiya
 Dima kirawa ga ku wuta salir nga.
 Mallam Tunde gir msiri ga adiya dima kira wa
 Ga ku wuta mwala nga.

Mallama Kuceli gir msira kata dima kira wa
 Ga ku lukwa mwar nga.
 Mallim Tunde gir msiri ka adiya dima kira wa
 Ga ku wuta kyir nga.

Alkawal ti giri hara ka giri ku hyenti ni,
 Madar mima yeru ata kida giri.
 Mallim Tunde gir msiri ga adiya dima
 Kira wa, ga ku wuta kyir nga.
 Mallama Kuceli gir msiri ga adiya dima
 Kira ga ka wuta salir nga.

Wala mini hara mada giri, giri adiya tsukzdi wa
 Ka giri ndzi akwa kyir giri.
 Alkawal ti giri hara ka giri bilata
 Madar mima yeru ata ka giri.
 Alkawal ti giri hara giri ku hyenta ni
 Madar mima yeru anta hira giri.

(Ms. Kuceli you are fortunate
 Do not worry any longer, you now have a husband.
 Mr. Tunde you are fortunate
 Do not worry any longer, you now have a wife.

Ms. Kuceli you are fortunate,
 Do not worry any longer, you now have a husband.
 Mr. Tunde you are fortunate,
 Do not worry any longer, you now have your own home.
 The promises you made to each other
 Our brethren, we ask you to fulfil them.

Mr. Tunde you are fortunate
 Do not worry any longer, you now have your own home.
 Ms. Kuceli you are fortunate
 Do not worry any longer, you now have your own home.
 No matter what happens between you, do not quarrel,
 Try to be patient and live together in your home.

The promises you made to each other
 You should remembered them, we enjoy you.
 The promises you made to each other
 You have fulfilled them, we love you.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

E. Work Songs

E 1.

Mdir psa ha: Dakwi, dakwi mbru hara kithlir.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah,ka mbru lalata!
 Mdir psa ha: Thankir buji aka bzir dakwi.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah, ka mbru lalata!

Mdir psa ha: Jang ata kuli, jang ata mbula.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah,ka mbru lalata!
 Mdir psa ha: Thankir buji aka bzir dakwi.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah,ka mbru lalata!

(Lead singer: Young men, young men, let us work hard.
 Chorus: Yes, let us dig the ground!
 Lead singer: Leave the lazy young man behind.
 Chorus: Yes, let us dig the ground!

Lead singer: Let phlegm fall on the hoe,

Let mucus fall on the tamarind tree.
 Chorus: Yes, let us dig the ground!
 Lead singer: Leave the lazy young man behind.
 Chorus: Yes, let us dig the ground!)
 (Ndzyeli Hindi)

E 2.

Mdir psa ha: Usa madar maya.
 Mjir dlu ah: Aya!
 Mdir psa ha: Usama ala giri wa.

Mjir dlu ha: Aya!
 Mdir psa ha: Mjir Garkida pila ngwa
 Ka yeru fata affa kuga lali.
 Mjir dlu ha: Aya!

(Lead singer: Thank you my brothers.
 Chorus: Aya!
 Lead singer: Thank you all.
 Chorus: Aya!

Lead singer: Garkida people said
 We should carry our arrows and bows.
 Chorus: Aya!
 (Ndzyeli Hindi)

E 3.

Ya, i kanta heni aka nci
 Ka thlata aviri
 Ka dim dima ar nzi ata wula.
 Ya, i kanta heni akwa nci
 Ka thlata aviri
 Ka hadli mthi aka bzir mara.
 Ya, i kanta heni aka nci
 Ka thlata aviri
 Ka dima yimi aka bzir mara.

Ya, i kanta heni aka nci
 ka thata aviri
 Ka dim dima ar bzir mara.
 Yimi arna kula usa
 Diva arna kula usa

Kula usa akila bzir mara.

(Oh, I deny myself sleep
And stay up all night
To think about the essence of living.
Oh, I deny myself sleep
And stay up all night
To grind corn for my co-wife's son.
Oh, I deny myself sleep
And stay up all night
To fetch some water for my co-wife's son.

Oh, I deny myself sleep
And stay up all night
To think about my co-wife's son.
My drinking water is not appreciated,
My food is not appreciated,
No appreciation from my co-wife's son.)
(Song recited by Zainabu Kubili Lawan)

F. Religious Songs

F 1.

Da pila ngwa tidda mda
Adi na dur nga ngwa.
Mda adi na tira nga wa.
Da pila ngwa Yesu mda
Adi na ndur nga ngwa,
Shang mda di na tira nga ya.

Anabiyayeri laga ku mta a fi akwa di ka hida,
Ama bzir Hyel adi fi akwa di wa.
Kara nari diffa ga aka Yesu na bzir Hyel,
Ka tsa mbanta nga ta biku ar nga.

(They said Father that there is someone
Who is greater than you.
There is no one greater than you.
They said Jesus that there is someone
Who is greater than you.
There is no one greater than you.

Some prophets died, and decayed in their graves
 But the Son of God arose from the grave.
 Give your heart to Jesus the Son of God.
 And he will save you from your sins.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

F 2.

Hyel mthlaku, ma yeru ku sumbwa,
 Kara nzi akwa nca yeru kayeru kita dza nga.
 Hyel mthlaku dluwa addua ar yeru bu,
 Shetan ku ngi ndurku yeru a limari.

Wala mda ana tsara ki nggita ngita,
 I ata usa nga, Yesu mbwi ali diffi
 Wala mda ana hgila ra ki ngi ngita,
 Ya, diffi ni mbwi dzi wa,
 I ata usa nga Yesu mbwi ali diffi.
 I ata usa nga, Yesu mbwi ali diffi.

(Lord Almighty, as we come into your presence
 Please be in our midst, and have mercy on us.
 Lord Almighty, please accept our prayers,
 Satan has set a trap for us.

Even if someone slaps me
 I ask you Jesus to give me patience.
 Even if someone abuses me
 I ask you Jesus to give me patience.
 Oh, it is hard for me to be patient.
 I ask you Jesus to give me patience.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

F 3.

Hyel ata wula nga
 Tsa adi ata ndir wa
 Anti ga anta hara biku.
 Ar Hyel Mthlaku tsa na heni
 Wala ba tipci wala aviri wa
 Ama tsa ana ndirwa.

(God sees you
But does not say anything
So you continue to commit sin.

The Lord Almighty neither sleeps
By day nor by night
But watches in silence.)

(Saraya M.D. Waziri)

F 4.

Mdir psa ha: Hyel ni ku ta,
Ama tsa adi ka ddir wa.
Mji dlu ha: Wha-a! Wha Hyel Mthlaku!
Mdir psa ha: Na ala yeru yimi kaka,
Na ala yeru himi ka yeru sa.
Mjir dlu ha: Wha-a! Wha Hyel Mthlaku!

Mdir psa ha: Na ala yeru yimi Baba,
Na ala yeru yimi ka yeru sa.

Mjir dlu ha: Wha-a! Wha Hyel ragai!

Mdir psa ha: Na ala yeru yimi kaka,
Aiye shimwi akwa nci.

Mjir dlu ha: Wha-a! Wha Hyel Mthlaku!

Mdir psa ha: Madar nkyer ata tiwa yimi
Hyel tidda.

Mjir dlu ha: Wha-a! Wha Hyel ragai!

Na ala yeru yimi kaka,

Mdir psa ha: Na ala yeru yimi ka yeru sa.

Mjir dlu ha: Wha-a! Wha Hyel tidda.

(Lead singer: The sky is cloudy,
But there is no sound of thunder.

Chorus: Oh! Oh God Almighty!

Lead singer: Give us water Grandfather,
Give us water to drink.

Chorus: Oh! Oh God!

Lead singer: Give us water; there are tears
In my eyes.

Chorus: Oh! Oh God Almighty!

Lead singer: Children are crying for water
God our Father.

Chorus: Oh! Oh God!
 Lead singer: Give us water Grandfather.
 Give us water to drink.
 Chorus: Oh! Oh God our Father!)
 (Song recited by Zainabu Kubili Lawan)

F 5.

Mbru ata thivir su wa,
 Ndir akwa karkadu ka mbru nkira zhari.
 Mbru ata thivir wa,
 ndir akwa karkadu ka mbru nkira kula zhari.

Ka namta ra apa dika,
 Ki dlarha duniya ki ra nkir ndir Yesu.
 Ma i ani pirdu i ata punkir dzi
 aka duniya ka da ngata ndir Yesu.

Ma i dlu baptisma i ata dlar ha
 Shanga duniya ki nkir ndir Yesu.
 Ka namtara apa dika ki dlar ha duniya,
 Ki nkir ndir Yesu.

(Let us not be afraid,
 Let us preach the Word in the Bible
 Without ceasing.

I wish I am like a bird
 So that I can fly around the world
 And preach about Jesus.
 If I were a fog I will cover the whole world
 So that they can hear about Jesus.

When I become baptized I will go around the world
 And preach about Jesus.

I wish I am like a bird
 So that I can fly around the world
 And preach about Jesus.
 If I were a fog I will cover the whole world
 So that they can hear about Jesus.)

(Shetu Gwangndi)

F 6.

Ma labir ar Hyel ni ku lata ayi akwa diffi,
 Shanga su akwa duniya ya thlivir wa.
 Ma labir Hyel ni ku lata kyi akwa diffi,
 Shanga su akwa duniya ya thlivir wa.

Labir ar Hyel ni adi mzhira diya mi,
 Ana ka mda jakta ali damwa.
 Labir ar Hyel ni adi mzhira diya mi,
 apa ka mda jakta ali damwa.

Ma labir ar Hyel ni ku lata kyi akwa diffi,
 Shanga su akwa duniya ya thlivir wa.
 Ma labir ar Hyel ni ku lata kyi akwa diffi,
 Shanga su akwa duniya ni ya thlivir wa.

Labir ar Hyel ni adi mzhira diya mi,
 Ana ka mda jakta ali damwa.
 Labir ar Hyel ni adi mzhira shang ya,
 Apa ka mda jakta ali damwa.

(When the Word of God dwells in my heart,
 I do not fear anything in this world.
 When the Word of God dwells in my heart,
 I do not fear anything in this world.)

The Word of God is not enough for me,
 I want to be given more.
 The Word of God is not enough for me,
 I want to be given more.

The Word of God dwells in my heart,
 I do not fear even the suffering in this world.
 The World of God dwells in my heart
 I do not fear even the suffering in this world.)

(Saraya M.D. Waziri)

F 7.

Asir giri mjir Yesu ka mbru hamta jiri
 Aka bzir Hyel,
 Duniya akwa tawara.
 Asir giri madar muma ka mbru hamta jiri
 Aka bzir Hyel
 Duniya akwa kingira.
 Asir giri mjir Yesu ka mbru hamta jiri
 Aka bzir Hyel,
 Duniya akwa tawara.

Ma mbru hamta jiri, sheriya adi akwa mbru wa,
 Mbru ata livi adza bzir Hyel.
 Ma mbru hamta jiri, sheriya adi akwa mbru wa,
 Mbru ata livi adza bzir Hyel.

Wala ga akwa boni tsu ga ata mta,
 Ga tubi ka ga mwari adza Yesu?
 Wala ga akwa boni tsu ga ata mta,
 Ga tubi ka ga mwari adza Yesu?
 Ga ani ka arziki tsu ga ata mta,
 Ga tubi ka ga mwari adza Yesu ?

Asir giri mjir Yesu ka mbru hamta jiri aka bzir Hyel
 Duniya akwa kingira.
 Asir giri madar muma ka mbru hamta jiri
 Aka bzir Hyel
 Duniya akwa tawara.

Ma mbru hamta jiri sheriya adi akwa mbru wa,
 Mbru ata livi adza bzir Hyel.
 Ma mbru hamta jiri sheriya adi akwa mbru wa,
 Mbru ata livi adza bzir Hyel.

(Come all Christians and let us believe
 In the Son of God
 Because the world is turning.
 Come all Christians and let us believe
 In the Son of God
 Because the world is shaking.
 Come all Christians and let us believe

In the Son of God
 Because the world is turning.
 If we believe there will be no judgement against us,
 We will go home and be with the Son of God.
 If we believe there will be no judgement against us,
 We will go home and be with the Son of God.
 Even if you are poor you will still die.
 Why don't you repent
 So that you can go and meet Jesus?
 Even if you are wealthy you will still die.
 Why don't you repent
 So that you can go and meet Jesus?

Come Christians and let us believe in the Son of God
 Because the world is shaking.
 Come Christians and let us believe in the Son of God
 Because the world is turning.
 If we believe there will be no judgement against us,
 We will go home and be with the Son of God.
 If we believe there will be no judgement against us,
 We will go home and be with the Son of God.)
 (Saraya M.D. Waziri)

F 8.

Zumunta mata shang mbru ka talentu
 Ka mbru hara kithlir bzir Hyel.
 Zumunta mata shanga mbru ka talentu,
 Ka mbru hara kithlir bzir Hyel.
 Mbru na member shanga mbru ka talentu
 Ka mbru hara kithlir bzir Hyel.

Yesu kita talentu ka na ala ga,
 Ga kithlir wa ga ata wuta ribar dlumi?
 Mda na ku ngita ka hara kithlir ka talentu,
 Tsa ata wuta ribar bzir Hyel.
 Mda na ku ngita ka hara kithlir ka talentu,
 Tsa ata wuta ribar bzir Hyel.

Zumunta mata shanga mbru ka talentu,
 Ka mbru hara kithlir bzir Hyel.
 Shilir member shanga giri ka talentu,

Ka giri hara kithlir bzir Hyel.
 Yesu kita talentu ka na alaga,
 Ga kithlir wa ga ata wuta ribar dlu mi?
 Yesu kita talentu ka na alaga,
 Ga kithlir wa ga ata wuta ribar dlu me?
 Ma mda na ku ngita ka hara kithlir ka talentu,
 Tsa ata wuta ribar bzir Hyel.

(Christian women we all have talents,
 Let us do the work of the Son of God.
 Christian women we all have talents,
 Let us do the work of the Son of God.
 All of us members have talents,
 Let us do the work of the Son of God.

Jesus took a talent and gave it to you
 If you do not works with it,
 How do expect to get a reward?
 Someone who works with her talent
 Will get a reward from the Son of God.
 Someone who work with his talent
 Will get some reward from the Son of God.

Christian women we all have talents,
 Let us do the work of the Son of God.
 Christian men you all have talents,
 You should do the work of the Son of God.

Jesus took a talent and gave it to you
 If you do not work with it,
 How do expect to get some reward?
 Jesus took a talent and gave it to you
 If you do not work with it,
 How do you expect to get some reward?
 Someone who works with her talent
 Will get a reward from the Son of God.)
 (Saray M.D. Waziri)

F 9.

Naha taku i akwa dzama, i akwa dzama.
 I akwa dzama ata kira miri?

Naha taku i akwa dzama, i akwa dzama.
 I akwa dzama ata kira miri?
 Aiye nkwar maya ga akwa dzama, ga akwa dzama.
 Ga akwa dzama ata kira miri?
 Aiye bzir maya ga akwa dzama, ga akwa dzama.
 Ga akwa dzama ata kira miri?

Yesu ku ndari boni anti tsa nggita,
 Anti mbru ata namtari apa sur gyeli ya?
 Yesu ku ndari boni anti tsa nggita,
 Anti mbru ata namtari apa sur gyeli ya?
 Tsa ndari boni anti tsa dlu dika.

Tsa dlu kamnyar na kamnyar nga.
 Tsa ndari boni anti tsa dlu kusa.
 Tsa dlu kamnyer na kamnyar nga.
 Yesu ku ndar boni anti tsa dlu mta.
 Tsa dlu kamnyar na kamnyar nga.
 Yesu ku ndari boni anti tsa dlu mta.
 Tsa dlu kamnyar na kamnyar nga.

Naha taku i akwa dzama, i akwa dzama.
 I akwa dzama ata kira miri?
 Aiye nkwar maya ga akwa dzama, ga akwa dzama.
 Ga akwa dzama ata kira miri?
 Aiye bzir maya ga akwa dzama, ga akwa dzama.
 Ga akwa dzama ata kira miri?

Yesu ku ndari boni anti tsa nggita,
 anti mbru ata mantari apa sur gyeli ya?
 Tsa ndari boni anti tsa dlu dika.
 Tsa dlu kamnyar na kamnyar nga.
 Yesu ku ndari boni anti tsa dlu kusa.
 Tsa dlu kamnyar na kamnyar nga.

(Yesterday in the night I was thinking, I was thinking.
 What was I thinking about?
 Yesterday in the night I was thinking, I was thinking.
 What was I thinking about?
 Oh my sister you are thinking, you are thinking.
 What are you thinking about?)

Oh my brother you are thinking, you are thinking.
What are you thinking about?

Jesus suffered and He endured
And we turned His suffering into a joke?
Jesus suffered and He endured
And we turned His suffering into a joke?

He suffered and He was beaten.
He receive it because of me and because of you.
He suffered and He was nailed.
He received it because of you and because of me.
Jesus suffered and He died.
He received it because of me and because of you.
Jesus suffered and He died.
He received it because of you and because of me.

Yesterday in the night I was thinking,
I was thinking.
What was I thinking about?
Oh my sister you are thinking, you are thinking.
What are you thinking about?
Oh my brother you are thinking, you are thinking.
What are you thinking about?
Jesus suffered and He endured,

And we turned His suffering into a joke?
He suffered and He was beaten.
He received it because of me and because of you.
Jesus suffered and He was nailed.
He received it because of me and because of you.)
(Shetu Alasa)

F 10.

Mda na ata bara mpika
Ma ga ku ngata ar Babil ni,
Ga adiya zhari wa.
Mda na ata bara mpika
Maga ku ngata ndir ar Babil ni,
Kara dzama.

Mda na ku ngiti ni, tsa ata livi adza ni.
 Tsa ku msira ka boni akwa uuh mba mba.
 Mji na ngiti ni, da ata livi adza ni.
 Da ata msira ka boni akwa uuh mba mba.
 Ama ma mwa ku gyeli mwa ku hara asar.
 Mwa ku hara asar aka mambilir mwa.
 Ama ma mwa ku zhari mwa ku hara asar.
 Mwa ku hara asar ka mambilir mwa.

Mda na ata bara mpika
 Ma ga ani ngata ndir ar Babil ni,
 Ga adiya zhari wa.
 Mda na ata bara mpika
 Ma ga ani ngata ndir ar Babil ni,
 Ka ra dzama.

Mda na ku ngiti ni, tsa ata livi adza ni.
 Tsa ku msiri ka boni akwa uuh mba mba.
 Ama ma mwa ku zhari mwa ku hara asar.
 Mwa hara asar ka mpika mwa.

(Somebody who wants to have everlasting life
 If you hear the Word from the Bible
 You should not reject it.
 Somebody who wants to have everlasting life
 If you hear the injunctions from the Bible
 You should think.

Somebody who endures will go and be with Him.
 She will be free from suffering in hell.
 Those who endure will go and meet Him.
 They will be free from suffering in hell.
 But if we play with it we will lose.
 We will cause our soul to lose.
 But if we reject it we will lose.
 We will lose our lives.

Somebody who wants everlasting life
 If you hear the Word from the Bible
 You should not reject it.
 Somebody who wants everlasting life

If you hear the Word from the Bible
You should think.

Somebody who endures will go and be with Him.
She will be free from suffering in hell.
But if we reject it we will lose.
We will lose our lives.)

(Saraya M.D. Waziri)

G. Political Songs

G 1.

Giri ni giri mji wa.
Giri na abila ahar Biu ni
Giri ana zhari sur mji wa.

Wala jaka murfa anti ga kita
Ka nari alada
Diya da ngalari mai.

(You are not nice people.
You over there in Biu.
You do not leave people's property alone.

Even if you take seven bags of money
And give it to them.
They will not refuse.)
(Sakdiya Sakwa)

G 2.

Bura adi ka tira nga ya,
Bzir Tanga.
Bura adi ka tira nga yaSaji.

Mayar nga ku si ya,
Bura Tanga?
Yernga ku si ya Saji?
(You are a complete Bura man,
You are from Tanga.
You are a complete Bura man, Saji.

Has your mother come,
 Bura from Tanga?
 Has your father come Saji?
 (Sakdiya Sakwa)

G 3.

Pila giri aka mjir NPN,
 Yeru ata bara fugum.
 Pila giri aka mjir NPN,
 Yeru ata bara GNPP.

Yeru adi ata bira Pinau wa,
 yeru ata bara fugum gogulaku.
 Yeru ata hira NPN wa,
 Yeru ata bara GNPP.
 Mjir NPN da ana hila.

(Tell NPN members,
 We want the rooster.
 Tell NPN members,
 We want GNPP.

We do not want maize,
 We want the big rooster.
 We do not want NPN,
 We want GNPP.
 NPN members are thieves.)
 (Song recited by Patima Gwangndi)

G 4.

Mtika ata wu hyel aka ngurdiki.
 Mandankyar ata tuwa aka ngurdiki.
 Ngurdikini a jakta simfa ya?

Kwi ata tuwa aka ngurdiki.
 Tima ata tuwa aka ngurdiki.
 Ngurdiki ni a jakta simfa ya?

(Chickens are cursing the cripple.
 Children are crying to the cripple.
 Will the cripple still live long?)

Goats are crying to the cripple.
 Sheep are crying to the cripple.
 Will the cripple still live long?
 (Song recited by Mavi Dzarma)

G 5.

Lilu ni abila ahar Hyera.
 I ata tuwa kwiyyir na.

Kwi na akwa dlima ni
 Ata kira muta!

Kwi na akwa dlima ni
 Ata kira muta!
 Fa giri kwaja diya!

(The screaming is in Hyera.
 I am crying for my goats.
 The goats in the hut
 Are for an orphan!

The goats in the hut
 Are for an orphan!
 Carry your arrow sheaths!
 (Song recited by Mavi Dzarma)

G 6.

Pila giri aka Bura
 Ka da dima yimi
 Ka thlir laku wa.
 Ka giri pila aka Bura
 Ka da dima yimi ka ama laku wa.

Gwamna ni suari
 Apa bzir mamza shiktika
 Ama mbru a ngita ni wa.

Gwamna ngini suari
 Apa bzir mamza shiktika
 Ama mbru a ngita ni wa miri?

(Tell the Bura people
 They should not fetch water
 And tar the roads.
 You should tell the Bura people
 They should not fetch water
 And tar the roads.

The Governor is tiny
 Like a newborn baby
 But we can't resist him.

This Governor is tiny
 Like a newborn baby
 Why can't we resist him?)
 (Song recited by Mavi Dzarma)

G 7.

Ndajara ya,
 I pila alaga kara mwari wa
 Ga si nggita ni wa.

Yerima ni nca ri apa ar tsingi.
 Nca ri apa jarjar ata sibila
 Sakati viri ata kura.

(Oh Ndajara,
 I told you not to go
 Because you may not withstand him.

The Yerima has eyes like a loin's.
 His eyes are like morning star
 Coming out at dawn.
 (Song recited by Mavi Dzarma)

G 8.

Mjir Maiduguri ma suna anfani forestri.
 Mutane England ma suna anfani forestri.
 Anfani forestri ya-ah,
 Anfani forestri.

Mjir England da akwa anfani forestri.
 Mjir Canada da ata anfani forestri.
 Mjir America ma da akwa anfani forestri.
 Anfani forestri ya-ah.
 Anfani forestri.

(Even Maiduguri people value forestry.
 Even people in England value forestry.
 Forestry is valuable.
 Forestry is valuable.)

People in England value forestry.
 People in Canada value forestry.
 Even people in American value forestry.
 Forestry is valuable.
 Forestry is valuable.)
 (Saji Pindar)

H. Children's Game Songs and Rhymes

H 1.

Mdir psa ha: Mamshi ka mamshi.
 Mjir dlu ha: Mamshi!
 Mdir psa ha: Mda ka mamshi?
 Mjir dlu ha: Mamshi!
 Mdir psa ha: Taku ka mamshi?
 Mjir dlu ha: Mamshi!
 Mdir psa ha: Kila ka mamshi?
 Mjir dlu ha: Mamshi!
 Mdir psa ha: Mtika ka mamshi?
 Mjir dlu ha: Mamshi!
 Mdir psa ha: Thla ka mamshi?
 Mjir dlu ha: Mamshi!
 Mdir psa ha: Pela ka mamshi?

(Lead singer: Blood, has blood.
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A human being has blood?
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A horse has blood?)

Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A dog has blood?
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A chicken has blood?
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A cow has blood?
 Chorus: Blood!
 Lead singer: A stone has blood?
 (Song recited by Patima Gwangndi)

H 2.

Mjir kuga: Ka yeru mwari ya?
 Mjir amsa: Awa!
 Mjir kuga: Ka yeru mwari ya?
 Mjir amsa: Awa!

Mjir kuga: Ka yeru mwari ya?
 Mjir amsa: Awa!
 Mjir kuga: Ka yeru mwari ya?
 Mjir amsa: E-a-y!

(Call: Should we go?
 Response: No!
 Call: Should we go?
 Response: No!
 Call: Should we go?
 Response: No!
 Call: Should we go?
 Response: Y-e-s!)

(Song recited by Patima Gwangndi)

H 3.

Mdir psa ha: Kilar na kajantanga
 Ama tsa ana kal wa.
 Mjir dlu ha: Sai ga!
 Mdir psa ha: Kilar na kajantanga
 Ama tsa ana kal wa.
 Mjir dlu ha: Sai ga!
 Mdir psa ha: Kilar an kajantanga
 Ama tsa ana kal wa.
 Mjir dlu ha: Sai ga!

(Lead singer: My dog is very thin
But it doesn't bite.

Chorus: Only you!

Lead singer: My dog is very thin
But it doesn't bite.

Chorus: Only you!

Lead singer: My dog is very thin
But it doesn't bite.

Chorus: Only you!)

(Song recited by Patima Gwangndi)

H 4.

Mdir psa ha: Dika ya.

Mjir dlu ha: Aya wa!

Mdir psa ha: Dika ya, dika pazhi.

Mjir dlu ha: Aya pazhir na!

Mdir psa ha: Kara kata ni.

Mjir dlu ha: Aya wa!

Mdir psa ha: Kara kata dakwi ala mwa.

Mjir dlu ha: Ay a pzhi ar na!

(Lead singer: Dika ya.

Chorus: Oh yes!

Lead singer: Oh, Dika my friend.

Chorus: Oh, yes my friend.

Lead singer: Try and hook him.

Chorus: Oh yes!

Lead singer: Try and hook a boy for us.

Chorus: Oh yes, my friend.)

(Song recited by Patima Gwangndi)

H 5.

Mdir psa ha: Tsa ahira pira wa.

Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!

Mdir psa ha: Ka giri wula ni ali.

Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!

Mdir psa ha: Tsa hira pira wa.

Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!

Mdir psa ha: Ka giri wula ni wa.

Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!

Mdir psa ha: Kira ri ka didi.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Ka giri wula ni ali.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Nca ri ka didi.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ah!
 Mdir psa ha: Ka giri wula ni.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Thirari ka didi.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Ka giri wula ni.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Sila ri ka didi.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Ka giri wula ni.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Tsi yari ka didi.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!
 Mdir psa ha: Ka giri wula ni.
 Mjir dlu ha: Ah-ha!

(Lead singer: He does not like bathing.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: He does not like bathing.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him for me.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His head is dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him for me.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His eyes are dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His teeth are dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!

Lead singer: His legs are dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: His hands are dirty.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!
 Lead singer: Look at him.
 Chorus: Ah-ha!)

(Marama Primary School pupils)

H 6.

Kumshi, Kumshi.
 Dinar ar liya, dinar ar liya
 Ta diva ar mwala.
 Mayer mwa diya,
 Nkwar kuhi, nkwar Yamta.
 Nkwa arna nzi mbwa azi.
 Nkwar Dikwa.
 Ga ata kumshi miri?
 I ata kumshi get, get!
 Su akwa zhabi ar nga
 Ata tuwa apa jijitu!

(Smile, smile,
 Silver metal, silver metal.
 Woman's cooking.
 Our mother.
 King's daughter, daughter of Yamta.
 My daughter who lives in this room,
 Daughter of Dikwa clan.
 What are you laughing at?
 I am laughing loudly!
 There is something in your cover-let,
 Crying like a bird!)

(Song recited by Zainabu Kubili Lawan)

APPENDIX TWO

List of Primary Sources

The following is a list of individuals who are the sources of my primary data. Details about these tradition bearers are provided, indicating their names, gender, where they come from; who are songmakers and singers and who are not songmakers but active bearers of Bura folksongs, and those with whom I conducted formal interviews. Their names are written alphabetically, each starting with the person's last name. "M" stands for Male and "F" stands for Female.

- Alasa, Shetu: (F), from Marama, songmaker and singer.
Audu, Anthony: (M), from Labu, songmaker and singer, an interviewee.
Audu, Awa: (F), from Kidang, songmaker and singer
Audu, Naomi: (F), from Shaffa, active bearer of Bura folksongs.
Audu, Yawulda: (F), from Kidang, songmaker and singer
Bauda, Ashetu: (F), from Pakilama, songmaker and singer
Bishi, Bukar: (M), from Shaffa, drummer.
Boaja, Usman: (M), from Gusi, songmaker and singer, interviewee.
Buma, Audu: (M), from Mbuma, songmaker and singer.
Dzarma, mavi: (F), from Kidang, active bearer of Bura folksongs.
Gwangndi, Patima: (F), from Kidang, active bearer of Bura folksongs.
Gwangndi, Hanatu: (F), from Huma, active bearer of Bura folksongs.
Gwodzang, Musa: (M), from Gwodzang, songmaker and singer, interviewee.
Haman, Kayanga: (F), from Marama, songmaker and singer.
Hamidu, Hauwa: (F), from Kidang, songmaker and singer.
Hindi, Ndzyeli: (F), from Bwala Katsina, active bearer of Bura folksongs.
Kalabar, Elizabeth: (F), from Laraba, songmaker and singer.
Lawan, Zainabu Kubili: (F), from Kidang, active bearer of Bura folksongs.
Lokoja, Bata: (M), from Lokoja, songmaker and singer.
Mbilari, Jirbi: (M), from Laraba, drummer.
Milala, Gunda: (M), from Milala, songmaker and singer.
Malgwi, Dauda Thlama: (M), from Kidang, active bearer of Bura folksongs.
Malgwi, Ya Thlama: (M), from Kidang, songmaker and singer.
Mhita, Saidu: (M), from Humusu, songmaker and singer.
Mthigina, Shangadzira: (F), from Kidang, songmaker and singer.
Musa, Mwajim: (F), from Kidang, active bearer of Bura folksongs.
Musamdiya, Shetu: (F), from Pakilama, songmaker and singer.
Ndajara, Audu: (M), from Buma, songmaker and singer.
Pakilama, Abori: (M), from Pakilama, songmaker and singer.
Pindar, Saji: (M), from Dikira, songmaker and singer.
Pwasi, Avi: (M), from Pwasi, songmaker and singer.

Sakwa, Sakdiya: (M), from Sakwa, flute player.

Waziri, Saraya Mwarinkir D.: (F), from Marama, songmaker and singer, interviewee.

Yerima, Uma: (F), from Kidang, songmaker and singer.

Zoaka, Yankirda: (F), from Kidang, songmaker and singer.

TRANSCRIPTIONS OF INTERVIEWS WITH FOUR REPRESENTATIVE BURA FOLKSINGERS

Interviewee is identified by his or her first name. Interviewer is also identified by her first name. Interviews were conducted in the Bura language and translated in English. I decided not to document the Bura version to save space. With the exception of the interview with Usman Boaja, all other interviews were recorded on tape. I could not record my interview with Usman Boaja on tape because the tape recorder broke down one or two minutes into the interview, and there was no facilities for repairs. I wrote down our conversation in my notebook.

Interview 1

Name of informant: Musa Gwoadzang
 Gender: Male
 Religion: Islam
 Home town: Gwoadzang
 Place of interview: Gwoadzang town.
 Date: 31 December 1994.
 Subject: His songmaking and performance
 Interviewer: Zainab Haruna

Zainab: Please I want you to tell me your name.

Musa: My name is Musa Gwoadzang.

Zainab: I also want you to tell me the name of your hometown.

Musa: Gwoadzang.

Zainab: The same as your surname?

Musa: Yes. As you know, some people like to be called by the names of their hometowns.

Zainab: How old are you?

- Musa: I am thirty-two years old.
- Zainab: How many wives do you have?
- Musa: I have three wives.
- Zainab: What are their names?
- Musa: One of them is called Shetu, another one is also called Shetu, the other one is called Patti. [Laughter]
- Zainab: What do you enjoy doing most?
- Musa: I enjoy performing music.
- Zainab: Do you consider music performance to be your favourite occupation?
- Musa: Yes!
- Zainab: What kind of music do you perform?
- Musa: I perform *Yakandi* [banjo] music.
- Zainab: What other work do you do ?
- Musa: I farm guinea corn (surghom), maize and groundnut (peanut).
- Zainab: Since you said that your favourite work is performing music, can you describe to me when and how you first started to perform music?
- Musa: From the time when I started to perform music to date, it is now about twenty years. But from the time I started performing outside a house for the public at ceremonies is about twenty-seven years now.
- Zainab: Why did you decide to become a musician?
- Musa: At that time we used to go and listen to musicians when they were performing. I noticed the musicians could praise the ladies whom they love, or their friends through songs. At times when the musicians got tired and decided to go for a break so that they could rest, I would take their *yakandi* and I would start to play it. In this way, people realized that I

could become a musician. So, at music events, sometimes when a musician goes on break members of the audience would ask me to take the musician's *yakandi* instrument and perform for the musician comes back from break. I performed music bit by bit for two years. During those two years of my minor musical performances, some people became interested in my music. So, after the two years, some people started to invite me to their houses to perform music for them. In the third year, I started going outside to perform music publicly for large audiences. In the year I started my public musical performance, I performed music in eight different wedding ceremonies. I was invited to perform music on those wedding occasions. From there my music career continued to progress. Since then I have performed music not only on wedding occasions but also on other occasions such as funeral ceremonies, *hirdi* and Muslim *Sallah* celebrations.

Zainab: Please, tell me how you are invited to perform music at social occasions such as wedding ceremony, funeral ceremony and installation of a new ruler.

Musa: For instance, during Muslim *Sallah* celebrations such as the Eid-El-Kabir, the village heads are all invited to Biu town to participate in the celebration. Usually, every village head will tell the musicians in his area of jurisdiction to accompany him to the *Sallah* celebration at Biu. Like other musicians, I will accompany my village head and we will lodge in the same place. On the first night of our arrival, in Biu, we will perform music in the place where our village head is staying. But the following night, all the musicians will perform music in front of the emir's palace. Every musician will look for a strategic spot where he could perform. During this occasion, we, the musicians will sometimes number up to twenty. That musician will perform there, that musician will perform there and this musician will perform here. And, you know, each musician will want his performance to be the best or to attract the largest audience. From the size of our audiences and their levels of patronage, we can assess as to whether or not we are doing well in our music. When you see a large audience listening to your music, you will also realize that these people will like to invite you to other occasions to perform music for them. They will want you to be the performing musician at for them at occasions such as their weddings. This is how we get invitations.

Zainab: In this case, one can say that *Sallah* celebration is one of the occasions to which you are invited to perform.

- Musa: Yes.
- Zainab: You have also revealed that you perform at wedding ceremonies.
- Musa: Definitely!
- Zainab: Please give me examples of the towns and villages where you have been invited to perform music at wedding ceremonies.
- Musa: I have performed music in wedding ceremonies in Biu, Miringa, Lokoja, Kubo, Kwaya, Bura, and even weddings in my hometown. I have also performed music at Garkida.
- Zainab: Do you perform music at both Muslim and Christian weddings?
- Musa: I perform at Muslim wedding ceremonies and Christian wedding ceremonies. You know, a Christian wedding is usually accompanied with musical performances. In some Muslim weddings, musical performances are not allowed. But there are some Muslims whose weddings include musical performances. On such occasions, I am invited to perform. During the performance, the bride and the groom will be asked to come to come and listen to the music. The bride and the groom will sit in the audience and listen to the music. When I start performing, a time comes when the bride will be asked to dance *hadla* and she will dance. If many people in the audience are enjoying your music you will know it through the way they give gifts to you.
After the bride has danced, herself, the groom and their friends will remain in the audience and continue to listen to the music. Sometimes we will perform until the following morning at about 7 am.
- Zainab: Some musicians tend to fix certain amount of money to be given to them as invitation fees. Sometimes they demand for items such as clothes or foods. What is your policy regarding your invitations?
- Musa: Sometimes one can fix invitation fees. But if you make it a policy not to perform for someone who can not pay the fixed amount of money I feel this is not proper. You see, everybody's financial capability is different. Someone might pay the invitation fee but if you do not receive a lot of gifts during the performance that is not good, you know. But if you go to perform at an occasion and you are rewarded with money during the

performance, even if the invitation fee given to you is less than the amount you fixed you will not mind. In the past when I first started performing music, money was more valuable than it is today. As you can see, today's money does not have much value. But in the past if someone says to you "five pounds" that means a lot of money. Today, if someone decides to give you one thousand Naira, the amount has less value than the five pounds which you received in the past. So, in the past, my first invitation fee was five pounds. Then it increased to two hundred Naira and to three hundred Naira. There had also been a four hundred Naira invitation fee. Therefore, while certain musicians will not accept money which is less than the amount of invitation fees they fixed, I do not do that. If the person inviting me is able to give me the amount of money which I fixed, thanks be to God. But if not, I do not bother. After all there are certain work which one does which can not be paid. Even if people do not give me gifts during the music performance I will still perform from night until dawn. That is it.

Zainab: From the time you started performing music to date, have you ever been invited to perform on funeral occasions?

Musa: Yes, I have.

Zainab: Have ever considered quitting the music profession, perhaps when you felt you were not benefitting much from it?

Musa: No, no. I have never thought of quitting.

Zainab: Now I want you to tell me the topics which you sing about.

Musa: If a person dies and I am invited to perform at his or her funeral, it is necessary for me eulogies and songs that will console the mourners. For instance, I can tell the person whose father died or whose father died not to mourn too much. There is a limit to every human experience. I will say that bereavement is not only one person's experience. it can happen to anyone. As it has happened to the bereaved today, it will happen to someone else tomorrow. With these thoughts about human experience instilled in the minds of the mourners, they will be comforted and interact with the people who have come for the funeral to express their condolences to the bereaved. There people who come to funeral occasions mainly to listen to my music or to be participant audience. I will also try to meet these people's needs. If my music does not comfort the people who are grieving, even the children of the deceased will not be encouraged to give me gifts.

But if I sing good songs the bereaved will stop grieving and join the rest in enjoying the performance.

Zainab: What about performing at wedding ceremonies?

Musa: During wedding ceremonies, there are certain themes which I sing about. Usually, at a wedding ceremony, the groom is happy because he has just gotten married, unless if there are problems during the wedding ceremony such as poor attendance or people are not willing to give gifts during the performance. The groom will feel unhappy. He will think that probably he is not a nice person that is why not many people attend his wedding. But if the groom has been nice to people, has participated in other people's wedding ceremonies, many people will attend his own wedding ceremony. Many people will be willing to give generous gifts at the ceremony and make the wedding day a happy day for the bride and the groom. I will praise the groom and make him feel happy. I will say that he is enjoying. Sometimes you also notice a change in the bride's behaviour. She will be rejoicing, and this makes me think that the bride is also happy and is enjoying my music performance.

Zainab: When performing at a wedding ceremony, do you give the bride and the groom advice?

Musa: Yes I do. On wedding occasions I sing songs that are related to wedding. I tell the bride and the groom that a married couple sometimes have marital problems. But if each of the couple exercises patience with each other, the joy of the marriage will eventually come. I also tell the bride that a man of ten marries a woman because he loves her, but if problem develops in the marriage, the husband may be abusive to his wife. If the wife does not exercise some patience they will soon divorce. So I tell the bride through songs that she should try and relate properly with her husband so that they can live happily. As for the groom, I tell him that it is not making the wedding vow that matters but his ability to love his wife, treat his wife well and make the marriage succeed that is more important. So I give the bride and the groom advice on successful marriage. That they should love each other so that their marriage can be successful as achieved by other married couples. Whatever they do to each other if not with love that thing will not be pleasing. So it is necessary for the husband and his wife to love each other. So, I sing about love and I advise the new couple to love each other very much. Neither one of them should be abusive to the other partner. If you marry a woman and she abuses your mother, this is bad. So I say in my

song that if a wife abuses her mother in-law there is no need for the man to keep that woman as his wife. Also if a husband verbally abuses his mother in-law there is no need to be a wife to that man. So, I do point out these issues to them through songs.

Zainab: What about politics? Do you sing songs about politics?

Musa: Yes I do. I compose and sing political songs during the time of campaigning for political elections. Any politician who comes to me and tells me that he is campaigning for election on the platform of a particular political party, I will make sure that I compose and sing songs that will persuade my listeners to vote for him. I will portray the party to which the person belongs as the best party. This is because you know, if the person is not elected I might be held responsible for it. If another politician also comes to me and asks me to compose and sing a song that will ensure his victory during the election, I will not refuse his request. Rather, as I did to the other politician, I will try my best to compose and sing a song that will persuade listeners to the song to vote for him. If I do not do the same thing for him, people will say that I am supporting one of the political parties and rejecting the other parties. If my client is not elected people will say it was my fault. So I try to support the two politicians. Even if there are two or three political parties I will not chose one and say that I am supporting it. Even if my client is the leader of his party I will not support his party. I have to show that I am neutral. If this party wins it is good for me, if that party wins it is good for me as well.

Zainab: Thank you. Now I want you to tell me how you compose your songs.

Musa: In some places you will see that musicians compose the songs which they are going to sing a day before the event. But in our area we do not do it that way. This is because, sometimes, when a person invites you to sing for him or her and you prepare the things you are going to say about him or her in your mind prior to the occasion, when you get there you may discover that the ideas you have in mind are not appropriate for the person. So, it is when I am performing and the person comes to me and starts giving gifts or stands in front of me that I will compose and sing songs about the person. Also, if I look at the audience I can identify a person whom I think can give me gifts, so I will compose a praise song about that individual. If I notice that the person is neat I will mention in my song that this person is neat. Furthermore, I will expect that if one goes to the person's house, one will find that the person's house looks good, so I will

praise the person's house. As result, whatever the person has, he or she will give it to me as my reward for praising him or her through song. Also, a certain individual may come to my musical performance, and the moment I see the person in the audience I can tell that the person is a motor driver. A person may come and stand in front of me when I am performing, and if I look at the person, I will know that the person is a tailor. So, I will compose and sing a song for the person about tailoring profession. Another person will come to me and the moment I look at him I will know that the person is a farmer. When you are coming towards me to ask me to sing a song for you, I will observe you and will start thinking of about the kind of person you are: your physical appearance, character, social status, profession, economic status, marital status and religion. Then I will mention and praise one, two or three of these qualities in a song. At least one of the three attributes I mentioned in the song will be applicable to you, and this will make you feel happy.

- Zainab: I noticed that when you are performing you rarely look at your audience. Then how do you study your audience and know their professions or personalities?
- Musa: There is no one who comes to listen to my music that I do not look at him or her.
- Zainab: But this is not obvious because you do not make people realize that you are looking at them. [We both laughed].
- Musa: Yes, that's right.
- Zainab: Sometimes before you start to sing you play the following tune, "ding-ding ki-di-ding" over and over again. Please can you explain why?
- Musa: Yes, I do this every time I am performing. I often use the moment of playing this tune to create songs.
- Zainab: There are times when you seem to be adjusting the strings on your *yakandi*. Why do you do that?
- Musa: Well, there are certain musical tunes I play to accompany the songs I sing. Sometimes a particular song may need a loud sound. Also there are times when I will play a certain tune but the it will not sound nice for that particular song I want to sing. If any of these problems occur, I will adjust

the strings of the *yakandi* a little bit so as to produce the right tune to accompany the song. This is the reason.

Zainab: Are these your ideas about how you compose and sing songs?

Musa: Yes.

Zainab: There are certain things about your music which I probably know, but I want you to tell me what you think of your music.

Musa: Alright. There is a difference between the music which I perform at funeral occasions and the music I perform at wedding occasions. When I arrive at a funeral ceremony to perform, since it is a tragic event, if a person pick up a fight I will tell show the person that what he or she is doing is not appropriate. We are at the funeral to console the bereaved. But on a wedding occasion, you know, the moment a person arrives there is nothing else other than merry making. Furthermore, at a funeral ceremony, if somebody comes to me when I am performing and give me gifts in a proud manner especially if the deceased was not very old I will not praise the proud person's behaviour. I will appeal to my listeners to behave appropriately because we attend the funeral mainly to mourn with the bereaved and to comfort the bereaved. If I abandon my responsibility to console the bereaved through songs and start to praise ladies and do other things the bereaved will not be pleased with me. Therefore, when I am performing at a funeral I must minimize praising the ladies I love and my friends. I must concentrate on mourning for the dead and comforting the bereaved through songs. Sometimes, the following day when children are going down to the well to fetch drinking water, they will still remember the songs which I sang at the funeral and consoled the children of the deceased.

Zainab: Do you perform music at an occasion only when you are invited to perform or do you go and perform at some occasions uninvited?

Musa: No, no. In the past, I could go and perform for some people even if they did not invite me. Anytime I hear that people in a certain village wanted musical performance for pass time or entertainment, I would go to that village and perform for them. Sometimes I would meet with people at funeral occasions and they would ask me to go and perform music for them in their village. I will then go to their village and perform for them. In most cases I perform in front of their *lawan's* [village head's] house. In villages

where the people are united and they do things collectively, they conduct most of their social events in front of their village head's house. But in a village where the people are not united, a person may invite me to perform music in front of his own house. If a person invites me to perform in front of his house as a pass time, I must ensure that he takes permission from his village head. If I go to a village uninvited to perform and someone asks me to perform in front of his house I will refuse. I will insist that we should go and perform the music in front of the village head's house since that is where pass time performances are usually done. In front of the village head's house, you know, I will meet with many people. The pass time will also last longer. Sometimes the performance will last till twelve midnight.

Zainab: What other work do you in addition to performing music?

Musa: I also do farming.

Zainab: If someone comes and invites you to go and perform music at his wedding ceremony this evening will you go? I mean, do you always accept invitations to go and perform music?

Musa: No, no. During the raining [farming] season I do not always accept invitations. And on a day that when I am not performing somewhere I will go and work on my farm. In other areas, when a musician is performing he or she will not become tired easily because they make use of things such as loud speakers or microphones. But these facilities are not available for use in this area. As result, there are days when I feel tired and will not accept any invitation to go and perform.

Zainab: How is the relationship between you and other Bura musicians?

Musa: There is a small feeling of jealousy and little bit of competition which exist among us. But they happen in such a way that not everyone will notice it. One thing I know is that, in our area, every musician is looking for food. It is like two people farming, this person has his own farm and that person has his own farm. So, I consider performing music to be like farming in order to get food. However, if I say that I will spoil my fellow musicians' job it will not be good. Just as I am looking for food, so are they. On social occasions such as the *sallah* and Christmas celebrations, when we musicians assemble to perform, that person will sit there, that person will sit there and this person will sit here. If one musician is able to attract larger audience than the other musicians some of us will not be jealous of

him because it is his efforts that bring him the large audience. Even in music performance sometimes you have to take it seriously, and work hard because there is no work that is easy. You have to do your best and shun laziness before you can attract a large audience. In some cases when you are performing the people whom you want to come and listen to your music will go somewhere else or will be doing other things. They will not come to you. As a result of this, some musicians may be discouraged and they will stop performing. Also there are some musicians who will perform for a long time without attracting a large audience, but they will not stop performing. Then you will see that eventually people will become aware of their music performances and will gather around them to listen to their music.

Zainab: How do you feel when other musicians copy your music?

Musa: I will not be angry. Actually, if you do something and people do not want to learn it, it means the thing is not good. You want to do something which another person will like to imitate. I see a number of people copying my own music. Sometimes I go near them when they are performing my music and I watch them. If I see that there are certain aspects of the music which they do not understand, if they are nice people, when the performance is over I will go and say to them, "when you are performing the music I performed, you should do it this way." I will show them how to do it. Just as I wanted to be famous when I composed and performed that music, they also want to be popular. So, I will demonstrate for them the right way to do it. But some musicians will not want other musicians to copy their music. Some musicians, if you are performing at the same event with them and you sit quite close to them they will change their spots. They will feel that if they sit close to other musicians they will not attract large audiences to give them gifts. But I think performing good music depends on a musician's good talent and on God's will. What is destined to yours nobody can deprive you of it. So if you are reasonable, there is no need to be jealous of your fellow musicians. But some people can do it. If you are not lucky, when you are performing they will either do something that will drive you away or they will encourage some people to start a fight in the place where you are performing to destroy your performance. I do not see any need for this kind of behaviour. I tell people who behave in this way that, if they do not love other people they should know that they may not have a happy life. They have to love people before people can come to them.

- Zainab: If someone comes to you when you are performing and asks you to compose a song of abuse or a satirical song about another person, what will you do?
- Musa: I will compose and sing the song. Unless the subject I have been asked to sing about does not appeal to my conscience and my principle. If the person about whom I have been asked to sing a song of abuse has done something that is inappropriate, I will as the complainant to describe to me the thing which the accused did. If I feel that the song will bring either a reconciliation or a stop to the inappropriate behaviour, I will compose a song of abuse or satirical song about the culprit. I would hope that the man who is the offender will hear the song and stop his offensive behaviour. or the lady whose behaviour is bad will hear the song and change. So, if I am asked to compose a song of abuse if I am convince that it will be helpful I will do it because we all want peaceful co-existence and good relationships. But I will not abuse someone through songs just for the sake of earning money. I tell people who ask me to do it that I do not like it.
- Zainab: I will now give an opportunity to tell me things that you want me to know about your music which I did not remember to ask you about them.
- Musa: There are times when a person get married before he starts performing music. If the person concentrates only on performing and neglects to look for a woman to marry, people will say that he is irresponsible. So. if a person is performing music he should be wise enough to find a woman to marry and have a family. After getting married, when he starts having children, he should be dedicated to his work. What people give him as rewards for his music, he should use the money he earns to meet the needs of his children. In doing this, his children will in the future say, "Our father was a good musician." These are some of the things about my music career which if I neglect my music will not be considered a good career.
- Zainab: Thank you very much for sharing your ideas about your music.
- Musa: There is no problem.

Interview 2

Name of informant: Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri
 Gender: Female
 Religion: Christianity
 Hometown: Marama
 Place of interview: Kidang
 Date: 22 January 1995
 Subject: Her Songmaking and performance
 Interviewer: Zainab Haruna

Zainab: I want you to tell me your name.

Saraya: My name is Mrs Saraya Mwarinkir D. Waziri.

Zainab: How old are you?

Saraya: If I tell you my age probably I will be lying to you.

Zainab: Give me an estimate.

Saraya: An estimate? Alright, what if I say I am one hundred years old? [Laughter]

Zainab: One hundred years old? That is too much! Probably you are forty-three years old or forty five.

Saraya: Oh fifty. Let's say fifty.

Zainab: What is your profession?

Saraya: My profession is farming.

Zainab: What other work do you do in addition to farming?

Saraya: You mean the work that I do with my hands?

Zainab: What about your singing? What do you think of it?

Saraya: I consider my singing to be the work of God. The songs I sing are inspired by the word of God. I get my ideas from sermons. For instance, if you stand here and start to preach, I will open my ears, raise my hands and

listen attentively to what you are saying. From what I learned from the sermon I will compose songs. Usually the message of the sermon is taken from the Bible so, when the preacher reads the Bible once, twice, thrice and appropriately incorporates them into his sermon I will learn some verses and use them to compose songs.

Zainab: Do you then consider your singing as one form of preaching the Word of God?

Saraya: Oh yes!

Zainab: Some Bura musicians mainly sing to praise and to entertain their listeners.

Saraya: Yes. [Background noise: a woman pounding food in a mortar]

Zainab: When did you start ministering through music?

Saraya: I have been singing for many years. I started singing many years ago, but I can not remember the exact year when I started.

Zainab: I want you to please tell me the occasions on which you perform music.

Saraya: I sing in wedding Christian wedding ceremonies, in Christian funeral ceremonies and during church services.

Zainab: How do you compose your songs?

Saraya: If it in church service that I am going to sing, I will use the ideas which I learned from the sermon to compose and sing songs during the same church service. If it is somewhere else, such as on a funeral occasion, I will carefully observe the way people come in crying and looking sad. Someone may be seen in deep thoughts. When I observe the grieving of these people: those buried in deep thoughts and those crying, I will then compose and sing eulogies. Songs that will reflect their feelings and songs that will give them consolation.

Zainab: You mentioned earlier that your singing is not a profession but a talent and the work of God.

Saraya: Yes I consider it to be a gift from God.

- Zainab: Now I want you describe the themes of your songs.
- Saraya: If it is at a funeral occasion, I will sing songs with the aim of consoling the mourners. This is because during funerals I see people grieving so I try to console them through elegiac songs. But if I during funeral occasions I am touched by the Holy Spirit as a result of the Word of God being preached on the occasion, I will also preach to the mourners through songs. On wedding occasions, how to start a new married life is one of the topic which I sing about. I also praise the bride and the groom through songs. Then I advice them on how to live happily and peacefully. I tell the bride and the groom to love each other.
- Zainab: Have been asked by politicians to compose and sing songs about them or their parties?
- Saraya: During the recent [1992] campaigns for political elections in Nigeria by the defunct NRC [National Republican Convention] and the SDP [Social Democratic Party] we did I did not sing for politicians or any political party. But during the previous 1983 part campaigns by the NPN [National Party of Nigeria] and the GNPP [Great Nigeria People's Party], I composed and sang political songs for some members of the GNPP. Songs that would make their party win the election. And I was reported to our pastor, Pastor Waziri, as being partisan instead of singing for the glory of God. [Sighs]
- Zainab: Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts with me about your music.
- Saraya: Thank you too.

Interview 3

- Name: Anthony Audu
 Gender: Male
 Religion: Islam
 Hometown: Labu
 Place of interview: Kidang
 Date: 22 January 1997
 Subject: His songmaking and performance
 Interviewer: Zainab Haruna

- Zainab: I want you to tell me your name.
- Anthony: Alright, my name is Anthony.
- Zainab: What is your father's name?
- Anthony: My father's name is Audu.
- Zainab: Do you live in Labu?
- Anthony: Yes, I live in Labu.
- Zainab: How old are you?
- Anthony: I am thirty-five years old.
- Zainab: What other job do you do in addition to performing music?
- Anthony: I am a farmer and I also perform xylophone music.
- Zainab: Which of these two occupations do you prefer more?
- Anthony: I like performing xylophone music more than farming.
- Zainab: Why do you prefer performing music to farming?
- Anthony: I prefer performing music to farming because of the money which I earn from it.
- Zainab: Where did learn how to perform play xylophone music?
- Anthony: Still in Labu.
- Zainab: I want you to tell me when and how you became a musician.
- Anthony: I started to learn how to be a musician when I was still a child. Shortly after my mother weaned me, when I had started to speak. I used to stay at home while my mother went to the farm to work. She would keep food for me in the direction in which the sun sets. Each time she would keep food and drinking water for me. And through out the day until the sun set, I would be at home playing music while my parents would be in the farm

working. If my parents returned home and found that I was not practising my music, my mother would not be happy with me. She might even beat me. That was how I started learning how to play music.

Zainab: Can you still remember the first time you performed music to a listening audience?

Anthony: Yes, I can still it very well.

Zainab: When?

Anthony: From the first time I performed music at a wedding ceremony to date is now about twenty years and one month.

Zainab: On what occasion did you first performed music?

Anthony: On a wedding occasion.

Zainab: Were you shy since it was your first time of performing music in public?

Anthony: No. Because I was still a young boy I was not shy.

Zainab: In which towns or villages have you been invited to perform music?

Anthony: I have been invited to perform music at Marama and Whita Mbaya. I have performed at Mubi and in Bauchi. I have been to Maiduguri, I have been to Kano, I have been to Zaria and I have been to Kaduna to perform music. I have also performed music in my home town, Labu.

Zainab: And in Kidang?

Anthony: Yes, and in Kidang. Kidang is also my hometown. [Laughter]

Zainab: On which social occasions do you mostly prefer to perform music?

Anthony: As a matter of fact, there are certain places and occasions where I prefer to perform at more than other places. For instance, If I am invited here at Kidang, I like performing music at Kidang. Also if I am invited to Marama town I like to perform there because residents of Marama are very hospitable to me. If I am invited to Garkida I like to go there and perform. At Shaffa, any time I am invited, I will go and perform. At Maiduguri, if I

am invited, I like going there to perform because the people there are good to me.

Zainab: In which part of Maiduguri do you perform music?

Anthony: In places like the Open Air Theatre. They always come to invite me to go and perform music for them.

Zainab: Why did you decide to be a musician?

Anthony: Actually, my father was a musician. He used to perform xylophone music. When I started performing at social occasions such as wedding ceremonies, I was schooling, but he told me to stop going to school and take up his music career because it is our family tradition.

Zainab: Are you married?

Anthony: Yes I am married.

Zainab: As our people would say, "Behind a successful man is a successful woman." Does your wife give you supports in your music career?

Anthony: Yes she supports me. Each time I am going somewhere to perform music she will advise me that I should do things carefully because if something tragic happens to me nobody will take care of our children. She advises me on things like this. And anytime people come to our house to look for me and I am not at home, she will ask them to be patient. Even if she is taking care of our her baby, she will tie the baby on her back to go and look for me.

Zainab: How many children do you have?

Anthony: We have six children.

Zainab: What are their names?

Anthony: Oh, no! I do not know all their names. [Laughs] Alright, the eldest one, his name is Manu. The second one is called Hajara. The third is called Yerima. The fifth is called Waziri and the sixth one is Kuceli. Kuceli was born recently, last Christmas. She was born on Christmas day. She is the last born.

- Zainab: Please I would like to know what you sing about when you are performing music.
- Anthony: I sing to them the songs that God gives me. For instance, if I am invited to sing at a wedding ceremony, I will give advice to the bride and the groom on how to live as good husband and wife. Since I am enjoying my own marriage, I will sing to them songs through which they will learn how to live happily in their marriage. But if it is at a funeral occasion that I am invited to perform music, I like to go to the funeral occasion to sing eulogies so that when the bereaved listen to the ideas expressed in the songs, they will be consoled and be consoled. Through songs, I will remind the mourners that we are all going to die in one way or the other, and at one time or the other.
- Zainab: Have you been hired by politicians to compose and sing political songs for them to increase their chances of winning elections?
- Anthony: Oh, yes! For instance, I was hired by Chairman Dautiya when he was campaigning to be the chairman of Hawul Local Government. He invited me, himself and Mr. Abba Madu Marama. At that time my horse had died recently and they gave me eight thousand Naira [about one hundred and sixty Canadian Dollars] to buy another horse. Then I said the best way to show my appreciation to them for giving me the money was to sing for them about the politics in which they were involved, the SDP [Social Democratic Party]. I did not mind if I was Killed for composing songs for SDP because it was SDP members who gave me money. So, I composed a song about NRC [National Republican Convention] on behalf of SDP members. In the song, I criticized some members of the NRC pointing out that some NRC members are not good people. Anyone who hears the song will vote for SDP instead of NRC.
- Zainab: In the song you were anti-NRC but supported the SDP?
- Anthony: Yes. This was because SDP members were the ones who gave me money to buy a horse when my horse died. I felt that I should support them even if they are bad people. I composed a song about NRC members saying that they are not good people including their wives. In the song, I also said that NRC members have their heads downward like bats. I use this idiom. Anyone who listens to this song will hear things that I said and will vote for SDP instead of NRC.

- Zainab: How do you compose songs?
- Anthony: As you have invited me now, right here I can compose a new song. This is a talent which God has given to me.
- Zainab: Does it mean that you can compose a new song at any given occasion?
- Anthony: Oh, yes.
- Zainab: You mean you do not spend weeks or days composing a new song before you sing it?
- Anthony: No. It will be a waste of time.
- Zainab: Do you repeat songs which you composed and sang at a previous occasion?
- Anthony: Yes, I do. I repeat songs which I dream about.
- Zainab: Do you have any choice of time and occasion for performing music?
- Anthony: No. I perform music at any time. It is my profession so any time I am asked to perform, I will do it.
- Zainab: Do you have other ideas about your music which we I forgot to ask you about?
- Anthony: Yes. You could probably ask me why among all Bura musicians, people prefer to listen to my music.
- Zainab: Yes, I wanted to ask you but I did not know how you will feel about it. Especially, I wanted to ask you about your relationship with other Bura musicians.
- Anthony: Yes, any time one is invited to perform and another musician is also invited to perform, it is expedient that one should see the other musician as an opponent. One should be like a good farmer by not letting one's own farm be filled with weeds. Work very hard so that the following year, if your opponent feels threatened he will also try to work very hard as you did. So, each time I am performing music at the same occasion with another musician I try to perform better than him.

- Zainab: Thank you very much. Now I am going to bring my camera and take your photograph and you xylophone. I hope you do not mind?
- Anthony: No I do not mind.
- Zainab: Thank you very much.
- Anthony: No problem.

Interview 4

- Name of informant: Usman Boaja
Gender: Male
Religion: Islam
Hometown: Gusi
Place of interview: Kidang
Date: 25 January 1995
Subject: His songmaking and performance
Interviewer: Zainab Haruna

- Zainab: What is your name?
- Usman: My name is Usman Boaja.
- Zainab: Where are you from?
- Usman: I am from Gusi.
- Zainab: How old are you?
- Usman: I am fifty eight years old.
- Zainab: How many wives do you have?
- Usman: I have four wives.
- Zainab: How many children do you have?
- Usman: I have twenty-four children.

- Zainab: What are your occupations?
- Usman: I used to be a tailor and I used to weaved clothes like *gabaka* and *bull* when I was a teenager - from age twelve to fourteen. I used to be a blacksmith when I was thirteen years old until the time I was fifteen years old. I used to make tools such as hoes, axes and knives. But the other blacksmiths prevented me from continuing with the blacksmithing. They alleged blacksmithing is not my family tradition. This made me to feel very angry., and I went and told my father about it. And my father told me that I should not worry because, after all, blacksmithing is not our traditional occupation. The occupation which is our family tradition is playing xylophone music. So I asked my father to buy me a xylophone because I was offended by the other blacksmiths. My father bought the xylophone for me and I started performing music. Immediately, my music started becoming good, even though I did not undergo training. Boys and girls started to dance to my xylophone musical performance. From the time I started playing xylophone music to public audience to date is forty-two years.
- Zainab: How did you learn to perform music?
- Usman: I did not receive training or become an apprentice of another xylophone musician before I started to perform my xylophone music. I inherited it from our family. It is a family tradition.
- Zainab: Among your occupations such as the tailoring, weaving, blacksmithing, farming and performing xylophone music, which one of them do you like most?
- Usman: My favourite occupation is performing xylophone music.
- Zainab: Tell me the places where you have been invited to perform music?
- Usman: I have performed xylophone music in many and various places including Marama, Kidang, Biu, Maiduguri, Jemeta, Jos, Kano, Kaduna, Ilorin and Lagos. I have even travelled to Berlin in Germany when I was invited to go there and perform music at an international music festival.
- Zainab: How do you compose songs?
- Usman: I compose songs when I am performing the xylophone music. When I am

performing on a wedding occasion or a funeral ceremony, I will be observing members of the audience to discern the social status, personalities or occupations of some individuals. I will then praise or mentioned those attributes through songs. When I am performing music on a wedding occasion, when I observe the bride and the groom I can tell whether or not their marriage will be a happy marriage. The words, phrases and ideas which I express in songs appeal to members of my audience because they relate to their personalities, social status, occupations and experiences. Also, the subjects of the songs will be relevant to persons whom they know. Individuals who deserve to be praised are praised. The types of songs I sing and the style of my music vary, depending on the occasion on which I am performing the xylophone music, and the topics I have been asked to sing songs about. The types of song which I compose and sing during my musical performances include praise songs, satirical songs, love songs, songs about politics and funeral songs.

Zainab: On what occasions do you perform music?

Usman: I perform xylophone music on various occasions including weddings, funerals, informal events, *sallah*, Christmas and New Year. If I am going to perform music at a funeral occasion, I try to know certain things about the deceased person's lifestyle and the bereaved family. I will then sing songs about the deceased. I will sing eulogies and songs that will console the help to comfort the bereaved. In the songs I will try to describe the deceased's family genealogy. I do not accept invitation fees when I am invited to perform xylophone music on a funeral occasion because it is an occasion for mourning. My intention is to sing songs that will console the bereaved. When I am performing on a wedding occasion, I try to know certain things about the bride and the groom. I will then sing for them love songs which will describe their love for each other. I will sing for them songs that will tell them how they can make their marriage to be peaceful and successful. Also, I will praise the couple through songs. On certain occasions such as on wedding occasions, I perform music well when I am treated well by the people who invited me. I also sing songs about politics. For instance, during the time of the defunct NPN [National Party of Nigeria] and the GNPP [Great Nigeria People's Party], and during the NRC [National Republican Convention] party campaigns, I composed and sang songs about the political parties and about the politicians. Either songs that will make them to win elections or lose elections. At the time when Bura people were demanding for autonomy from the Pabir authority in Biu, I sang a song in which I advocated for Bura people's independence from the

Biu authority. As a result, some officials from Biu came and took me to Biu where I was detained for three months. They said I was detained because I was advocated for Bura people's secession from Biu.

Zainab: What do you sing about?

Usman: I sing about various things. I sing about issues such as love, marriage, death, politics, and people's behaviour, lifestyles and occupations.

Zainab: To what extent does the type of occasion on which you perform music determine the type of songs you sing?

Usman: The type of occasion on which I perform can determine the type of songs which I sing on the occasion. For instance, if I am performing xylophone music on wedding occasions I will sing songs such as songs about marriage the bride and the groom. If I am performing xylophone music on funeral occasions I will sing songs that will comfort the people who are bereaved and songs about the deceased.

Zainab: Do you perform music at events to which you have not been invited to perform?

Usman: No. I do not perform music on occasions without being invited. But if I am invited, I will make sure that I go and perform music. Excepts when I am sick or I have already accepted invitation to go and perform somewhere else, then I will not accept the invitation. Sometimes I will ask my son to go and perform music on certain occasions on my behalf.

Zainab: Some people complained that your invitation fees are too high. What do you say to those people?

Usman: Some people have been saying bad things about me. It is not true that I must be given the head of the cow killed on a wedding occasion before I perform music on that wedding occasion. It is not true that I charge high invitation fees. I accept any amount of money given to me by the person inviting me. Also I do not demand for many cartons of beer to be given to me before I perform on a wedding occasion. I do not drink beer, I do not go after women, but some people say these things about me.

Zainab: Please describe to me how you compose and sing songs.

- Usman: Usually, I do not repeat the same song I sang on an occasion at another occasion, unless I am asked to sing the song by a member of the audience. When composing songs I use phrases and ideas that are familiar and relevant to the audience, especially those who asked me to compose the songs. That is why when I am singing sometimes members of the audience will sing along with me, especially in singing the choruses and familiar phrases.
- Zainab: In what ways do you members of your audience can influence the types of song you sing and your style of performance?
- Usman: There are various ways in which members of my audience can influence the types of song I sing and the style of my musical performance. On many occasions, when I am performing music, it is members of the audience who suggest to me the themes which I compose and sing songs about. Also when I am performing the xylophone music and the audience are pleased with the music and the songs which I sing, they reward me or treat me well, and this encourages me to perform well. The social status and age of my audience can influence the type of songs I sing and my style of performance. If the audience consists mainly of government officials or politicians I will sing songs that will either appeal to them or are relevant to them. The songs which I sing for youths may vary from the songs I sing to adults. Even my style of xylophone performance may vary.
- Zainab: How do your members of your audience participate in your musical performance:
- Usman: There are various way in which members of my audience participate in my xylophone music performance. They sometimes sing the songs along with me by singing the chorus or by repeating the phrases I use which are familiar to them. Also members of my audience suggest topics for me to compose and sing songs about. They make the requests or give suggestions of the themes through my *dan ma'aba*. He stops me and he repeats to me the request made to me by members of the audience. To compose songs about. Furthermore, the audience participate in the performance by coming forward and rewarding me with money when I am performing. The dancing to my xylophone music especially by ladies is another way in which the audience participate in my musical performance. When my musical performance is affective to the audience some women in the audience will come forward and do some ululating as a mark of their excitement, acknowledgment and reward.

- Zainab: At this moment do you earn your living solely from musical performance?
- Usman: No. Performing xylophone music is not my only means of livelihood. I can not adequately support myself and my family if I rely only on performing xylophone music. I also do farming during the raining season.
- Zainab: During which time of the year do you perform music?
- Usman: I perform xylophone music at any time of the year. But usually I perform on more occasions during the dry season because it is the time when people are not working on their farms as they do during the raining season. For instance, I perform more frequently during the Christmas period because there are more weddings at that time.
- Zainab: Thank you very much for sharing your views with me about your music and performance.
- Usman: No problem.

APPENDIX THREE: FIGURES AND MAPS

Photographs and Drawings including Bura Folk Musicians, Types of Bura Dance and Bura Musical Instruments.

Maps including Map of Biu Emirate Showing Bura Land.

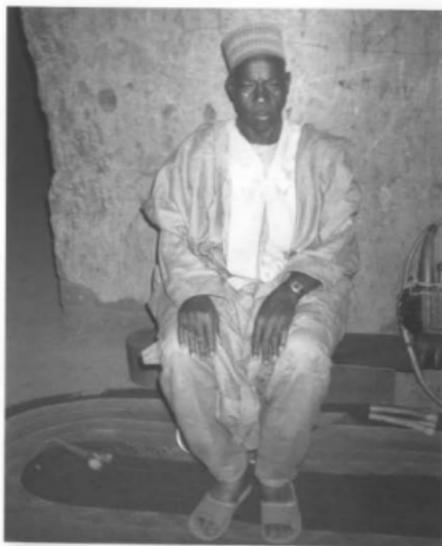


Figure Ia: Usnan Boaja

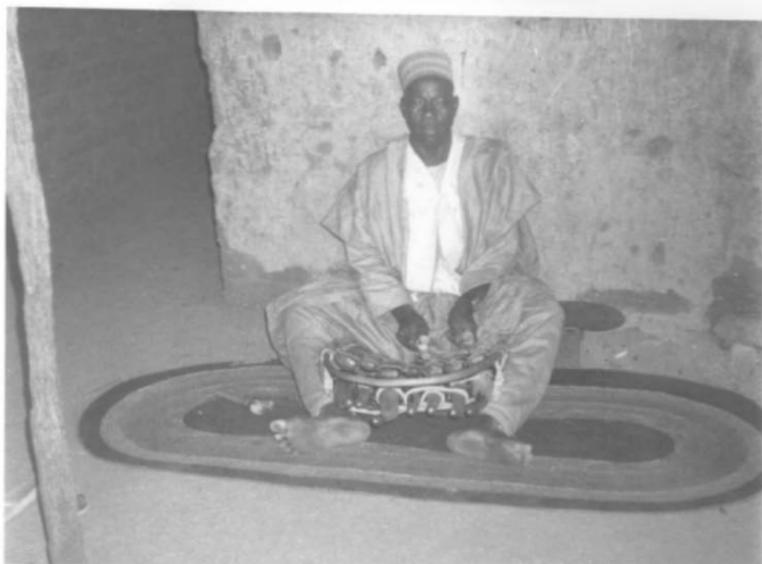


Figure Ib: Usnan Boaja Playing "Tsindza" (Xylophone)



Figure 2a: Musa Gwoadzang

Figure 2b: Musa Gwoadzang Playing "Yakandi" (Banjo)



Figure 3a: Anthony Audu Playing "Tsindza" (Xylophone)



Figure 3b: Anthony Audu Performing to a Large Audience

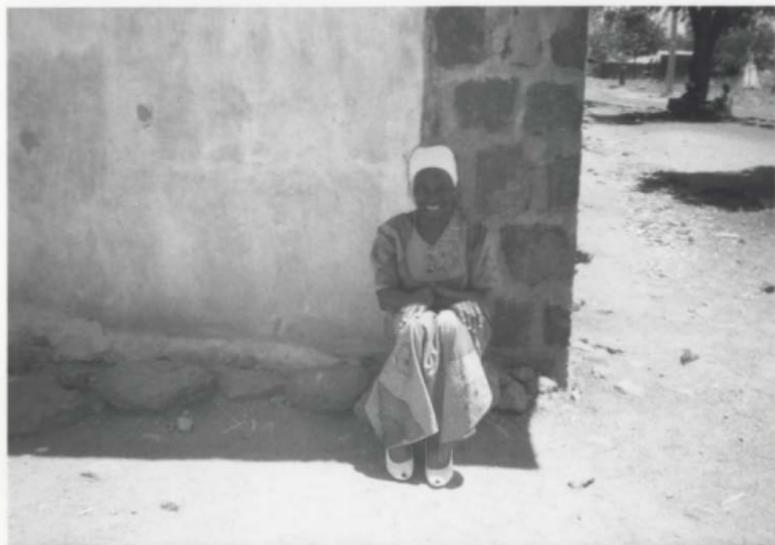


Figure 4a: Saraya Mwarinkir D. Maziri

Figure 4b: Saraya Mwarinkir D. Maziri Performing in a Church



Figure 4c: Saraya Mwarinkir D. Haziri Getting Ready to Perform at a Wedding Ceremony



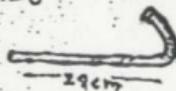
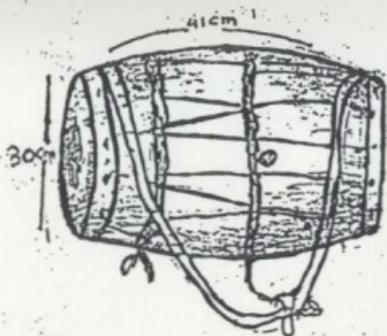
Figure 4d: Saraya Mwarinkir D. Haziri Singing at a Wedding Ceremony



Figure 5a: Bura Drummer, Bukar Bishi Performing

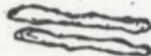
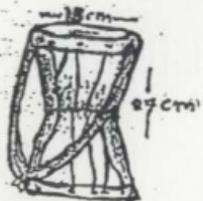


Figure 5b: Bukar Bishi Playing Tripple Drums



drum stick (for Beating the Drum)

Figure 6a: "Ganga" (Drum)



beaters (for Beating the Small-Drum)

Figure 6b: "Kwala-Kwala" (Small-Drum)

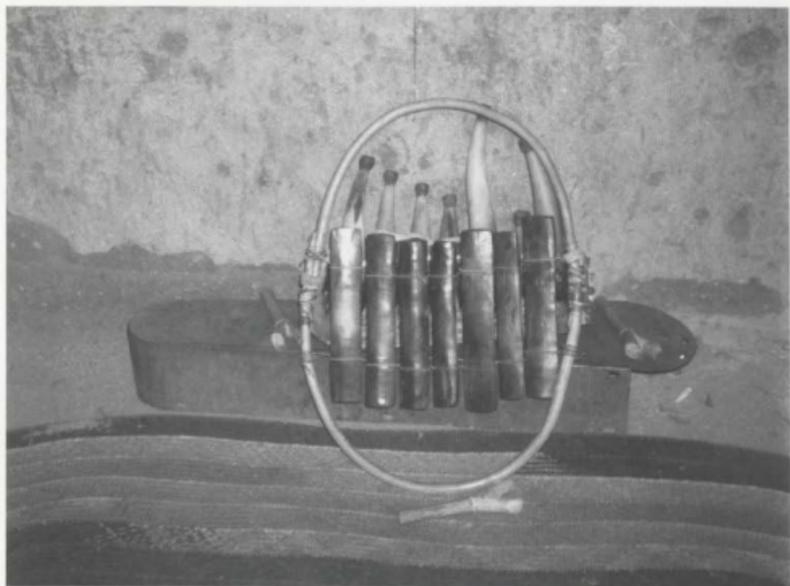
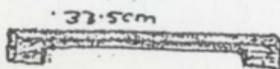


Figure 7a: Bura Xylophone (Front View)

Figure 7b: Back View of Bura Xylophone



Angilma

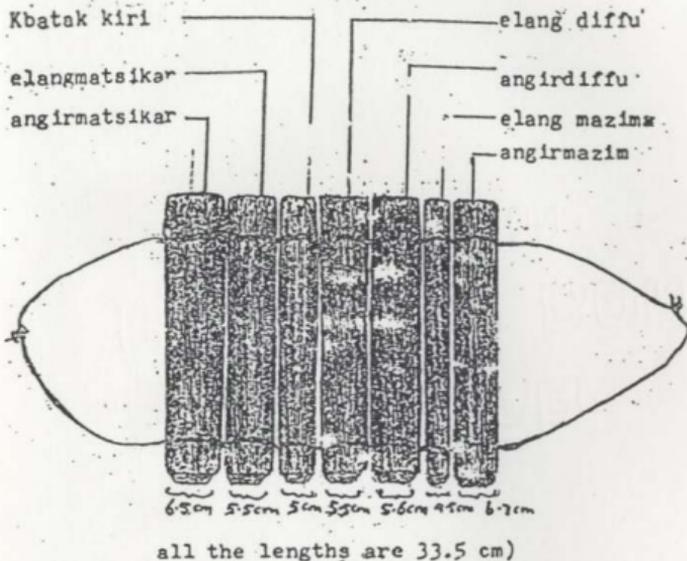


Figure 7c: ("Tsindza" Keys and Their Bura Names)



Figure 7d: "Timbila Thla" (Cow Horn)

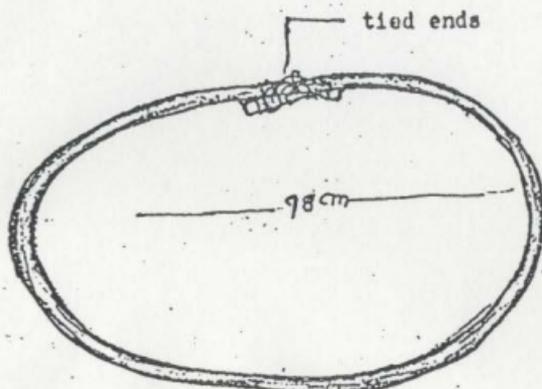


Figure 7e: "Udzum Tawar-war" (Circular Wooden Frame)

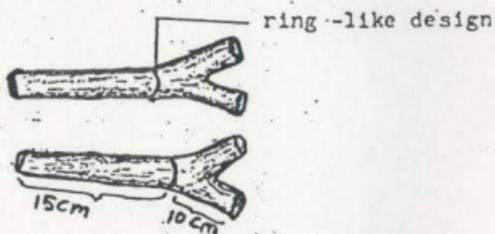


Figure 7f: "Kuli Tsindza" (A Pair of Y-shaped stick used for beating the Xylophone)

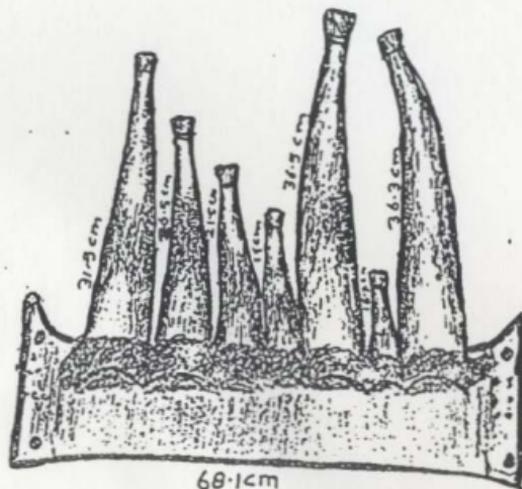


Figure 7g: Arranged Horns in the Curved Plank

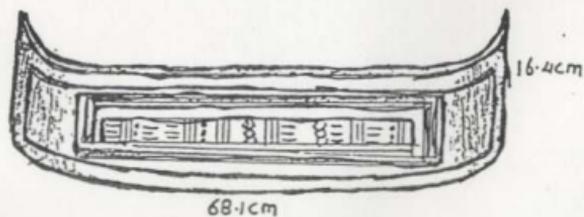


Figure 7h: "Kugwa Tsindza" (Curved Plank of the Xylophone) (Decorated)



Figure 8a: Big "Tuhum Humbutu" (Pot) Instrument
(decorated)

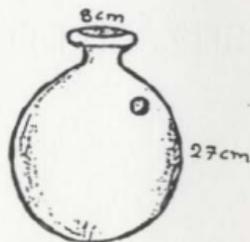


Figure 8b: Small "Tuhum Humbutu" (Pot) Instrument



Figure 9: "Kugwa" (Calabash) Instrument



Figure II: "Zhantu" Placed on a Calabash

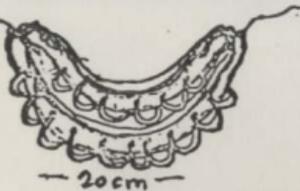


Figure 10a: "Bara" (Rattles)



Figure 10b: "Kice-kice" (Beaded Gourd)

FIGURES 12a-c: BURA AEROPHONES

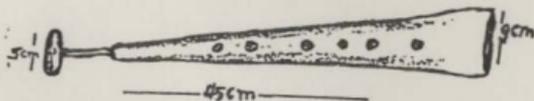


Figure 12a: "Alkita" (Wooden Oboe Instrument)

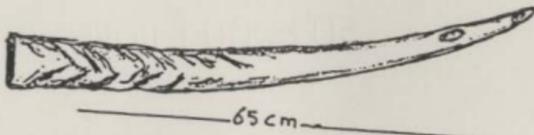


Figure 12b: "Timbil" (Horn)

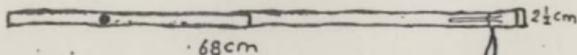


Figure 12c: "Shola Dlika" (Flute made from corn stalk)

Figure13a-d: Types of Bura Dance



Figure13a: A Woman Performing "Hadla" Dance



Figure13c: Group of Women Performing "Bansuwe" Dance



Figure13b: "Banjuli" Dance

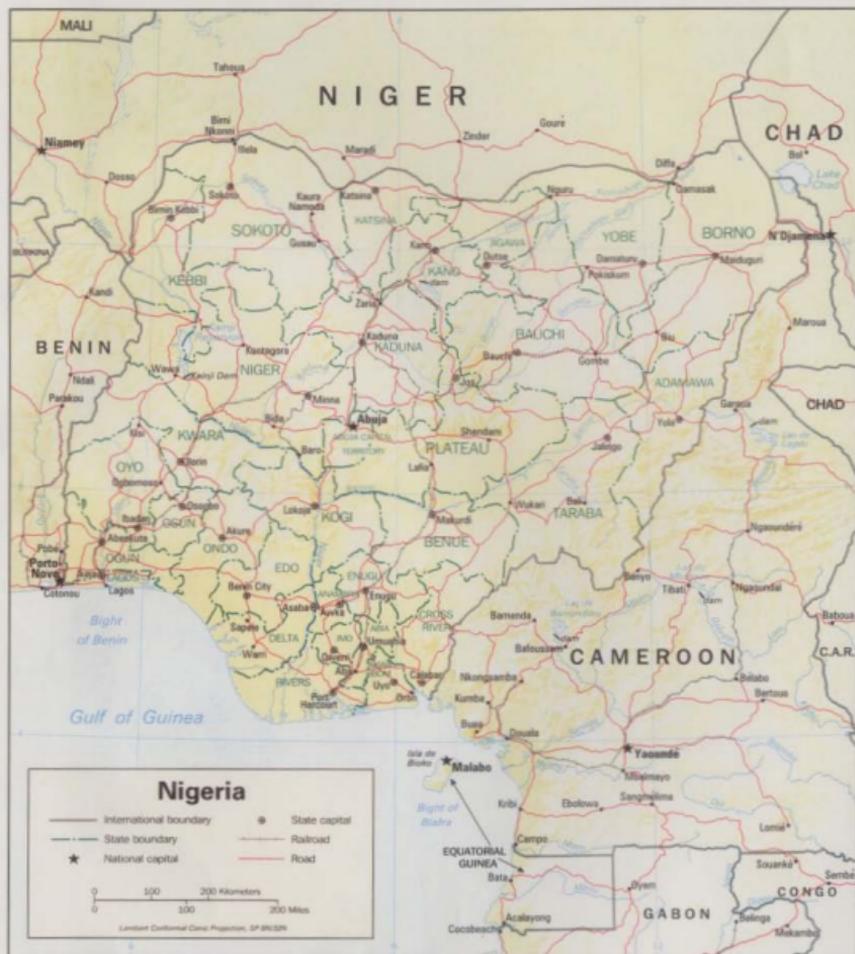


Figure13d: "Waksha-Waksha" Dance

Africa



Map I: Map of Africa Showing Nigeria





Map 3: Map of Borno State Showing Biu Emirate

Source: Ministry of Home Affairs, Information and Culture,
Maiduguri



Map 4: Map of Biu Emirate Showing
Bura Area.

KEYS:

Local govt boundary	-----
Local government	▭
Local govt. head quarter	⊙
District Head quarter	△
Tarmac road	————
Main paths	- - - - -
villages studied	⊕
River	~~~~~

Source: Ministry of Land and Survey, Maiduguri





